

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: Develop an Objective Index for Equitable Access to Public Drinking Water in the City of Vancouver

Project Background & Overview:

Internationally, the right to water is recognized by the United Nations. It entitles everyone, without discrimination access to safe, sufficient, physically accessible and affordable water.

In 2020, the City of Vancouver acknowledged that access to water is a fundamental human right and passed a motion that directed staff to prepare a report on policy updates that would align city services with a human right centric approach to water services and asked staff to provide a plan to increase the availability of public water fountains and water bottle filling stations.

The Vancouver Plan has a vision where “Vancouver is a city that lives in greater balance with our ecological systems while providing more complete, inclusive, and resilient neighborhoods where people of all ages, incomes, abilities, and backgrounds thrive.” Equitable access to drinking water, in particular in the public realm, contributes to two of three Vancouver Plan foundational principles, Equity and Resilience.

The City of Vancouver’s Access to Water Program aims to establish a standard that outlines what equitable access to drinking water in the public realm is while increasing the City’s resilience to climate change and natural disasters such as earthquakes.

Project description

The focus of this project is to develop an objective index that establishes a total number of permanent freeze proof public drinking fountains that would achieve adequate and equitable access to drinking water in the public realm.

As our climate continues to change, and the need for access to drinking water increases, we must consider the various demographics that call Vancouver home, and the diversity of ability within these demographics.

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Establishing an objective index will allow for a consistent, fair and equitable approach to increasing our level of service of providing access to drinking water for the public. The Access to Water Program will utilize the final report to guide decision making on how many permanent drinking fountains need to be installed across the City, and where. Providing us with a benchmark number of fountains, and the process on how it was established will give us an end goal to work towards. It also will allow us to assess the current state of the program, and where the most significant gaps are to appropriately prioritize funding allocations.

Project scope

Through literature review, desktop research, and interviews we want to know:

- What is an objective index for equitable access to public drinking water?
- What is the total number of permanent freeze proof drinking fountains that need to be installed across Vancouver to provide equitable access to public drinking water, and how does it vary across the different demographic neighbourhoods?
- How can the City of Vancouver use this index in the future, as our population, climate, and demographics change?

Project activities will include:

- Review of a minimum of 3 to a maximum of 5 jurisdictions to collect information on best practices to define and measure provision of equitable access to safe public drinking water
- Development of an inventory of existing City data (to understand what indicators are collected now and that will continue to be collected)
- Interview knowledge holders (Emergency Management groups, Community groups, BIAs, VCH, etc.) to contextualise the information collected in the previous activity and collect additional information based on of their specific knowledge / experiences.
- Identify and analyze data for the following considerations:
 - High density vs low density
 - Vulnerable vs non-vulnerable
 - Demographic trends in each neighbourhood
- Based on the research produce an objective index to benchmark equitable access to drinking water in Vancouver

Deliverables

- A final report containing a summary of the work completed for the online public-facing [Scholars Project Library, and to be shared with COV.](#)
- An objective index developed for the COV indicating the total number of permanent freeze-proof drinking fountains required to provide equitable access for the various communities in the City.
- Time permitting: A strategy for maintaining the suggested standard given changing demographics, climate change forecasts, increasing population, etc.

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 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
- Familiarity with research methodologies and survey techniques
- Statistical analysis
- Community engagement experience
- Familiarity conducting focus group research
- Strong analytical skills
- Ability to work independently
- GIS training or experience.
- Familiarity preparing feasibility studies

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>