Summer 2026 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 February 1, 2026.

Project title: Develop a Watershed Improvement Prioritization Framework for the City of Coquitlam

Project Background

Creeks are an important environmental asset in the City of Coquitlam's system of parks, trails and natural facilities. The City has over 300 kilometers of creeks and streams that are home to fish and other aquatic habitat, and they play a significant role in the broader Coquitlam ecosystem and drainage system.

This project works towards the City's Environmental Sustainability Plan, which contains relevant goals: to improve ecological conditions of natural areas (e.g., forests, streams, wetlands, meadows) for the community and wildlife; and to use an integrated approach to storm water management that provides flood protection while protecting ecological health. Environmental Sustainability is a key priority in the City's Corporate Strategic Plan, and an identified action is to continue an in-stream works program to mitigate flooding and enhance aquatic habitat.

With creeks and streams facing increasing pressures from climate change and urbanization, it is paramount that the health of these waterways is maintained and enhanced. However, with limited funding, it is important to know where to prioritize watershed improvements. Key watershed improvement areas can include water quality, water quantity (seasonal base flows), water temperature, and stream complexing/habitat.

Project description

The purpose of the project is to provide the City of Coquitlam with a simple and practical watershed improvement prioritization framework to guide the City's ongoing and future watershed improvement projects.

The Scholar's research and recommended framework will be used to rank and compare different watershed improvement projects.

Project scope
The project will primarily involve desktop research utilizing current promising practices on the subject matter.

The Scholar will research, compare and recommend a prioritization framework to guide investments in watershed improvement. More specifically, the Scholar will:

- Review and confirm the key project categories to rank and evaluate (i.e., water quality, water quantity (base flows), water temperature, and stream habitat). Add or adjust evaluation categories as necessary.
- Review the currently available data for the key attributes and advise if there are additional data sets that can be readily obtained that would improve the reliability of the results (see Coquitlam's existing Adaptive Management Framework (AMF) Program, Integrated Watershed Management Plans, the 2025 UBC Sustainability Scholar Report on Base Flow Augmentation, and watershed impervious area percentages).
- Conduct research to determine the relative importance of the key attributes, with commentary on the target and 'baseline' requirements for each category (noting that there could be site or creek-specific targets).
- Develop a simple and practical prioritization framework and scoring matrix that can be used to rank, evaluate, and compare various watershed improvement projects. The framework should be tested against multiple projects to confirm the results.

The Scholar will work with a mentor (senior staff) at the City throughout their research.

Deliverables
- A draft report containing a summary of the work completed, including:
  - Data inventory and gap analysis summary
  - Draft prioritization frameworks and scoring matrix
  - Pilot application of the framework to one representative watershed
- A final report containing a summary of the work completed
- A final report for the online public-facing Scholars Project Library.
- Presentations to City Staff:
  - Early findings presentation to the Project Team
  - Draft final presentation to the Project Team
  - Final presentation to Senior Leaders
  - Presentation to Regional Engineers Advisory Committee (REAC) Rainwater Management Subcommittee (optional)

Time Commitment
- This project will take 250 hours to complete
- This project must be completed between May 1 to August 14.

- The Scholars is to complete their hours between 9 am and 5 pm, Monday to Friday, approximately 17 to 20 hours per week.
- A work station will be made available to the scholar at the City of Coquitlam Works Yard (500 Mariner Way). The student can work hybrid (in-office and remote)

Required/preferred Skills and Background

☒ Excellent research and writing skills
☒ Demonstrated interest in sustainability
☒ Familiarity with research methodologies and survey techniques
☒ Strong analytical skills
☒ Ability to work independently
☒ Deadline oriented
☒ Project management and organizational skills
☒ GIS training or experience.
☒ Familiarity with benchmarking methods and tools
☒ Design and layout skills
☒ Demonstrated interest in and knowledge of watershed planning and management
☒ Familiarity with principles and practices to do with watershed health would be an asset

Applications close **at 11:59 pm Sunday February 1, 2026**
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 19, 2026. Click here for details and to register.

Below are some links to useful resources to help you with your resume, cover letter and preparing for an interview (there are many more online).

https://students.ubc.ca/career/career-resources/
https://www.grad.ubc.ca/cover-letter-cv-resume-templates-ubc-career-services