

## 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.**

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### **Project Title: Research to develop a baseline on local and social employment and procurement in development projects**

#### **Project Background & Overview**

Real estate development projects play a pivotal role in shaping the city's environmental and social landscape; however, the social and economic benefits of these projects often vary depending on specifics of the project execution. The Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) Policy, adopted by the City of Vancouver in 2018, aims to maximize the local and social economic impact through employment and procurement practices. By doing so, it helps ensure the project benefits are widely accessible, especially to demographics who have historically been equity-denied.

A [2024 Sustainability Scholar](#) project established an economic model and measured the impact of the CBA policy through an economic multiplier measurement. The 2025 proposal is a continuation of this initial research by creating a comparable set of data which can be used to measure the impact of the CBA Policy above the typical economic impact of development. This project responds to the need to assess the efficacy of the CBA Policy by establishing baseline data on local and social employment and procurement levels in development projects not covered by the CBA. Understanding the baseline will enable a meaningful comparison of CBA and non-CBA projects, offering insights into the CBA's impact on local hiring, procurement practices, and economic equity. This research will support in determining whether the CBA Policy is meeting its objectives of promoting social inclusion and providing measurable benefits to local communities.

The CBA Policy supports social sustainability goals in the following ways:

1. Advancing inclusive economic opportunities by analyzing baseline employment and procurement practices. The research can identify gaps in local hiring and procurement that disproportionately affects marginalized communities.

2. Socially inclusive and equitable employment and procurement strengthens communities by fostering economic stability and resilience, particularly for vulnerable communities.
3. Understanding current procurement and employment patterns in non-CBA projects will highlight opportunities to increase the access to economic opportunities, particularly for small businesses and social enterprises.
4. Prioritizing local employment and procurement will contribute to stronger connections between development projects and the communities they impact. Engagement will inform strategies that support socially sustainable, vibrant, and inclusive economic environments.
5. Equity and environmental sustainability are interdependent: development projects that center local and social benefits reduce reliance on external labor and materials, minimizing their environmental impact. This research will demonstrate how equity practices contribute to healthier communities and a healthier planet.

## **Project Description**

The purpose of this project is to establish a baseline of local and social employment and procurement practices within development projects that do not fall under the City of Vancouver's Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) Policy. By determining the baseline conditions in non-CBA projects, the research will enable a comparative analysis with CBA-governed projects, providing valuable insights into the effectiveness and impact of the CBA Policy. This analysis will help assess the policy's contributions toward Vancouver's goals of social sustainability, equitable economic opportunities, and climate action.

This project aligns closely with both climate and social sustainability goals as outlined in the City's core strategies. The research connects directly to the Healthy City Strategy and Equity Framework by examining how the CBA Policy impacts inclusive employment and procurement opportunities for equity-denied groups. The results will help inform policy adjustments to ensure that all Vancouver development projects contribute to a healthier, more equitable city. The findings are anticipated to be actionable by Fall 2025, directly informing City departments in strategic planning, policy development, and future application of the CBA Policy to expand social and environmental benefits.

## **Project Scope**

The Scholar will conduct a series of tasks aimed at thoroughly investigating and analyzing local and social employment and procurement practices in Vancouver's development sector. The primary activities will include:

- 1) Data Collection:
  - a) Review the City's CBA Policy and generate a list of the policy's conditions regarding procurement and employment.

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- b) City staff will work with the Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability department to source data from 3 - 5 existing non-CBA projects. The Scholar will obtain additional data from the developers and general contracts to collect procurement spends, employment numbers and workforce demographics through an existing City reporting process and survey. .
- c) Source publicly available workforce demographics, hiring practices and demographics, and procurement spends as needed.
- 2) Data Analysis: Analyse the data collected through step 1 to learn the percentage of employment and procurement activity that are meeting both local and social conditions that would be required in a CBA Policy development project.
- 3) Interviews with Stakeholders: Conduct 3 to 5 interviews with key stakeholders, including City staff, developers, contractors, and community organizations, to gain qualitative insights into current practices and the perceived impacts of CBA and non-CBA approaches. The intention of these interviews is to support the data collection and analysis.
- 4) Economic Impact: Using the data collected, assess the economic impact of the non-CBA projects, including leveraging previous Sustainability Scholar research to calculate the economic multiplier model. Please note that the model exists, and the mentor will provide an orientation to using it in advance.
- 5) Comparative Analysis: Compare findings from non-CBA projects with CBA project data that is provided by the project mentor, assessing the differences in local and social employment, and local and social procurement.
- 6) Alignment with Climate and Social Strategies: Time permitting, map findings against the Healthy City Strategy, and Equity Framework to evaluate the alignment and impact of the CBA Policy with these broader city objectives.

## **Deliverables**

- Final Report: A detailed report summarizing the project objectives, research methods, findings, analysis, and actionable recommendations for policy and practice. This report will include a comparison between non-CBA and CBA projects and provide insight into the broader social and environmental impacts of the CBA Policy.
- Public Report for Scholars Project Library: An abridged version of the final report for publication in the Sustainability Scholars Project Library, making the findings accessible to a broader audience and supporting future research and policy development.
- Final presentation for internal and external stakeholders

## **Time Commitment**

- This project will take 250 hours to complete
- This project must be completed between May 1 to August 15.
- The Scholars is to complete their hours between 8 am and 5 pm, Monday to Friday, approximately 17 to 20 hours per week.
- The Scholar will have the opportunity to attend relevant team and/or City Staff meetings.

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## Preferred Skills and Background

- Excellent research and writing skills;
- Experience conducting stakeholder engagement;
- Familiarity with research methodologies and survey techniques;
- Statistical analysis;
- Community engagement experience;
- Strong analytical skills;
- Deadline oriented;
- Familiarity with benchmarking methods and tools; and,
- Comfortable interacting with people from diverse backgrounds with competing needs
- Good understanding of equity and intersectionality
- Interest in or familiarity with procurement practices, particularly if they pertain to development projects would be an asset
- Interest or familiarity with economic analysis, an asset

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

Apply here: [Click here to apply](#)

Contact Karen Taylor at [sustainability.scholars@ubc.ca](mailto: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>