

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 evaluate and measure the long-term impact of a nature-based youth program

Project Background & Overview:

NatureKids BC is an exciting nature discovery and environmental action program that helps children aged 5-12, with their families, get outdoors to explore, play, learn about and take action for nature. Through an award-winning network of volunteer-led Intergenerational Nature Clubs that extend across British Columbia, we enable young people and their families to:

- Play in and Explore nature on outdoor Explorer Day Adventures, supported by local nature leaders and experts, known as Nature Mentors
- Learn about BC's diverse native wildlife, plants, and ecosystem stewardship, and connect with other nature-lovers, through interaction with Nature Mentors & NatureWILD Magazine, and,

Take action for nature, being part of the solution, with 25+ Stewardship Projects, Citizen Science activities, and our Passport to Nature Programs.

We want to better understand the impact of the NatureKids BC program nature experiences on the following (and other) key life skills and decisions made by participant children and family alumni:

- academic & career choices
- relationship to nature through different life stages and events
- decision-making generally
- family health and internal relationships

Our theory of change:

If we engage children (with their families) in early experiences with BC flora and fauna, then we will create a community of healthy, lifelong stewards of BC ecosystems with eco-literate behaviors, because children felt nature's healing connection and grow with a desire to protect it.

Project description

The purpose of this project is to determine to what degree NatureKids BC is activating its belief that enabling children to access nature-based activities in the company of passionate role models, with a sustained frequency will embed a love of nature and a long-term commitment to protect it.

There is exhaustive evidence within the child and nature movement to refer to as a backdrop to provide NatureKids BC with options on evaluation tools. Early childhood development indicators, outdoor play impact measures, family relationship measures, etc. Ultimately, we are curious about:

- Do our participants develop a love of nature?
- In what ways do they then seek to protect nature as they grow?

To that end, we would like to approach the review & design of impact evaluation from two angles:

- **Short term** – improving the tools that NatureKids BC currently uses to measure immediate connections to nature pre/post program event (vs. program satisfaction)
- **Long term** – life impact of the experience on the individual participant and evidence of achievement of organizational theory of change, with relationships to the broader community impact where possible.

There is a potential longer-term outcome from this project that sets the stage for an established alumni engagement program where youth who have grown out of the program return in post secondary or with their young families to participate and contribute.

Project scope

- background research on children/nature benefits/experiences (to give the Scholar context)
- scan/literature review of best practices in longitudinal/program impact evaluation
- review and summary of current evaluation practices & identification of gaps and opportunities
- development of a methodology/framework
- development and deployment/testing of a research instrument of some kind (survey/interviews) OR if time is tight, development of an action plan/road map and recommendations

Deliverables

- A final report containing a summary of the work completed
 - Identification of new and more valuable program measures of impact
 - Frameworks for collecting data to inform longitudinal data collection
 - Implementation planning suggestions for organization
- A final report for the online public-facing Scholars Project Library.

SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Time Commitment

- This project will take 250 hours to complete
- This project must be completed between May 1 to August 15, 2023
- The Scholars is to complete their 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
- Familiarity conducting focus group research
- Strong analytical skills
- Ability to work independently
- Deadline oriented
- Project management and organizational skills
- Comfortable interacting with strangers to conduct public/in person surveys
- Design and layout skills, an asset

About NatureKids BC

NatureKids BC is an exciting nature discovery and environmental action program that helps children aged 5-12, with their families, get outdoors to explore, play, learn about and take action for nature. Through an award-winning network of volunteer-led Intergenerational Nature Clubs that extend across British Columbia, we enable young people and their families to:

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- Take action for nature, being part of the solution, with 25+ Stewardship Projects, Citizen Science activities, and our Passport to Nature Programs.

We are building a healthy and sustainable future for our world with the vision to engage every BC child and their family in the diversity, complexity, and wonder of the natural world.

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>