

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 case studies on climate change adaptation in the Global south that can be applied to the BC context

Project Background & Overview:

The BC Council for International Cooperation consists of a network of organizations, community groups, youth-led collectives, academic institutions and individuals working in international cooperation and solidarity to achieve sustainable development across the globe. At this time, BCCIC represents close to forty organisations and over a hundred individuals engaged in transnational partnerships or otherwise focusing on international education and public engagement in British Columbia.

Since 2021, BCCIC has increased its focus on climate justice throughout its programming. From 2022 onwards, the collective focus, as confirmed by a Members' Assembly, is the intersection of the climate crisis, peace and women's leadership, and food security.

BCCIC's strategic directions are to support their members and the general population in:

- Decolonising aid: Unlearning and relearning as a continuous, dynamic process
- Knowledge exchange and knowledge generation: Connecting voices, people to people, people with people
- Supporting members' capacity to achieve their respective missions.

This is in line with and promotion of the Istanbul Principles on development effectiveness, which encompass human rights, gender equity, governance, environmental sustainability, equitable partnership and solidarity; and the creation and sharing of knowledge towards a commitment of mutual understanding for positive, sustainable change.

The current project addresses, in particular, equitable partnership, solidarity, and knowledge generation towards environmental sustainability, in light of the global climate emergency.

Project description

It is in this context that BCCIC seeks to raise a sample of experiences, in the form of stories that illustrate the manner in which knowledge generated in the Global South can serve to increase British Columbians' knowledge and capacity for adaptation to the effects of global warming. The intent is to re-establish some degree of recognition that international partnerships are not necessarily led by the knowledge and

power of “our” Canadian organisations, and that Canadians also stand to gain from the experience of others, in particular from those who have lived through and continue to live with the effects of climate change.

Canadians have learned through the Covid 19 pandemic that at a time of global crisis, a global response is critical. Regardless, public perception or attitude has largely been one of “Canada First”, as documented in BCCIC’s research [British Columbians’ Perspectives and Engagement on Global Issues in Light of COVID-19: Research, Findings and Recommendation](#). Canada First, then if, only if, there were extra remaining resources, then forms of “aid” to more vulnerable countries might be contemplated, although, again from said research, in a context of skepticism, mistrust and misinformation.

By highlighting or illustrating manners in which British Columbians stand to gain from knowledge generated in the Global South, we hope to help shift the narrative of “aid” or of support to an “other”, towards an understanding, in practice, of the advantages of international cooperation seen as a **mutual and equitable relationship or partnership**.

As countries and communities of the Global South have long experienced the effects of climate change, the premise is that their experience may contribute learnings to share with British Columbians, for **climate change adaptation and on climate change resilience**.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), in its glossary of key terms¹, defines adaptation as “Human-driven adjustments in ecological, social or economic systems or policy processes, in response to actual or expected climate stimuli and their effects or impacts” and climate change resilience as “The ability of a social or ecological system to absorb disturbances while retaining the same basic structure and ways of functioning, the capacity for self-organization and the capacity to adapt to stress and change.”

Project scope

General scope: identification of two climate change adaptation experiences (e.g., extreme flooding, wildfires, droughts, etc.) in the Global South that may provide grounds for shared knowledge and learnings with and for BC actors. The analysis of these, and the questions they raise will be eventually be shaped into communications to be used in the future.

The Scholar will undertake the following:

1. Literature review on lessons from the Global South, and how they have been conveyed and received, including:
 - Documented applied cases, if available, related to climate change and in particular adaptation
 - Proposed or existing strategies stemming from the Global South

This may lead to some background research on:

¹ "Glossary of Key Terms." *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*, 1 Jan. 2022, [www4.unfccc.int/sites/NAPC/Pages/glossary.aspx#:~:text=Adaptation%20Human%2Ddriven%20adjustments%20in,impacts%20\(LEG%2C%202011\)](http://www4.unfccc.int/sites/NAPC/Pages/glossary.aspx#:~:text=Adaptation%20Human%2Ddriven%20adjustments%20in,impacts%20(LEG%2C%202011)). Accessed 1 Dec. 2022.

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- Transnational and translocal cooperation, networks or movements that advocate for strategies and practices of the Global South
 - Definitions and understanding of international knowledge exchange and generation
2. Refinement of the research question with the mentor
 - The broad question at start is: What can we learn from experiences in climate change adaptation even when the context varies widely?
 3. Identification of questions to pose in a survey to BCCIC members, in coordination with the BCCIC team, to inquire about their international partners' experiences in adaptation, where there may be learnings of interest to BCCIC members and to a more general public preoccupied with the effects of climate change in BC. If necessary BCCIC staff may be available to carry out some of the inquiry
 4. Based on the members' survey and research, identify one to two relevant scenarios and produce case studies analysing the criteria, conditions, determinants that shaped the success (or challenges) of the experience in the global south and considerations of how these have been or could be of use to British Columbians in light of the actual or potential climate-induced (human-induced) events affecting BC populations.
 5. Prepare a five to ten-page report on the case studies and literature review.
 6. Produce an internal set of learnings and recommendations (conclusions, perceptions)

Deliverables

- A final report containing a summary of the work completed, including the lit review
- Bullet list (1-2 pages) of learnings and recommendations (conclusions, perceptions), including questions raised that BCCIC staff and members might or should pursue or reflect upon.
- A final report 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 hours between 9 am and 5 pm, Monday to Friday, approximately 17 to 20 hours per week.
- Staff meetings are held every Monday morning online. In general, Fridays are no-meeting days. The BCCIC team works remotely, with staff communicating during the day by keeping Slack open during their work hours.

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
- Ability to work independently
- Project management and organizational skills
- Comfortable interacting with strangers to conduct public/in person surveys
- Familiarity with appreciative inquiry, an asset
- Familiarity with feminist approaches and methodologies, an asset
- Interest in or familiarity with climate change adaptation, an asset
- Familiarity with climate adaptation in the global south context, an asset

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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>