

## 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.**

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### > This is a Fraser Estuary Research Collaborative Project <

The [Fraser Estuary Research Collaborative](#) (FERC) is focussed on advancing efforts to protect the Fraser River estuary in collaboration with key NGO and Indigenous partners. If you are interested in producing new knowledge and supporting Fraser estuary protection through scientific, technical, governance and policy innovations, the following project might be for you. Read on for more details.

### **Project title: Research to inform conservation policies and strategies to retain traditional terrestrial foodlands in the face of climate change and commercial development**

#### **Project Background & Overview:**

The Centre for Sustainable Food Systems at UBC Farm is a research centre and local-to-global food hub working towards a more sustainable, food-secure future. Our work centres sustainable, climate-friendly practices on farmland and foodlands, including traditional Indigenous foodlands with an aim to food sovereignty for Indigenous communities.

Indigenous food-related knowledge, values and wisdom have been built up over thousands of years. The Fraser River Estuary has served as traditional foodlands both terrestrial and aquatic for generations of Indigenous communities, and is increasingly under threat from climate change along the waterways and watersheds that feed into the estuary region.

Foodlands are at risk of degrading or disappearing entirely unless traditional Indigenous knowledge on foods, land care and stewardship, harvesting practices, etc. can continue to be shared and passed along the generations of Indigenous community members.

Drawing on the global food sovereignty movement as an innovative approach to achieving long term food security, the project will aim to advance Indigenous food sovereignty as a specific policy approach to addressing the underlying issues impacting Indigenous peoples and their ability to respond to their own needs for healthy, culturally adapted Indigenous foods.

Community mobilization and the maintenance of cultural harvesting strategies and practices provide a basis for forming and influencing "policy driven by practice".<sup>1</sup>

Such policy can then also form the basis of a response to climate change to protect, restore and mitigate damage to the foodlands areas.

## **Project description**

Drawing on key principles of Indigenous Food Sovereignty, the project aims to identify traditional terrestrial foodlands and undertake research to inform potential conservation strategies to retain them.

In consultation with Musqueam content experts such as Patricia Isaak and Yeganeh Asadian, and community leaders such as Leona Sparrow, as well as building on the work of the [2022 Sustainability Scholar Katharine Baldwin](#), this project will address issues in the following areas:

- Indigenous food sovereignty: Recognize and support Indigenous self-reliance, self-determination and food sovereignty; access to safe, affordable, healthy, culturally appropriate and reliable food sources and foodlands.
- Indigenous traditional cultural practices: Recognize and support Indigenous cultural practices in relation to foodlands care and stewardship, as well as food harvesting, preservation and preparation.
- Environmental protection: Help protect and restore estuary shoreline ecosystems in the face of climate-change related events such as on-shore flooding, sea-level rise and ocean acidification, as well as commercial activity.

## **Project scope**

Building on the relationship with the Musqueam community, the Scholar will engage with Musqueam knowledge-keepers to identify traditional terrestrial foods that are located in, and supported by the estuary, both historically and at present. They will also listen and learn about traditional land care and stewardship practices, then document these practices in a form that is acceptable and beneficial to Indigenous communities. Through the research, they will identify and document risks posed to the foodlands by climate change, then work with the content experts to draft Indigenous-informed recommendations and draft policy on how these risks can be mitigated.

The Scholar will be building on the work completed in 2022, including finalizing a research agreement with Musqueam. A significant literature review has been completed so the Scholar

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<sup>1</sup> Indigenous Food Systems - <https://www.indigenousfoodsystems.org/food-sovereignty>

will be encouraged to refer to the recommended reading materials as background, and re-establish connection with key contacts identified in the final report.

Time permitting: As time permits, the Scholar will seek funding sources to provide honoraria in order to work with Musqueam knowledge-keepers for future research.

## **Deliverables**

- A final report containing a summary of the work completed
- A final report for the online public-facing [Scholars Project Library](#).
- Recommendations on best practices and policy implementation based on Indigenous traditional knowledge to conserve and protect traditional terrestrial foodlands and stewardship practices in the Estuary in the face of climate change

## **Time Commitment**

- This project will take 260 hours to complete: 250 hours to be allocated to the research, and 10 hours to be allocated to participating in meetings and collaboration opportunities with the rest of the FERC cohort
- 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.
- The Scholar must live in the lower mainland in order to be available to attend FERC meetings and events in person.
- Some weekend or evening work may be required to attend meetings with Musqueam and Indigenous communities.

## **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
- Ability to work independently
- Deadline oriented
- Project management and organizational skills
- Experience in Indigenous engagement, an asset
- Comfortable interacting with strangers to conduct public/in person surveys
- Familiarity preparing feasibility studies
- Willingness to listen to, learn from and be guided by Indigenous knowledge-keepers is essential
- Must demonstrate understanding and openness to the value of both Western and traditional ways of knowing.

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## **Additional requirements:**

The Scholar will need to provide their own PPE/field gear for field work/site visits, including sturdy boots with ankle support and rain gear, and must have the ability to walk/hike on uneven terrain and up steep slopes.

The Scholar may need to travel to Musqueam village site and estuary areas not easily accessed by public transit therefore access to a vehicle or car share for the field work would be an asset. If the Scholar uses their own vehicle/car share reasonable mileage costs for the field work will be reimbursed through the project mentor.

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

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

Contact Karen Taylor at [sustainability.scholars@ubc.ca](mailto: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>