

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: Advancing Climate Policy Through Collective Bargaining: A Review of Emerging Labour Agreement Language

Project Background

As Canada transitions to a low-carbon economy, unions and workers are emerging as critical partners in shaping climate-aligned labour practices. There has been an increase in provisions related to climate mitigation, workplace sustainability, green skills training, and protections for workers affected by decarbonization being featured in collective agreements. However, the landscape of “green bargaining” is evolving rapidly, requiring up-to-date tools to support unions in negotiating effective and worker-centred climate language.

In 2022, the Adapting Canadian Work and Workplaces to Climate Change (ACW) initiative created the first [Green Collective Agreements database](#) to catalog existing climate-related bargaining language across Canada. While foundational, the database now requires an update to reflect new agreements, improved language, shifting policy contexts, and emerging workforce needs driven by the clean-energy transition. A more accessible and synthesized resource will support unions, workers, and employers in understanding the state of practice and identifying pathways to strengthen climate resilience and job quality.

Given ZEIC’s leadership in climate innovation and workforce development, and BC Federation of Labour (BC Fed) and MoveUp’s central roles in labour advocacy and member support, this collaboration is well-positioned to advance the next generation of green bargaining tools. With additional contribution from SkillPlan and research support from a UBC sustainability scholar, the project responds to the growing demand for actionable, equity-informed tools that help workers navigate and benefit from the energy transition.

Project description

The Zero Emissions Innovation Centre (ZEIC), the MoveUp union, BC Fed are looking to collaborate to update the Green Collective Agreements database created by the Adapting Canadian Work and Workplaces to Climate Change (ACW) initiative in 2022.

Project Objectives

Using a UBC Sustainability Scholar, this project aims to:

- Review 5–10 collective agreements to identify updated or emerging climate-related language.
- Extract and code relevant clauses, identifying recurring themes and notable patterns.
- Highlight promising practices of climate-aligned bargaining language.
- *Time permitting*: Conduct limited interviews with union leaders to contextualize findings.
- Produce a final synthesis (written report or recorded presentation) summarizing the analysis and outlining potential next steps for future training tools or curriculum development.

Project scope

1. Targeted Agreement Review

- Conduct a detailed review of 5–10 collective agreements that include climate-, sustainability-, or energy-transition-related provisions.
- Identify and extract relevant clauses.
- Tag and categorize content into an updated structure (e.g., mitigation, adaptation, green skills, transition supports).
- Identify recurring themes, gaps, and emerging trends.

2. Synthesis & Leading Practices

- Analyze similarities and differences across agreements.
- Identify promising clause types or approaches that illustrate effective climate-related bargaining.
- Develop concise case snapshots of promising practices, especially those related to electrification, energy efficiency, or workforce transition language

3. Updated Database Format

- Update and reorganize the original ACW dataset into a more accessible and modernized format (e.g., Airtable or similar).
- Integrate metadata, tagging systems, and a simplified user interface suitable for unions and labour educators.

4 Union Leader Interviews (Time Permitting)

- Conduct up to three short interviews with negotiators or union leaders.
- Explore how bargaining priorities are developed, how climate-related language is drafted, and what challenges or opportunities exist.
- Integrate insights only if capacity allows within the 250-hour limit.

5. Training & Capacity-Building Foundations (Time Permitting)

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- Draft a high-level outline of potential training materials or tools to support green bargaining (e.g., workshop concept, learning modules).
- Provide recommendations on where expanded curriculum development could occur in future phases.

6. Final Deliverables

- Updated Green Collective Agreements database in an accessible format.
- Final synthesis report capturing trends, case studies, and qualitative interview insights.
- Skeleton of draft training materials and recommendations for future curriculum development.

Additional deliverable

The scholar will produce one of the following, depending on skillset and project fit:

- A written synthesis report (≤10 pages), OR
- A recorded presentation summarizing the analysis, findings, and recommendations.

Time Commitment

- This project will take 250 hours to complete
- This project must be completed between May 1 to August 14.
- The Scholar is to complete their 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
- Strong analytical skills
- Ability to work independently
- Familiarity with platforms such as Airtable
- Experience with conducting qualitative interviews
- Familiarity with Zotero, an asset
- Comfortable working with and updating datasets

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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>