

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 Develop a Climate Education Knowledge and Community Action Hub

Project Background & Overview:

The BC Sustainable Energy Association (BCSEA) is a registered charity with the mandate to help BC transition to a no to low carbon-based energy infrastructure. BCSEA is pursuing this mandate via education and policy advocacy. The following are BCSEA's current programs and initiatives:

- Supporting member organisations through articles, local events, informational resources, social media, newsletters, and events (egg annual Energy Connections conference).
- Represent ratepayers advocating for sustainable energy at the BC Utilities Commission (BCUC) – the regulatory body for BC's primary energy providers.
- Webinar series with guest speakers on energy related topics, such as innovation in technology, public policy, and case studies/site tours of demonstration sites.
- The **Cool It!** - Climate Leadership Training program for grades 4 to 7 and high school.
- Support BCSEA chapters that host events, engage the public with community projects and extend BCSEA's reach across BC

We have noticed that while there is a lot of information available in the public domain, it is in disparate locations and tends to be presented in a stand-alone format. This makes it difficult for an individual to piece the available information together to create a holistic view and make better informed decisions on reducing their carbon footprint. Our membership would like access to information that enables them to take larger impact action than just simply "turning off the lights when leaving a room". They would also like to know what large impact actions they can take in the context of apartment living. Our members are not finding this kind of information in the broader public space. It is likely the broader public is also not easily finding this information.

BCSEA would like to address this issue in two ways. First, create a “one stop shop” information hub/resource centre regarding sustainable energy that empowers people to make better informed decisions on how to reduce their carbon based energy consumption.

The second initiative is to leverage our existing Cool It Climate Leadership Training program and expand it to the neighbourhood level. Our current program works with students where they learn about climate change and actions individuals can take to reduce their contribution to climate change. The program includes the climate challenge, where students pledge to take specific actions and we measure the amount of carbon avoided as a result of those actions over the length of the program. Through our school programs we facilitate a carbon reduction of about 3,000 tonnes per year. By expanding to the neighbourhood level, we can achieve greater impact by scaling up from the individual level to a group level where larger reductions are possible.

Both initiatives, the information hub and the Cool It Climate Leadership for Neighbourhoods, have the same first step. We need to identify what information is already easily accessible to the public and where are the gaps. Based on these findings, recommendations can be made regarding the next steps.

Project description

We are seeking a Sustainability Scholar to contribute to the background research, ideation and development of a virtual climate education and action hub. Through this online portal/hub we aim to provide information and education on climate change, and the actions that we can take on the individual and community level to reduce our emissions at home and work. The emphasis will be on supporting actions greater than “turning off the lights when leaving a room.” The hub could include research, policy, actions, case studies, updates from other organisations working on climate change, environmental and sustainability initiatives, information about home energy upgrades and retrofits and the government incentives available, etc. It will be accessible by the public and would be particularly aimed at adults interested in making changes in their lives, and providing a one-stop-information source for where to begin. The focus will be on the energy aspects of climate change, sustainability and action.

Project scope

- Best practices research to identify potential content for and structure of an online information hub to help our audience understand how they can contribute to climate action through home retrofits and everyday sustainable behaviour. Research will include identification of potential content partners and shareable content (among other details) and identifying gaps in readily available information.
- Design and develop a survey to distribute to BCSEA members and other key stakeholders to understand their informational needs around sustainable energy, for example sustainable behaviour, home retrofits or what can you do when you live in an apartment.

SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

- Based on the research and survey results, provide recommendations for the design and structure of an information hub (including a list of resources and links) and options for addressing information gaps.
- Time permitting: develop a plan for developing, implementing and promoting the information hub (it is expected that BCSEA will provide more support for this task, depending on the Scholar's skill set and interest).
- Time permitting: develop content for the information hub

Deliverables

- A report summarizing the following:
 - Survey results
 - Information that is readily available to the broader public
 - Information that needs to be added and suggestions on how to obtain that information
 - Potential content partners
 - List of resources
 - Recommendations for next steps
- An executive summary for the online public-facing [Scholars Project Library](#).

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 their 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
- Familiarity with research methodologies and survey techniques
- Community engagement experience
- Strong analytical skills
- Ability to work independently
- Deadline oriented
- Familiarity with climate change and sustainability topics 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>