

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: Policy and best practices review to develop energy efficiency policies for new residential construction (Songhees Nation)

Project Background:

The project takes place at a pivotal moment for the Songhees Nation's housing, energy, and sustainability efforts. The Nation is currently progressing several initiatives aimed at improving the energy efficiency and health of several dozen on-reserve homes, with these initiatives focused on building envelope and mechanical system upgrades. Beyond these ongoing efforts, anticipated near-term projects include the construction of infill housing and a significant number of high-density residential units to meet community housing needs.

Operating in tandem with these initiatives is the development of a Community Emissions Plan (CEP) that will baseline, monitor, and forecast emissions associated with the Nation's housing and on-reserve operations. Foundational to the success of these projects—and to ensuring alignment with the CEP—is the Nation asserting its jurisdictional authority to enforce compliance with an appropriate Building Code. The proposed research will support this goal by examining how other Nations have created and enforced bylaws to embed energy efficiency policies into new construction projects. It will also identify the steps Songhees should take to position itself to retain control over housing standards and compliance during and after treaty transition. This work will provide a framework for integrating sustainability into future housing development while reinforcing the Nation's authority and governance over its built environment.

Purpose and Value

This project aims to guide the Songhees Nation through the process of becoming the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) for all residential renovation and construction on treaty lands, while shaping long-term strategies for sustainable development. The research will focus on reviewing existing policies, analyzing land-use planning, and studying how other Nations have embedded energy efficiency and sustainability into building codes and bylaws. Key undertakings include identifying culturally specific considerations for future housing, exploring bylaws to grant enforcement authority, and outlining steps to position the Nation for autonomous governance over construction standards.

This work will help define next steps and investment trajectories for housing and infrastructure projects that align with Songhees' goals—particularly as the Nation prepares to settle its treaty, expand its land

SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

base, and ensure development occurs in a culturally informed, self-determined manner consistent with UNDRIP and DRIPA (i.e., in a culturally informed, self-determined manner).

Project Scope:

- 1. Policy and best practices scan.** Engage other Nations within Canada who have undertaken the transition to becoming the AHJ over residential construction on their lands to better understand the steps necessary for this transition. Critical to this will be understanding similarities and differences between the Songhees and other Nations, and how those factors may justify deviations from previously used approaches.
- 2. Policy and Land-Use Review**
Conduct a comprehensive review of existing policies and land-use plans to identify gaps and opportunities for integrating energy efficiency and sustainability requirements into future housing and infrastructure development. This includes analyzing best practices from other Nations and assessing alignment with Songhees' long-term governance and treaty objectives.
- 3. Framework development. Organize Knowledge for Future Planning**
Compile and organize data gathered into a structured knowledge base. This resource will serve as an input for shaping future housing and infrastructure projects, helping the Nation make informed decisions about investments and development priorities. The intent is to create a flexible, accessible foundation of information that can be drawn upon as the Nation moves toward treaty settlement, land expansion, and long-term sustainability goals.

Deliverables:

- 1. Summary Report – Best Practices Scan**
Key findings from other Nations' experiences, including recommended considerations for Songhees.
- 2. Summary Report – Policy and Land-Use Review**
Highlights of gaps, opportunities, and alignment with sustainability and governance goals.
- 3. Knowledge Repository**
A consolidated, organized database of research findings to serve as a reference for future projects.

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.

Required/Preferred Skills and Background

- Knowledge of or willingness to learn about the Douglas Treaties, their significance in historic and present-day land rights and negotiations for Lekwungen peoples
- Demonstrated interest in housing sustainability and affordability
- Experience conducting stakeholder engagement events, including facilitation skills, is an asset
- Familiarity with research methodologies and survey techniques
- Familiarity conducting focus group research
- Ability to work independently
- Deadline oriented

SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

- ☒ Experience or familiarity with: BC Step Code, Construction & Renovation Projects, an asset
- ☒ Familiarity with benchmarking methods and tools
- ☒ Familiarity preparing feasibility studies
- ☒ Experience with financial modelling and analysis

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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>