

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: Testing and Adapting an Evaluation Framework for Equity and Justice in Climate Action at the City of Vancouver

Project Background & Overview:

The City of Vancouver has been implementing climate and environmental plans for decades and is committed to advancing equity through its policies and practices, taking guidance from the City's Equity Framework, UNDRIP Strategy, and Climate Justice Charter. However, the equity impacts of climate action are largely unknown. Climate work is led by several departments and teams at the City, alongside many community partners. Starting in 2024, the City's Sustainability Group will refresh the Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) and the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (CCAS). As part of the refresh process, staff will aim to meaningfully integrate equity, justice, and decolonization into climate mitigation and adaptation, which is relatively new for the City. Evaluating equity and justice in climate action is an implementation action in the Climate Justice Charter (CJC).

The consistent and intentional evaluation of equity-related impacts of climate mitigation and adaptation policies is necessary for several reasons:

1. to ensure that climate action is equitable and just
2. to address potential gaps or unintentional negative consequences in planning, policy making, engagement, and programs;
3. as an intervention to facilitate ongoing systems change towards a more equitable and decolonized city;
4. to hold the City accountable for its commitments to climate justice to a variety of internal and external users/stakeholders;
5. to facilitate reflection and learning about the integration of equity and justice goals into climate action to improve impacts over time.

These evaluation-related needs require a different kind of evaluation process than is typical for the City in our current approach to measure impacts from climate action. The evaluation process must consider the complex intersections of climate change, equity, justice, and decolonization.

Project description

This project will support the City of Vancouver in creating a new process to evaluate equity in climate action. Building on work completed by a [Sustainability Scholar in 2023](#), the Scholar will test the existing evaluation framework prototype by evaluating 2-3 climate actions, projects, or policies at the City of Vancouver, with a view to ensuring the work integrates equity, justice, reconciliation, and decolonization considerations into climate action. This collaborative project will involve working with a variety of different people and teams. The Scholar will work with end users (City staff) to evaluate equity in their work, summarize findings, and potentially create and test new iterations of the framework based on feedback. The Scholar will reflect on their own experience using the evaluation framework prototype to further improve it.

Examples of projects the evaluation may be tested on include:

- Land-use projects like increasing density in single family zones, or along rapid transit
- Shifting to more sustainable modes of transportation, like walking, rolling, or cycling
- Programs to encourage electric vehicles over gas vehicles, like creating accessibility guidelines for EV charging
- Projects to decarbonize buildings, like energy requirements and resilience for multi-unit residential buildings
- Adaptation projects like the design, implementation, and monitoring of green rainwater infrastructure projects, or approaches to coastal adaptation planning.

Based on this user research, the Scholar will provide the City with recommendations and create a “prototype 2.0” version of the evaluation. This will inform the City’s work to develop a finalized framework to evaluate equity in climate action. The City’s evaluation framework will be designed as a tool to facilitate systems change, which is complex and requires multiple perspectives and approaches. Prototyping, reflecting, and adapting are required in order to find potential interventions and solutions. This project is part of that iterative process. Equity evaluation work will be ongoing as we change our practices, and this project will support that shift.

Project scope

- Perform background research to scan for any new ideas or initiatives related to equitable evaluation, and to get familiar with the topic if needed.
- Work with the project mentor to review and finalize a list of 2-3 projects to evaluate. If time permits, the Scholar may also work with a community member to test the evaluation framework externally.
- Work with project staff to evaluate 2-3 climate actions using the framework, this may involve 2-3 meetings with each project staff group (consisting of 1-2 people).
- Reflect on the evaluation process using a Developmental Evaluation or a similar tool, and determine any process improvements.
- Potentially adapt the framework during the process and test new iterations for each project.
- Analyze and summarize findings from these evaluations, and present back to City staff.
- Create a report or memo to summarize methodologies, key findings, and recommendations.

SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

- Present findings to City staff

Deliverables

- A report, memo, journal, or PowerPoint for the online public-facing [Scholars Project Library](#) including the following:
 - Methodologies used to test the evaluation framework
 - Summaries and key findings from testing the framework for 2-3 climate projects
 - A reflective entry outlining the Scholar's experience using the framework
 - Recommendations for improving the existing prototype of the evaluation framework
- A final presentation for City staff and key stakeholders

Time Commitment

- This project will take 250 hours to complete
- This project must be completed between May 1 to August 15, 2024
- 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
- Demonstrated experience studying/working/living at the intersections of sustainability, climate, equity, justice, and decolonization
- Familiarity with research methodologies and survey techniques
- Community engagement experience
- Ability to work independently
- Project management and organizational skills
- Demonstrated experience in social science methodologies, as they relate to evaluation or measurement or participatory/community-engaged action and applied research
- Able to interact with people with a diversity of lived experiences, and well-versed in cultural empathy and safety
- Demonstrated knowledge of and/or willingness to learn about anti-racism and anti-oppression
- Demonstrated understanding of how positionality and intersectional identities shape approaches to policy, planning, and engagement
- Evaluation background, an asset
- Social justice background, an asset

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>