The UBC Sustainability Hub is pleased to offer current UBC graduate students the opportunity to work on funded sustainability internship projects. Successful candidates work under the mentorship of a partner organization, and are immersed in real world learning where they can apply their research skills and contribute to advancing sustainability across the region.

- Visit the Sustainability Scholars Program website to learn how the program works and to apply.
- Be sure to review the application guide to confirm your eligibility before applying.

Applications close at midnight on Sunday September 18, 2022.

Project title: Mapping and Capacity Assessment of Youth Focused Organizations in Vancouver

Project Background & Overview:
The City of Vancouver Social Policy and Projects Division is reviewing its approach to policy and planning for youth in the municipality. As such, staff have identified the need to have an updated overview of the state of the youth sector including a more fulsome understanding of the current landscape of youth programs available in the city. This initial mapping and assessment of trends, sectoral relationships and organizational capacity issues is a fundamental step in any social policy planning process. A vibrant youth sector is necessary to mobilize youth voice, promote engagement at the community level and drive innovation to address current social, environmental and economic challenges facing youth today.

The Non-Profit Sector in Vancouver
The non-profit sector contributes to a healthy functioning city. It is not only a key economic driver as an employer, but also mobilizes and strengthens the human and social capital of communities. Its impact is reflected in employment numbers, volunteering rates, extensive service provision and community building.

Given the changing context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the overdose crisis, the movement for racial and climate justice, non-profit organizations are being called on to support Vancouver's residents impacted by these major converging issues. The pandemic has disrupted young people's lives in an unpreceded manner, as many youth have had to face confinement, unemployment, psychological distress and social isolation in a crucial developmental stage for identity formation.

As continuously supported by research, non-profit organizations are essential for the provision of services, for empowering and encouraging expression and for being catalysts of innovation in society, making their contribution invaluable for the city. Social services focused on children and youth play a key role in meeting basic needs—from addressing threats to food security and fears of increased domestic violence, to continuing to provide a cultural and social safety net amidst increased stress, lack of belonging, mental health strain, isolation, and overall service demand. Social service organizations are faced with increased demand for services and the impacts of disruption in services due to a change in operating models and pressures in the workforce.

The non-profit sector is extremely diverse, as evidenced by the scope, breadth and multiple mandates of organizations identified in the 2020 current state analysis of the non-profit sector in Vancouver (https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/npo-current-state-report-covid-19-summer-2020.pdf) . Through this report, the City of Vancouver provided an overview of the state of the sector by outlining the current landscape of non-profits in the city, reflecting on the impacts of the pandemic on non-profit organizations, and identifying needs and challenges across sub-sectors. The pandemic has exposed some of the underlying systemic vulnerabilities of the sector caused by a lack of sustainable operating funding sources, significant inequities and challenges in the workforce, and space affordability and access challenges.

