

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: Exploring Financing Models to Decarbonize Commercial Fleets in Vancouver

Project Background & Overview:

Commercial fleets represent a significant portion of Vancouver's transportation emissions (39% of our total greenhouse gases) and small fleet-owners are a significant user group within Vancouver's community of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Many businesses are struggling to access zero emission vehicles (ZEVs) because of supply chain issues, internal capacity gaps, and high capital costs (despite long-term savings that will accrue over the lifetime of the vehicle). These high upfront costs are a particular problem and innovative financing and funding mechanisms, such as energy savings contracts, bulk-purchasing, and vehicle sharing, have the potential to address these barriers. Based on this context, building capacity amongst SMEs to access ZEVs will be a key component of delivering on Vancouver's emissions reductions commitments in transportation and generating greater resilience in Vancouver's economy.

Project description

Ensuring that businesses can effectively transition to a net-zero economy is the central purpose of the [Vancouver Economic Commission \(VEC\)'s Zero Emissions Economic Transition Action Plan \(ZEETAP\)](#), which supports the City's [Climate Emergency Action Plan](#). Commercial vehicles are a significant component of Vancouver's transportation emissions (39% of all GHGs). This project will study innovative financing or purchasing decarbonized commercial vehicles for fleets. It will look at best practices from other jurisdictions as well as engage with local stakeholders to understand what programs work elsewhere, and which may be best suited to the Vancouver context.

Study outcomes will inform future VEC programming and policy recommendations, including a forthcoming (anticipated 2023-24) VEC program to decarbonize goods movement in Vancouver.

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Project scope

This project will have three components, using a mixture of desktop research, 1-on-1 interviews (either remotely or via email), and potentially a small amount of facilitated engagement (e.g., running a focus group).

The first component will involve desktop research on innovative fleet decarbonization financing and access initiatives in other jurisdictions, developing outputs such as:

1. High-level brief comparing 3-5 relevant jurisdictions with comparable zero emissions vehicle (ZEV) mandates as BC, comparing factors such as vehicle types the mandate applies to, implementation milestones, and any supportive programs that are tied to the mandate (e.g., incentives, coaching, etc.).
2. 2-3 case studies from identified jurisdictions of relevant supportive programs, either run by the government or private sector, that support businesses in purchasing ZEVs.
3. Comparative table which identifies any relevant private sector organizations, especially financial institutions, from identified jurisdictions, which are part of these programs (or, through other research, are identified as otherwise significant)

The second component will involve limited engagement with local stakeholders in Vancouver and some desktop research to better understand specific needs relevant to our ecosystem, developing outputs such as:

1. Summary of relevant research from government, think tanks, or industry associations related to ZEV business cases for commercial fleet owners and synthesising commonly identified problems and needs.
2. Summary of existing fleet owner support programs in BC for commercial fleet owners
3. Interview 2-3 fleet owners to further understand any specific financing challenges they have, particularly in light of existing incentives and other supports

The third component will be to develop recommendations for VEC and other, relevant organizations (e.g., industry associations) to support the development of similar programs, including outputs such as:

1. Identification of gaps or areas for growth in existing BC programs compared to other jurisdictions
2. Conceptual breakdown of which programs may have greater applicability to Vancouver/BC needs based on prior synthesis of research
3. Recommendations to VEC (and others) for future research and program design options

Deliverables

- A final report containing a summary of the work completed
- 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.

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Required/preferred Skills and Background

- Excellent research and writing skills
- Demonstrated interest in sustainability, and specifically sustainable transportation
- Transportation background (e.g., engineering, planning), with a strong understanding of technical aspects of vehicles
- Experience with financial modelling and analysis
- Familiarity with research methodologies and survey techniques
- Excellent public speaking and presentation skills
- Familiarity conducting focus group research
- Strong analytical skills
- Ability to work independently
- Deadline oriented
- Project management and organizational skills
- Strong technical and drafting skills
- Comfortable interacting with strangers to conduct public/in person surveys

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>