

Summer 2023 Sustainability Scholars Program Internship Opportunity

The UBC Sustainability Initiative (USI) 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 on the Apply page to confirm your eligibility before applying.

Applications close at midnight on Sunday January 29, 2023.

Project title: Research to inform the creation of safe & equitable public spaces for heat emergencies

Project Background & Overview:

As the climate changes and extreme heat events become more frequent, residents are at-risk in their own homes, most of which were not built to provide cooling. In 2021 a heat dome in British Columbia caused over 600 deaths, 99% of which occurred within residences. Additionally, the impacts of the heat dome were disproportionately felt by vulnerable or marginalized people. The BC Coroners Reports states that the majority of people who died were vulnerable due to a variety of factors, including age, health condition, disability, and social isolation. In-home cooling will be an important solution to heat-related illness and death in the future, but in-home methods face multiple barriers, including cost, availability, or technical feasibility.

Municipal service providers like the University Neighbourhoods Association (UNA) need to take quick action to create accessible, cool public spaces, both indoors and outdoors, as part of a strategy to adapt to, and mitigate, health impacts from climate change and heat emergencies. These spaces must be approached with a climate justice lens to ensure that they are accessible and appropriate to those most vulnerable to heat-related illness and death.

The UNA provides municipal services to UBC's five residential neighbourhoods, where over 15,000 people live. UBC neighbourhoods are a unique jurisdiction – a city within a city – with close connections to residents and UBC's academic campus.

Project description

The purpose of this project is to identify short-term and long-term measures to provide cool, accessible public spaces during extreme heat events and where they could be situated in the university residential neighbourhoods. These recommendations will inform the actions of the UNA's Operations and Facilities department, UNA programming, and UNA communications with residents.

The UNA will share study results with UBC Sustainability and Campus + Community Planning staff and will support the dissemination of study results to neighbourhood residents as applicable.

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Project scope

Project work will include

- An inventory of existing cooling assets and infrastructure in UNA neighbourhoods, including cooling centres and water fountains,
- Desk research (and, if appropriate, interviews with subject experts) to understand the different needs of vulnerable populations to ensure that solutions will meet their needs, and could include changes to built form, landscaping, infrastructure purchases, and other approaches. E.g., https://www.c40knowledgehub.org/s/article/How-to-adapt-your-city-to-extreme-heat?language=en_US,
- An online survey of UNA residents to learn more about resident experiences during heat events,
- A scan of 3 to 5 other jurisdictions/municipalities, primarily within Metro Vancouver, to gather information on best practices for equitable public space creation or retrofits for heat emergencies, and, if appropriate, up to 5 interviews with municipal staff to further investigate possibilities.

Deliverables

- A final report containing a summary of the work completed and recommendations for next steps
- A final report for the online public-facing [Scholars Project Library](#).
- A presentation to the UNA Board and management team

Time Commitment

- This project will take 250 hours to complete
- This project must be completed between May 1 to August 15, 2023
- The Scholar is to complete hours between 9 am and 5 pm, Monday to Friday, approximately 17 to 20 hours per week.

Required/preferred Skills and Background

- Excellent research and writing skills
- Demonstrated interest in sustainability
- Statistical analysis
- Community engagement experience
- Strong analytical skills
- Ability to work independently
- Comfortable interacting with strangers to conduct public/in person interviews, is an asset
- Background/interest in equity, climate displacement, climate justice, etc.
- Intermediate GIS knowledge, such as familiarity with creating a custom map using Google Maps, is an asset

Applications close **midnight Sunday January 29, 2023**

Apply here: [Click here to apply](#)

Contact Karen Taylor at sustainability.scholars@ubc.ca if you have questions

Useful Resources

We are holding a special **resume preparation workshop for prospective Scholars** on January 23, 2023. [Click here for details and to register.](#)

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>