

## 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: Mapping the network of community relationships crucial to extreme heat planning in Vancouver

### Project Background & Overview:

Emergencies and disasters, while devastating, can also catalyze collaboration and action in an immediate term and contribute to resilience and transformative future planning.

The [Spaces to Thrive: Vancouver Social Infrastructure Strategy](#) clearly articulates the value of social infrastructure in fostering thriving, sustainable, equitable, and resilient communities. One finding from this strategy is that individual social infrastructure spaces (such as neighbourhood houses) and programs are often part of an ecosystem of services, spaces, and people – acting as a social safety net for equity-denied communities. These ecosystems exist in and across neighbourhoods and within Social Infrastructure Network areas<sup>1</sup> in Vancouver, and have been identified as places for resilience and safety planning within the context of equity, reconciliation and decolonization.

Further, the Resilient Vancouver Strategy prioritizes the concept of neighbourhood resilience – hyper-local networks of people and organizations who enable community to thrive day-to-day, and ultimately enable equitable and accessible response and recovery during emergencies and disasters (including climate-related ones like extreme heat).

This project focuses on Neighbourhood Houses, as a distinct type of place-based social infrastructure that functions to bring people together to build and strengthen their communities, and is reflective and responsive to the needs of the community.<sup>2</sup>

Over the past two summers, Neighbourhood Houses have played a crucial role in supporting equity-denied and vulnerable populations during extreme heat events. City Staff worked with Neighbourhood Houses<sup>3</sup> in developing unique, capacity-based plans for extreme heat in 2022, and coordinated with

---

<sup>1</sup> For more information on Social Infrastructure Network areas see: Spaces to Thrive: <https://council.vancouver.ca/20211208/documents/cfsc1.pdf> (pdf p.26)

<sup>2</sup> Association of Neighbourhood Houses of BC, <https://anhbc.org/about-us/>. Accessed on December 7, 2022.

<sup>3</sup> Social Policy and Projects department at the City of Vancouver was established in 1966 and the relationship with Neighbourhood Houses dates back to this time.

partners between June and October using a new and innovative community-led approach to emergency management. During this time, partners shared information about their unique approaches to community response and plans, including innovative partnerships with local businesses, other non-profits, grassroots organizations and mutual aid networks. Anecdotal discussion with Neighbourhood Houses has indicated that organizations created new relationships and strengthened existing relationships with other organizations within their neighbourhood through the heat planning process.

Network mapping, also known as social network analysis<sup>4</sup> is becoming an increasingly common methodology for qualitatively evaluating the number, strength, and diversity of relationships. There are many methodologies and approaches to map and identify rich networks and collaborative partnerships that improve access to services, equity, and ultimately increase resilience during shocks. This project will seek to deepen our understanding in two neighbourhoods to understand the breadth and depth of relationships and networks that coordinate actions across the social sector – and provide recommendations on how networks can be leveraged to deepen collaborative and equitable neighbourhood-scale planning.

## **Project description**

The City is seeking a scholar to work with two Neighbourhood Houses in two neighbourhoods in Vancouver (to be identified by City staff prior to the start of the project<sup>5</sup>) and conduct primary research that uncovers ways in which networks and relationships between Neighbourhood Houses, service providers, and businesses grew, changed, and strengthened as a result of extreme heat planning and response in 2022. Explored through an equity lens based on the City's recently adopted [Equity Framework](#), this work will reference the dynamics of these relationships through the interplay between different aspects of identity including race, religion, socio-economic status, immigration status, gender orientation and sexuality.

This project directly responds to actions outlined in the Spaces to Thrive strategy to map service areas and networks around the City – building on mapping work already conducted in the Downtown Eastside.

Moreover, by identifying and mapping changes in networks and relationships, this project will increase the understanding of both staff within the City, and external partners, of the ways coordinated planning can increase collaboration, mutual support, and trust within community – all of which are essential to resilience.

## **Project scope**

This project requires a scholar to interview key staff and volunteers at two Neighbourhood Houses in Vancouver to identify pre-extreme heat planning networks, as well as changes, growth, and adaptation of networks during the course of extreme heat planning (approximately 10 interviews). The scholar will then follow up with a survey to key partners highlighted during interviews to collect additional perspectives on strengthened connections and relationships across organizations and businesses.

---

<sup>4</sup> Tamarack Institute, Network Mapping at a Glance, 2011.

<https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/hubfs/Resources/Tools/Network%20Mapping%20at%20a%20Glance.pdf?hsLang=en>

<sup>5</sup> Prior to the start date of this project, City staff from Social Policy and Projects and the Office of the Chief Safety Officer will consult the Neighbourhood House sector to identify two Neighbourhood Houses for this project.

# SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

The scholar will then produce data collected through the above process to generate two network maps that will complement ongoing implementation of the Spaces to Thrive strategy. This data and mapping may also be used within local area planning processes to identify what spaces and relationships may need to be carefully protected from displacement in redevelopment processes.

Finally, the scholar make recommendations for building and strengthening networks between service providers and other neighbourhood-based groups, and recommendations for place-based relationships required for community-led emergency response.

## Deliverables

- A final report containing a summary of the work completed
- Interview, workshop, and survey response data on pre- and post-extreme heat planning networks of 2 Neighbourhood Houses
- 2 maps illustrating networks of 2 Neighbourhood Houses
- 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.

## 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
- Ability to work independently
- Deadline oriented
- Project management and organizational skills
- GIS training or experience.
- Design and layout skills
- We welcome all candidates to apply for this position. We especially encourage applicants who have strong knowledge of Indigenous ways of knowing and/or Indigenous cultural experience; or who have strong knowledge of Black history and politics in Canada and/or lived experience as a member of the Black community

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>