The pandemic, impacts of climate change and the increased need for services have significantly impacted the sector by:
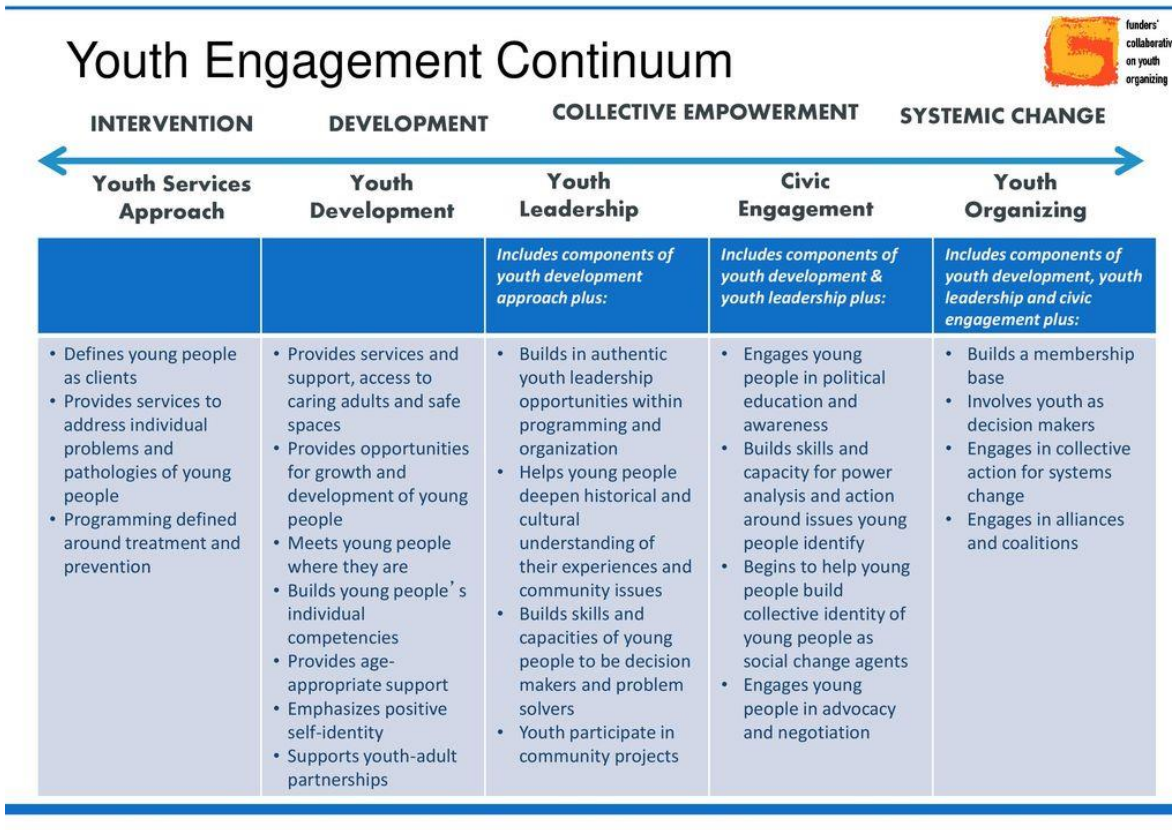- Depleting reserves and decreasing earned revenue while increasing COVID-19 related costs;
- Causing organizations to disrupt services, shift scope, change their delivery methods to virtual formats and causing infrastructure and capacity challenges; and
- Causing staff burnout, lay-offs and loss of volunteers.

Decades of unsustainable funding has resulted in a sector facing serious challenges to make it through the pandemic. As a result, young people face barriers to access important social infrastructure that support them when addressing social, environmental and cultural issues that are important to them. Non-profit organizations are catalysts for youth to make a difference in the communities they belong to, they provide important services, they raise awareness and address inequities in the society, and add vibrancy to communities by enabling volunteering and greater connections.

Deeper dive into Youth Services
Social services are generally organized around the populations they serve and the conditions of vulnerability that they are trying to address. As such, social service non-profits include agencies which offer a wide range of supports, including childcare, newcomer settlement services, youth programs, senior support groups, women, Indigenous people and persons with disabilities serving groups and community-based food programs among many others.

The Funders' Collaborative of Youth Organizing outlines a known framework for understanding the range of programs available for young people that describes both forms and degrees of young engagement based on a continuum of interventions (https://organizingengagement.org/models/youth-engagement-continuum/). The Youth Engagement Continuum features four developmental levels or progressive degrees of youth engagement—Intervention, Development, Collective Empowerment, and Systemic Change—and five forms of youth participation aligned with the developmental progression: Youth Services (Intervention), Youth Development (Development), Youth Leadership and Youth Civic Engagement (Collective Empowerment), and Youth Organizing (Systemic Change)

