Position: CIRS Program Development Assistant

Job Description:
The Centre for Interactive Research on Sustainability (CIRS), along with UBC faculty and external partners, is exploring options for educational programming targeting university and K-12 students and focused on themes of regenerative sustainability in urban settings, which could utilize UBC assets such as the CIRS building as teaching tools. Regenerative sustainability is one of the fundamental concepts behind CIRS that approaches sustainability issues in a positive and pro-active way. The intent is to develop programs to educate and inform students about big, interconnected global topics (climate change, population growth and migration, resource consumption, social equity and justice etc.) while inspiring and empowering them to have a positive impact on the world by acting in their own communities. The primary focus of this position will be to work with CIRS staff to scope out possibilities and develop concepts for pilots of potential educational programs and activities, which are tailored to specific age ranges, and can complement and expand current curricula and required learning outcomes in local schools districts and institutions.

The position may also be involved with other programs relating to sustainable design and urban development, as well as assistance with activities related to CIRS’ interdisciplinary research projects, professional learning sessions, and inhabitant engagement.

The CIRS Program Development Assistant will work closely with the CIRS Research Manager, Project Coordinator, Director of Operations and Business and the rest of the CIRS team. The work will involve collaboration and consultation with UBC faculty and staff, and external partners.

Tasks will encompass research, literature reviews and interviews; benchmarking with other Canadian and international programs and educational standards; report writing and editing; cataloguing of reference materials; identification of case studies, interactive tools and data-sets that can be used for hands-on learning; working with staff on the creation of pilots course and event plans; assisting with the identification of potential program partners, funding sources and grant applications, and other duties as assigned.

Work will be directed by the CIRS Research Manager. On-going feedback will be provided by the CIRS Research Manager and the Administration Manager.

Skills/Qualifications:
- Preference will be given to a Master student in an Education field, preferable with knowledge and training related to the K-12 demographic.
- Interest in the social, ecological and economic issues related to sustainable design, urban development and human well-being.
- Experience in research projects and best-practices.
- Strong oral and written communication skills, visual communication skills a plus.
- Excellent interpersonal skills, enthusiasm for learning.
- Ability to work both independently and collaboratively.
- Ability to organize, prioritize and meet deadlines (basic project management skills).
- Strong attention to detail and ability to plan.
- Comfortable problem solving, learning by doing and asking questions.
Student Learning Components

Anticipated Skills and Knowledge Acquisition:

- Improved understanding of sustainability concepts and the complexity of their application in the real world.
- Improved understanding of the interplay between sustainable buildings and their inhabitants, and the potential utilization of the built environment for research, education and hands-on learning.
- Exposure to the variety of practices and tools related to sustainability and to applied research.
- Connections with educators, researchers, professionals and other organizations performing innovative and leading-edge work through sustainability research, teaching and practice.
- Integration of academic skills such as critical thinking, writing and creative representation.
- Project management, event planning and grant writing skills and tools.
- Administrative skills including office procedures and practices.

Orientation, Feedback and Support:

- Comprehensive orientation process with the CIRS Research Manager and Administrative Manager which includes the following:
  - Description of office processes and procedures
  - Description of position and responsibilities
  - Overview of the CIRS research program, priorities and projects
  - Background and tour of the CIRS building
  - Introductory meetings with CIRS staff and with key collaborators
  - Review of project specific background materials
- Regular mentoring and feedback sessions with the CIRS Research Manager to focus on successes, areas of improvement and goal setting.
- Opportunity to develop areas of personal or professional interests and flexibility to adapt your work commitments with class schedule and classroom learning.
- Networking opportunities within the University and with project specific external partners and stakeholders – e.g. educators, sustainability practitioners, community organizations etc.
- Access to professional development opportunities relating to sustainability through visiting lectures, lunch & learns, open houses and other activities.

Documents Requests:

- Cover letter, resume, class schedule, recent writing sample on sustainability or curriculum development topics.