Summer 2025 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. The pay rate for the summer 2025 program is $31.25/hour or $7,812.50 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 11:59 pm on Sunday January 26, 2025.

Project title: Developing a monitoring and tracking framework to evaluate progress on community energy and emissions plan implementation

Project Background & Overview:
The City of Richmond has set ambitious climate action goals through its Community Energy and Emissions Plan (CEEP) 2050, targeting a 50% reduction in GHG emissions by 2030 and achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. To achieve these targets, the City has identified eight strategic directions, each with a series of actions designed to drive progress toward emission reduction, equity, and community resilience. A systematic approach to monitor and track the progress of these actions is essential to ensure alignment with CEEP goals.

This project proposes developing a comprehensive monitoring and tracking framework to evaluate the progress of projects under the CEEP implementation plan. This framework will enable the City to quantify progress, identify gaps, and optimize future actions.

Project description
This project focuses on developing a comprehensive monitoring and tracking framework to systematically evaluate the progress of CEEP initiatives. The purpose of this project is to create a data-driven approach that enables city departments to assess the effectiveness of current strategies, identify areas requiring additional resources, and optimize project outcomes to align with the CEEP's climate and equity goals.

This project is valuable because it provides the City with the tools needed to transparently monitor its climate action progress, ensuring accountability to stakeholders while supporting evidence-based decision-making. The monitoring framework will standardize data collection, reporting, and visualization across departments, making it easier to evaluate performance against key targets. By integrating this framework, the City can enhance its ability to respond to evolving climate challenges, allocate resources more efficiently, and demonstrate measurable progress toward its emissions reduction goals.

The work will be actionable immediately upon completion, with a structured framework that can be implemented by city staff to track ongoing and future projects. This will include the development of a centralized dashboard for real-time progress updates, a set of key performance indicators (KPIs) tailored to each strategic direction, and standardized reporting templates to ensure consistency across departments. The project is set to run from May to August 2025, aligning with the summer UBC Sustainability Scholars Program timeline, providing immediate value and impact as Richmond accelerates its climate action efforts.

Project scope

- Review the CEEP 2050 implementation plan to become familiar with the type and scope of initiatives. The types and scopes of initiatives span emissions sectors, including buildings, transportation, and more. While it is not necessary for the Scholar to understand the technical details of each action, the Scholar should review and conceptually understand the CEEP to support ideation on how progress can be communicated and measured in the monitoring and tracking framework.
- Best practices review of monitoring and tracking systems created by other municipalities in BC and elsewhere. As part of the research, collect KPIs and other relevant tracking metrics.
- Working from a list of approximately 10 to 12 sectors (to be provided by the project mentor) conduct stakeholder consultations with staff at City departments to understand existing data collection practices, identify gaps, and collect information to document the status of CEEP actions. The status typology will be informed by the best practices review, but will likely consist of one standard typology ("not started," "in progress," "complete," or "discontinued") column accompanied by another column with brief notes that elaborate on the status.
- Based on the research, develop and prototype a draft monitoring and tracking framework. Ideally, the prototype monitoring system will use a tool like Excel, Power BI, or Tableau for data visualization. The tool is intended to enable city staff to monitor CEEP project progress, with a focus on metrics such as GHG reduction, energy efficiency, and community engagement.
- Prepare a report with recommendations on scaling the framework for long-term use.

Time permitting:

- Prepare data collection protocol guidelines for consistent data collection across departments, ensuring accurate tracking of key indicators related to carbon emissions, building retrofits, EV adoption, and green infrastructure projects.
- Develop a quarterly reporting template: A standardized reporting template to streamline updates on project milestones, budget utilization, and emission reductions.
- Conceptualise a Dashboard Prototype for visualizing progress, allowing stakeholders to access real-time data on CEEP implementation.

Deliverables

- A final report containing a summary of the work completed, including:
  - Methodology
  - Best practices review
  - Recommendations for scaling the framework for long-term use
- A final report for the online public-facing Scholars Project Library.
- A progress tracking framework
- Time permitting
  - Data Collection Protocols:
  - Quarterly reporting template
  - Visualisation dashboard

Time Commitment

- This project will take **300** hours to complete
- This project must be completed between May 1 to August 15.
- The Scholars is to complete their hours between 8:15 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
☒ Data analysis and visualization
☒ Excellent presentation skills
☒ Strong analytical skills
☒ Ability to work independently
☒ Deadline oriented
☒ Project management and organizational skills
☒ Programming skills
☒ Familiarity with benchmarking methods and tools
☒ Comfortable interacting with strangers to conduct public/in person surveys
☒ Familiarity preparing feasibility studies, and asset
☒ Experience with modelling and analysis, an asset
☒ Design and layout skills, an asset
☒ Demonstrated competency using Excel, Power BI, or Tableau

Applications close **at 11:59 pm Sunday January 26, 2025**
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 21, 2025. 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