

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: Improving accessibility at rapid transit stations and plazas

Project Background & Overview:

In alignment with the goals outlined in the City's Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP), which declares Vancouver's commitment to being a recognized leader in green transportation, the City's Transportation 2040 introduces a strategic framework to promote optimal transportation choices and help shape a more sustainable city. It highlights a vision that considers excellent transit as essential to the city's success. By 2040, the aim is for 33% of trips to be made using public transit. As the one of the costliest infrastructure investments, rapid transit use has been steadily increasing.

Great transit is meant to be usable by everyone, including people with mobility, visual, hearing, and cognitive impairments, as stated in the CEAP. Enhancing accessibility to transit stations and plazas is crucial to inviting more people to use public transit and to ensure better safety and overall satisfaction. While attempts have been made in creating a transit system that caters to diverse needs, the imperative for enhanced accessibility at transit stations and plazas has been emphasized through feedback from a variety of sources, including the general public (heard through feedback from public engagement) as well as the Persons with Disabilities Advisory group. In addition to acknowledged accessibility challenges in station buildings, which range from elevator functionality to washroom facilities, the outdoor environment surrounding station entrances, which includes considerations such as plaza amenity provisions and paving materials, presents many potential concerns that necessitate an inclusive approach in terms of their engagement, planning and design.

Project description

Aligning with the vision of a green transportation transition and the objective of developing fully accessible rapid transit infrastructure in the Vancouver Plan 2050 and Transportation 2040, the primary purpose of this project is to document the specific challenges faced by individuals accessing rapid transit stations and provide recommendations for improvements to station accessibility. This project aims to conduct an inventory of existing accessible designs at both

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pre-existing and planned rapid transit stations and plazas, identify outstanding challenges to be addressed, and provide actionable recommendations through case studies to enhance current design guidelines regarding accessibility.

Project scope

Part 1: Context setting, inventory study, stakeholder interviews gap analysis

- Review background documents pertaining to relevant rapid transit projects in City of Vancouver. (BC Building Accessibility Handbook 2020, TransLink Building Code Criteria 2020, etc.)
- Conduct an inventory of existing accessibility strategies at rapid transit stations and plazas.
- Connect with 1-3 stakeholders, such as the Province, TransLink, or City of Vancouver's Accessibility Committee, and conduct interviews with staff to identify concerns of users with lived experience. Mentors will help contact external agencies to schedule the interviews if needed.
- Conduct a high-level summary of the existing gaps, based on interviews, to identify the top five problematic aspects (such as washrooms, elevators, emergency announcements, plaza paving materials, grade, amenities, etc.) that require improvement.

Part 2: Jurisdictional scan, case studies

- Case studies research on 3 to 5 jurisdictions that have advanced accessible design for rapid transit station areas in North America, such as Portland, San Francisco, and possibly in key international locations.
- Based on the case studies, identify lessons learned and actionable recommendations from other jurisdictions and conduct a high-level feasibility analysis tailored to the City of Vancouver context regarding accessibility. This analysis should include identifying potential constraints and specifying the roles and scopes of each partner (the Province, TransLink, and the City of Vancouver)

Part 3: Finalize key findings and provide recommendations and potential constraints.

- Compile key finding and write a well-structured report.

Deliverables

- A final report containing a summary of the work completed
- A final report for the online public-facing [Scholars Project Library](#).
- A final presentation to the branch (TRIP)

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.

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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
- ☒ Statistical analysis
- ☒ Excellent public speaking and presentation skills
- ☒ Strong analytical skills
- ☒ Ability to work independently
- ☒ Deadline oriented
- ☒ Project management and organizational skills
- ☒ Experience in Urban design or Architectural design, an asset
- ☒ Comfortable interacting with strangers to conduct public/in person surveys
- ☒ Familiarity preparing feasibility studies
- ☒ Design and layout skills
- ☒ Interest in or familiar with green transportation, access and inclusion in rapid transportation planning or related topics, 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>