Youth Engagement Continuum

INTERVENTION	DEVELOPMENT	COLLECTIVE EMPOWERMENT		SYSTEMIC CHANGE
Youth Services Approach	**Youth Development**	**Youth Leadership**	**Civic Engagement**	**Youth Organizing**
		Includes components of youth development approach plus:	*Includes components of youth development & youth leadership plus:*	*Includes components of youth development, youth leadership and civic engagement plus:*
• Defines young people as clients • Provides services to address individual problems and pathologies of young people • Programming defined around treatment and prevention	• Provides services and support, access to caring adults and safe spaces • Provides opportunities for growth and development of young people • Meets young people where they are • Builds young people's individual competencies • Provides age-appropriate support • Emphasizes positive self-identity • Supports youth-adult partnerships	• Builds in authentic youth leadership opportunities within programming and organization • Helps young people deepen historical and cultural understanding of their experiences and community issues • Builds skills and capacities of young people to be decision makers and problem solvers • Youth participate in community projects	• Engages young people in political education and awareness • Builds skills and capacity for power analysis and action around issues young people identify • Begins to help young people build collective identity of young people as social change agents • Engages young people in advocacy and negotiation	• Builds a membership base • Involves youth as decision makers • Engages in collective action for systems change • Engages in alliances and coalitions

Using this framework as an analytical reference to understand the types of programs currently available for youth in Vancouver, through this research project we hope to:

- Map the geographical distribution of youth organizations in the City
- Outline the types of programs currently available
- Identify service gaps
- Understand the relationship dynamics within the youth serving sector
- Discuss broader trends in the youth serving sector
- Understand organizational capacity challenges that prevent effective youth engagement and the provisions of youth services in city

Project description

A vibrant youth sector is necessary to mobilize youth voices, promote engagement at the community level and drive innovation to address current social, environmental and economic challenges facing youth today.

This project will provide a descriptive overview of the youth sector in Vancouver by setting a baseline and mapping the current landscape of non-profit youth serving organizations in the city; and reflecting on the Vancouver-specific trends and challenges in service delivery, coordination and organizational capacity.

The main research question we hope to explore is: *What is the current service capacity of Vancouver based youth serving organizations to provide services and engage youth in the city?*

Project scope

This project will be comprised of two distinct but related components:
   a) Inventory and mapping of youth serving organizations based on an existing directory of the non-profit sector
   b) An online survey focused on perceptions of service capacity and current levels of coordination and collaboration among service providers
   c) Two focus groups or world cafes to discuss current trends in the youth sector, program delivery challenges and service gaps from the service provider perspective.

Key questions:
   1) What organizations in Vancouver currently provide youth services? What types of services or programs do they provide?
   2) What are the most pressing organizational capacity issues that youth serving agencies face?
   3) What are the most important organizational strengths that promote service capacity and youth engagement in the youth sector?
   4) What are some examples of collaboration or service coordination currently taking place in the community?

Deliverables

- A baseline inventory of youth serving organizations in the City of Vancouver
- A final report containing a summary of the work completed including online survey findings and key themes from focus groups.
- A final report for the online public-facing [Scholars Project Library.](#)

Time Commitment

- This project will take 250 to complete
- This project must be completed between October 17, 2022 and March 15, 2023
- The Scholar is to complete hours between <u>9 am and 5 pm, Monday to Friday</u>, approximately 10 to 12 hours per week.

Required/preferred Skills and Background

- Excellent research and writing skills
- Demonstrated interest in sustainability
- Experience conducting stakeholder engagement events, including facilitation skills, is an asset
- Familiarity with research methodologies and survey techniques
- Community engagement experience
- Familiarity conducting focus group research
- Strong analytical skills
- Ability to work independently
- Project management and organizational skills
- GIS training or experience.

SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Applications close **midnight Sunday September 18, 2022**
Apply here: Click here to apply
Contact Karen Taylor at sustainability.scholars@ubc.ca if you have questions

Useful Resources

Below are some links to useful resources to help you with your resume and cover letter (there are many more online). Some of these resources also provide information on preparing for your interview.

https://students.ubc.ca/career/career-resources/resumes-cover-letters-curricula-vitae

https://www.grad.ubc.ca/current-students/graduate-pathways-success

https://www.grad.ubc.ca/cover-letter-cv-resume-templates-ubc-career-services