

Frequently asked Questions

Q: What is an academic referee, and what is a professional referee?

A: An academic referee could be your supervisor, or another member of your faculty who knows you well, and would be able to comment on your academic ability and perhaps personal attributes as well. A professional referee is typically a previous employer for whom you have worked for, or someone who supervised your work in some way (this could even be in a volunteer capacity).

Q: What if I don't have a professional referee?

A: Please list the referees that you do have, if you do not have both.

Q: Can my graduate supervisor be my professional referee? I am an international student and do not have any local work experience.

A: The categorisation of your referees can be at your discretion. In addition to your supervisor, if you have any international work experience that you would like to list a referee for, you are also welcome to do so.

Q: Do you want me to provide a letter of reference?

A: You are welcome to include a letter of reference with your application, but it is not required. All we need in the way of a reference is the name, their email, a brief description of your relationship to the person (e.g., academic supervisor, department manager, internship supervisor, etc.), and their professional/academic title (e.g., MEL Program Director, Operations Manager, Floor Supervisor, etc.)

Q: Can I submit my referees after the application deadline?

A: Yes, but please submit your referees as soon as possible.

Q: Can I still apply if I have limited availability?

A: The work schedule of the successful candidates will be negotiated between each Scholar and their project mentor directly—as each Scholar will need to work around their various other commitments over the term. In the application form there is a place where you can comment on particular limitations on your availability.

Q: I have restrictions on how many hours per week I can work due to scholarships and other funding source. What should I do when I apply?

A: Please indicate your restrictions in your application. If your application is successful, you and your mentor will need to discuss your working hours in due course. Your availability might have an impact on hiring decision; however, not disclosing relevant information can cause problems after you are selected as a Scholar.

Q: Am I eligible to apply if I am an international student on a study permit that does not allow employment off campus?

A: Yes, a current international graduate student with a valid study permit is eligible to apply. Because the student is hired by UBC to work with the partner organization on the specific project,

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it is considered employment on campus. If you don't have one yet, please be sure to get your social insurance number before the end of March.

Q: I have applied for a UBC graduate program, but have not yet been admitted. Am I eligible to apply?

A: Scholar positions are only open to current UBC graduate (Master and PhD) students. You can apply once you are enrolled and have commenced your program.

Q: I am submitting my thesis in August. Does this create any conflict with my application?

A: No, the timing of your thesis submission should not deter you from applying. As long as you are a current student as of May 1, 2018, you are eligible to apply.

Q: Can I provide additional supporting documents in my application?

A: You may provide additional documents electronically, however only a resume, cover letter, and references are required. Please ensure these are included in your single, PDF document.

Q: I have been awarded a fellowship/funding which prohibits accepting other funding, am I still eligible?

A: You will be paid \$5250 in total for 250 hours of work, which is equivalent to \$21/hour. You will need to contact your other funding source to confirm that this is acceptable.

Q: Are there any requirements about minimum GPA?

A: No. However, there are UBC HR rules around academic standing for student appointments. Potential candidates cannot be on academic probation.

Q: What is the criteria for being a successful applicant?

A: Applicant requirements vary depending on the needs of the project, but generally we are looking for bright, articulate students who can bring their education, experience, and research and writing skills to the work at hand.

Q: One of the requirements to be eligible for the program is to be in good academic standing. In that sense, do you want the applicants to include in their resume a summary of their grades, or would you check this information afterwards?

A: A student's Academic Standing is only a concern with respect to our Scholars Program. If their standing has been changed to *On Academic Probation* or *Failed*—the student is ineligible due to UBC HR rules. You do not need to include your grades on your application.

Q: Are there any online resources or documents to help me learn about the program?

A: The best way to get a sense of the program is to have a look in the [Projects Library](#). There you will see the array of sustainability projects that students have worked on in the past.

Q: I am a law student, am I eligible to apply to the program?

A: Yes, students in a J.D. (Juris Doctor) are welcome to apply to the program.

Q: Who should I address my cover letter to?

A: Please address your cover letter to the UBC Sustainability Scholars Program Manager.

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Q: Can I use my Sustainability/Greenest City Scholar project to meet my academic internship requirements?

A: Sustainability Scholars are paid to do applied research on sustainability-related projects that help our partner organizations achieve their organizational sustainability goals.

If you are the successful candidate for a Scholars position, your primary obligation is to meet the expectations of the project as outlined by your mentor. If you choose to do more work outside the scope of the project and the hours assigned to it in order to meet course requirements, that would be your choice, but any additional work must not affect the core project requirements in any way. In other words, your course requirements should not drive the Sustainability Scholar/Greenest City Scholar project requirements or outcomes.

The UBC Sustainability Scholars program does not directly support students to meet their academic internship requirements, although many former participants in the Scholars program have been able to use their Sustainability/Greenest City Scholar project to meet their internship requirements. Unfortunately, we cannot confirm in advance that you would be able to meet your academic requirements through participation in the program.

More questions? Please email sustainability.scholars@ubc.ca