

Summer 2024 Sustainability Scholars Program Internship Opportunity

The UBC Sustainability Hub is pleased to offer current UBC graduate students the opportunity to work on sustainability internship projects. Successful candidates work under the guidance of a mentor from the partner organization, and are immersed in real world learning where they can apply their research skills and contribute to advancing sustainability across the region. These opportunities are paid. The pay rate for the summer 2024 program is \$27.50/hour or \$6,875 for a 250-hour project.

- 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 28, 2024.

Project title: Research to Inform a Workforce Attraction Strategy for Residential Retrofit Excellence

Project Background & Overview:

The Home Performance Stakeholder Council (HPSC) is a not-for-profit society that supports the growth of the home performance industry in BC. Home performance is the science and practice of building and improving homes based on a house-as-a-system approach.

Recently, industry and the HPSC leadership team have determined a gap in support for the residential retrofit industry in BC that is slowing the rate of energy efficient upgrades being performed in the province: a lack of available labour. Residential retrofit contractors need more skilled labourers now, and help preparing the future workforce of their businesses as the demand for retrofits increases and the existing workforce retires. Specifically, an increased supply of contractors trained in a house-as-a-system approach is needed across BC to meet demand for the almost 500,000 homes that will need to be retrofitted between now and 2032 ([Deep emissions reduction in the existing building stock, Pembina, 2017](#)).

A shortage of labour is not unique to just the residential retrofit industry, but the sector faces unique obstacles that pose a greater challenge than other areas of the economy. Promoting residential retrofits is also particularly challenging as the pay and hours are often less enticing than the commercial and/or new construction sectors. Additionally, some properly trained residential retrofit employees require years of well-supervised instruction before they can master their craft – a commitment not paralleled in some other construction careers.

The HPSC is the only organization known to be specifically addressing the workforce needs of the residential retrofit industry. The construction industry itself receives a lot of attention and support, especially for new construction, but many HPSC stakeholders express a lack of resources for the residential industry. With this sector being so critical to greenhouse gas (GHG) emission targets, this Project is an important first step in supporting workforce development.

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Once this Sustainability Scholars project is completed, the HPSC will begin actioning the recommended next steps, pursuing funding as needed in 2024 to begin the work in earnest. The Project will serve as the cornerstone of the HPSC's workforce development plans for the next several years and beyond.

Project description

The purpose of this project is to support the development of a workforce attraction strategy. The Project will provide the HPSC with the research and recommendations required to determine next steps for a full workforce development strategy. The strategy will include both short- and long-term insights to ensure that both the immediate needs of industry are supported, while also future-proofing the workforce.

Project scope

1. Conduct research to understand the appropriate target demographics based on the short- and long-term goals of attracting skilled workers and youth, respectively. Depending on how much information is available, the program deadlines, and the interests of the Scholar the research may be modified to focus on either skilled workers (preferred) or the youth demographic.
2. Conduct a landscape scan of workforce development for the residential retrofit industry. This may include:
 - Review existing reports identifying the short- and long-term gaps in the residential retrofit workforce.
 - Review existing policies or initiatives in BC and Canada to support workforce development and examine how they might support, hinder, or overlook the retrofit industry.
 - Conduct a literature review of approximately 3-5 global entities that have successfully supported workforce development.
 - Identify approximately 5 key stakeholders in workforce development and/or the retrofit industry in BC or Canada and conduct thirty-minute interviews.
3. Develop a summary of recommended next steps for the HPSC towards a full workforce development strategy based on the research conducted.

Deliverables

- An internal-facing report for the HPSC that contains a summary of the demographic research, landscape scan, and list of recommended next steps, with an external-facing executive summary. 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, 2024

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- The Scholars is to complete their hours between 8 am and 5 pm, Monday to Friday, approximately 17 to 20 hours per week, except where online work/research allows for work outside these days/hours.

Required/preferred Skills and Background

- ☒ Excellent research and writing skills
- ☒ Experience conducting stakeholder engagement events, including facilitation skills, is an asset
- ☒ Familiarity with research methodologies and survey techniques
- ☒ Ability to work independently
- ☒ Deadline oriented
- ☒ Comfortable interacting with strangers to conduct stakeholder interviews
- ☒ Familiarity preparing strategies/reports with budgets and timelines is an asset
- ☒ Experience developing strategies/thinking strategically
- ☒ Demonstrated interest in the green buildings space, an asset

Additional information:

This position is a good opportunity for someone looking to work in the green buildings space who has strong writing and research skills as this Project is less focused on the technical aspects of the industry. The Project will provide opportunities for the Scholar to make connections through the research and stakeholder engagement conducted which could provide them with beneficial networking opportunities.

This is a remote position as the HPSC does not have a physical office. The Scholar will be required to use the HPSC's VOIP system to conduct phone calls as needed; the HPSC will bear the associated costs of the VOIP number.

Applications close **midnight Sunday January 28, 2024**

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, 2024. [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>