

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: Developing and prototyping an evaluation framework to ensure equity and justice in climate action at the City of Vancouver

Project Background & Overview:

The City of Vancouver has been implementing climate and environmental plans for decades, but the equity impacts are largely unknown. Climate action is led by several departments and teams at the City, alongside many partners in community. Through the City's [Equity Framework](#), [UNDRIP Strategy](#), and Climate Justice Charter (forthcoming), the City has committed to advancing equity through its policies and practices. While sustainability work has been happening for a long time, integrating equity, justice, reconciliation and decolonization into climate work is relatively new for the City.

The consistent and intentional evaluation of equity-related impacts of climate mitigation and adaptation actions is necessary for several reasons:

- (1) to ensure that climate action is truly equitable;
- (2) to address potential gaps or unintentional negative consequences in planning, policy making, engagement, programs, and service delivery activities;
- (3) as an intervention to facilitate ongoing systems change towards a more equitable and decolonized city;
- (4) to hold the City accountable for its commitments to climate justice to a variety of internal and external users/stakeholders;
- (5) to facilitate reflection and learning about the integration of equity and justice goals into climate action in order to improve impacts and outcomes over time.

These evaluation-related needs will require a different kind of evaluation process, framework, and approach than is typical for the City in our current approach to measure impacts from climate action.

Evaluating equity and justice in climate action is an implementation item in the Climate Justice Charter (CJC), and City staff are in the early phases of exploring approaches to this work. The City's climate plans, such as the [Climate Emergency Action Plan](#) (CEAP), include indicators that measure progress towards goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. While metrics are important, additional methods are required in order to ensure that the evaluation process is rooted in justice and that the findings are used to improve conditions for current and future generations and Vancouver's more-than-human residents. The evaluation process must consider the complex intersections of climate change, equity, justice,

reconciliation and decolonization. The work should draw from various worldviews (e.g., the Indigenous lens of two-eyed seeing), perspectives, and evaluation methods (e.g., developmental evaluation, utilization-focused evaluation). Evaluation findings will be used by City staff to adjust policies, practices, and patterns to be more equitable and just. This approach is a departure from the City of Vancouver's current process, and City staff are open to adopting new-to-us methodologies.

Project description

This project will support the City of Vancouver in creating a new evaluation process to evaluate equity in climate action. The Scholar will research potential evaluation frameworks and methodologies best suited to integrating equity, justice, reconciliation, and decolonization considerations into climate action planning and implementation. They will then design and test an evaluation framework specific for our purpose to measure equity in climate action at the City of Vancouver. This collaborative project will involve working with a variety of different people and teams; it will rely on co-creation and collective research methodologies.

The project will focus on one of two distinct streams of work (the decision as to which one will be based on the Scholar's interests and skills):

- 1) **A Framework to Evaluate the Implementation of the Climate Justice Charter (CJC)**
The Climate Justice Charter provides guidance on how City staff can integrate equity and justice into their work. To ensure that the CJC is being used effectively, a framework will be used to evaluate how directions from the CJC show up in climate work implemented by City staff, and their understanding of the CJC. It will also consider if and how the framework can measure implementation of the CJC with and by community-based organizations.
- 2) **A Framework to Evaluate Equity and Justice in the Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP)**
The Climate Emergency Action Plan is a climate change mitigation strategy, which staff have been implementing since 2020. This framework will be used to evaluate how the CEAP is contributing to equity, justice, reconciliation and decolonization, using the City's Equity Framework, UNDRIP Strategy, and Climate Justice Charter as lenses. The evaluation can focus on a specific component of the plan (e.g., specific CEAP actions) or the CEAP as a whole.

The "CJC framework" and the "CEAP framework" outlined above should draw from methodologies and approaches from the fields of social innovation, participatory action and community-engaged research, systemic design, transformative adult learning, or similar fields. The successful applicant will test their evaluation framework prototypes with community or City staff, revise it based on feedback, and document lessons learned. Prototyping is a quick, iterative process that enables learning and improvement.

The findings from this project will inform the City's work to develop a framework to evaluate equity in climate action. The City's evaluation framework will be designed as a tool to facilitate systems change, which is complex and requires multiple perspectives and approaches. Prototyping, reflecting, and adapting are required in order to find potential interventions and solutions. This project will be part of that iterative process. Equity evaluation work will be ongoing as we change our practices, and this project will support that shift.

SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Project scope

- Perform a literature and best practice review of other government agencies, non-profits, or other groups to build on existing work done by the City of Vancouver and research potential evaluation frameworks and methodologies to integrate equity, justice, reconciliation, and decolonization considerations into climate action planning and implementation
- Create a summary of the findings to support capacity building (this can be an infographic or visual representation)
- Based on findings from the literature and best practice review, in addition to the scholar's interest, develop one framework as outlined below to evaluate equity in climate action. The framework can draw from various existing methodologies or practices, or be completely new.
 - CJC framework: evaluate the City of Vancouver's operations and how the Climate Justice Charter is being implemented
 - CEAP framework: evaluate Climate Emergency Action Plan actions with an equity lens (based on the Equity Framework, UNDRIP Strategy, and Climate Justice Charter)
 - *Note that this project is adaptable and emergent; depending on the research, there may be time to develop and/or test two or both frameworks.*
- Prototype the framework with intended users (e.g., City staff, a specific community group, or a partner that works with the City of Vancouver); document and report on the findings
- Present the framework and research findings to Sustainability staff

Deliverables

- An evaluation framework and an accompanying summary (can be a visual or infographic piece, depending on time and skillset)
- A final report for the online public-facing [Scholars Project Library](#) containing a summary of the work completed, including:
 - Key research findings
 - Proposed evaluation framework for measuring equity in climate action at the City of Vancouver
 - Recommendations for the City of Vancouver
- A final presentation for City staff and key stakeholders

Time Commitment

- This project will take **300** 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.

SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Required/preferred Skills and Background

- ☒ Excellent research and writing skills
- ☒ Demonstrated experience studying/working/living at the intersections of sustainability, climate, equity, justice, reconciliation and decolonization
- ☒ Community engagement experience
- ☒ Ability to work independently
- ☒ Demonstrated experience in social science research methodologies, as they relate to evaluation or measurement or participatory/community-engaged action and applied research
- ☒ Able to interact with people with a diversity of lived experiences; well-versed in cultural empathy and safety
- ☒ Demonstrated knowledge of and/or willingness to learn about anti-racism and anti-oppression
- ☒ Demonstrated understanding of how positionality and intersectional identities shape approaches to policy, planning, and engagement

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>