

Fall 2023 Sustainability Scholars Program Internship Opportunity

The UBC Sustainability Hub is pleased to offer current UBC graduate students the opportunity to work on funded sustainability internship projects. As a Sustainability Scholar, you work under the broad guidance of a mentor at one of our partner organizations. Through your project work you are immersed in real world learning where you apply your research skills and contribute to advancing the sustainability goals of your mentor's organization.

The program provides a unique professional and educational experience for UBC graduate level students. It is open to currently registered Masters (including JD) and PhD students from all academic disciplines.

- 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 September 17, 2023.

Exploring university-city partnership models to inform climate policy in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside (DTES)

Project Description

The UBC Learning Exchange, a community-university hub and place-based initiative located in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside (DTES), in partnership with the UBC Sustainability Hub, have recently launched a 3-year collaborative sustainability project entitled **CLEAR (CLimate Equity, Activation and Resilience)**. This exciting project aims to make climate research accessible to the DTES community through knowledge translation and mobilization, and work with a number of sustainability partners to train and support peer advocates with lived experience in the DTES to speak to how climate change affects their community. The long-term vision is to use the resources produced to learn about promising practices and exemplary models for our community-based project in efforts to bring about meaningful policy change to alleviate the effects of climate change for the DTES and its residents.

We are seeking an engaged student to support the first year of the CLEAR project by completing research that will inform the subsequent two years of project development by providing an account of evidence-based actions and innovative programs underway in major Canadian and select other university-city partnerships on climate action.

The student will examine existing literature to compare and contrast models of partnership between post-secondary institutions and cities that engage the public around climate change,

with a focus on efforts that seek to build the capacity of disproportionately impacted residents and of local organizations to advocate for climate justice policy reform and action.

As studies have shown, the heat dome events of 2021 in Vancouver are just one example of how climate change disproportionately affects marginalized communities like the DTES.¹ Drawing on key approaches and learnings from similar city-university partnerships, we will apply the scholar's work to understand how other city-university partnerships have addressed climate justice for marginalized populations, and adapt our project accordingly to ensure success and enact meaningful change in how all levels of government address the unique needs of the DTES in adapting to the impacts of climate change.

Project scope

1. Comprehensive literature review of other university-city partnerships on climate change involving inner city residents/marginalized communities and surface key learnings, recommendations, and identify which projects reached their intended outcomes, which did not and why. The hope is the review will greatly inform potential innovations, approaches and exemplary models that lend themselves within our context. Identifying experiences where these partnerships successfully turned project findings specifically into climate policy through advocacy work will be a key focus. Examples to investigate include firstly, major Canadian city-university partnerships (many of these partnerships are at an early stage of development), such as:
 - Montreal, e.g. the Concordia [UNIVER/CITÉ 2030 initiative](#) and the [Montreal Climate Partnership](#)
 - Toronto, e.g. York University's project on [Climate Solution Parks](#); University of Toronto's work with the City on Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) [Canadian Mental Health, Equity and Climate Change Initiative](#) and the School of Cities [Symposium on Climate Justice & Cities May 2023](#)
 - Another city of particular interest is Portland's experience with the Portland Clean Energy Community Benefits Fund. The Scholar will examine the role of Portland universities, if any, in this policy innovation.
 - These examples are starting points for the student to begin their research.

¹ <https://climateinstitute.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/The-case-for-adapting-to-extreme-heat-costs-of-the-BC-heat-wave.pdf>; Henderson, Sarah B., et al. "Analysis of community deaths during the catastrophic 2021 heat dome: Early evidence to inform the public health response during subsequent events in greater Vancouver, Canada." *Environmental Epidemiology* 6.1 (2022).; Planning for Extreme Heat and Air Quality Mitigation in Vancouver, Motion to City Council, <https://council.vancouver.ca/20210720/documents/b5.pdf>; Detailed Response from City in 2022 <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/2022-03-10-council-memo-planning-for-extreme-heat.pdf>

2. Broad academic literature review. There is a large amount of scholarly literature on city-university partnerships for sustainability.² For the purpose of this project we require the Scholar to instead focus on those partnerships that centre directly on climate, inner city populations and climate justice. There may not be as much academic literature on these partnerships, however there is a large amount of grey literature. Starting points to investigate include: The University Climate Change Coalition UC3; the Urban Sustainability Directors Network, C40, and Think Tank programs such as WRI's [City Fix](#).
3. In collaboration with the wider project team and with support from the LE's [Making Research Accessible Initiative](#) the Scholar will also:
 - a. develop accompanying resource(s) (e.g., an infographic) that summarize key findings in community-friendly ways to support community leaders who are engaging in climate advocacy
 - b. prepare a set of recommendations on promising practices to engage inner-city residents and/or marginalized populations in climate action and policy impact, and
 - c. deliver an end of project presentation to CLEAR stakeholders that summarizes key points from the work.

Deliverables

- A final report containing a summary of the work completed
- Complementary material(s) with a focus on knowledge translation, mobilization and accessibility of the findings that may be included in the [DTES Research Access Portal](#)
- A final report for the online public-facing [Scholars Project Library](#)
- A presentation to CLEAR project stakeholders that summarizes key findings, outcomes and recommendations for climate action engagement

Time Commitment

- This project will take 250 hours to complete
- This project must be completed between October 16, 2023 and March 15, 2024
- The Scholar is to complete hours between 9 am and 5 pm, Monday to Friday, approximately 10 to 12 hours per week.

Required/preferred Skills and Background

² e.g., [Building transformative city-university sustainability partnerships: the Audacious Partnerships Process](#); [Real-Time Evaluation of City–University Partnerships for Sustainability and Resilience](#)

SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

- ☒ Excellent research and writing skills
- ☒ Demonstrated interest in sustainability
- ☒ Experience conducting stakeholder engagement events, including facilitation skills, is an asset
- ☒ Excellent public speaking and presentation skills
- ☒ Community engagement experience
- ☒ Strong analytical skills
- ☒ Ability to work independently
- ☒ Deadline oriented
- ☒ Project management and organizational skills
- ☒ Preferred - Design and layout skills
- ☒ Preferred – Experience working with Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside or a similar community
- ☒ Preferred – Understanding of or familiarity with impacts of climate change on equity-denied populations
- ☒ **NOTE: The successful candidate for this position must be located in the Lower Mainland and able to attend meetings at the Learning Exchange in the DTES.**

Applications close **midnight Sunday September 17, 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>