**UBC SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM  
WELLBEING SCHOLARS FUNDING: PROGRAM OVERVIEW & PROPOSAL TEMPLATE**

The UBC Sustainability Scholars program was established to provide a unique educational experience for UBC graduate level students through funded sustainability internships. Working under the mentorship of our partner organizations, UBC Sustainability Scholars are immersed in real world learning where they can apply their research skills and contribute to advancing organizational sustainability goals.

The program is open to UBC graduate students from all academic disciplines. Since 2010, the program has engaged over 280 Scholars who have completed projects for partners in local governments, the health and energy sectors, a local First Nations community, the City of Vancouver, Metro Vancouver, and several UBC campus departments.

A number of Scholar alumni have obtained full-time employment following their internship. So far, 33 former Scholars that worked on City of Vancouver projects have obtained employment at the City, and many Sustainability Scholars have been hired by other partner organizations permanently and on term contracts following the completion of their work term.

**About the UBC Wellbeing Funding Program**

In 2017 and 2018, UBC Wellbeing co-funded a number of Sustainability Scholars projects that supported UBC’s wellbeing strategies, particularly those set out in the Okanagan Charter, the 20-year Sustainability Strategy, and the People and Place strategy. Following on the success of the last two years, UBC Wellbeing is once again offering partial funding for up to five projects that support the health, wellbeing, and social sustainability priorities on our Okanagan and Vancouver campuses. Preference will be given to projects that address priority areas including food and nutrition, the built and natural environments, active living, inclusion and connection, and mental health and resilience.

**Benefits of Participating in the Program**

Partner organizations can engage skilled and enthusiastic UBC graduate students to work on projects that help find solutions to their sustainability challenges. Participation in the program provides:

* added capacity, fresh ideas, and robust research contributions that Scholars bring to their sustainability work
* an opportunity to provide professional mentorship to a motivated and skilled graduate student
* access to a diverse pool of applicants and a chance to evaluate potential future hires for their organization
* involvement in a collaborative partnership between UBC Wellbeing, the UBC Sustainability Initiative and the community to advance wellbeing

**Benefits to UBC Graduate Students Participating as Wellbeing Scholars**

Students in the program gain valuable experience conducting applied research on matters to do with sustainability. The program provides diverse opportunities for students to:

* apply their research skills to real-world sustainability questions and challenges
* refine their project management and presentation skills, and expand their professional work experience
* develop practical sustainability skills and knowledge under the guidance of a mentor
* build professional network connections
* play a key role in helping UBC advance as a wellbeing promoting university

**PROGRAM STRUCTURE – OVERVIEW**

The cost of participating in the Sustainability Scholars program is $5620 of which $370 goes to cover benefits and $5250 goes to the student for 250 hours of project work (equivalent to a rate of $21/hour). Successful Wellbeing project proposals will receive up to $2810 in funding from UBC Wellbeing, the remainder is payable by JV to the UBC Sustainability Initiative in September. The UBC Sustainability Initiative covers the program administration (including shortlisting applications and setting up student appointments), training, and end-of-program conference costs.

The Scholars complete their 250 hours of project work on a part-time basis over the summer term (April 29 to August 12, 2019). The Mentor and Scholar together determine an appropriate balance of work hours over the program period, and complete and sign a Project Plan outlining the agreed objectives, tasks and associated deliverables of the project.

THE UBC SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE (USI) places the call for applications, manages the incoming applications, and provides a short list of up to five possible candidates for consideration by the mentor. USI hires the successful candidates and hosts a program orientation, a mid-project check-in, and professional development workshops over the summer. Scholars are required to produce a report (or, depending on the confidentiality of the content, a 3 to 4 page Executive Summary to serve as a record of their work), which will be posted to the [Sustainability Scholars Project Library](https://sustain.ubc.ca/ubc-sustainability-scholars-project-library).

THE MENTORdevelops and puts forward a project proposal, reviews the applicant shortlist, interviews, performs a reference check, and notifies the USI Program Manager of their chosen candidate. Mentors are responsible for overseeing the scholars work throughout the project and for ensuring the project is satisfactorily completed. Preferably, the student will be able to spend a portion of their work-time on-site with the partner organization.

The primary project tasks should be research related to organizational wellbeing/social sustainability goals, and offer sufficient challenge and interest to a graduate student, allowing them to engage in larger, meaningful projects with minimal routine clerical work.

**PROJECTED 2019 PROGRAM TIMELINE**

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| **December 2018** | Call for project proposals. |
| **January** | Applicants are encouraged to apply early. UBC Wellbeing will review proposals on a rolling basis and, if necessary, refine with mentors. Final proposals due **January 17, 2019.** Notice of funding approval January 28, 2019. |
| **February / March** | UBC Sustainability Scholars Program places call for, manages and shortlists applications; provides up to 5 applications to the mentor for consideration and selection. |
| **March / April** | Mentors review the applicant shortlist, interview applicants, perform a reference check, and notify UBC Sustainability Scholars Program of their chosen candidate. Note that interviews and hiring decisions take place on a rolling basis between March 5 and 22. The last of the Job offers and student appointments are in place by April 5. |
| **April** | UBC Sustainability Scholars Program hires successful candidates, holds a program orientation for the Scholars, and works with mentors on getting projects started. |
| **April 29 to August 12** | Students work 250 hours (part time) to complete their summer internship projects. UBC Sustainability Scholars Program provides professional skills training. |
| **Late August / early September** | Evaluation survey distributed to mentors and scholars. Project partner invoices distributed. |
| **Late September** | Wrap up event. Scholars present their work at the Research to Action: Advancing Urban Sustainability Conference |

**PREFERRED PROJECTS HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUALITIES:**

* The primary project tasks involve research related to the organization’s wellbeing/social sustainability goals. Proposed topics will be evaluated in terms of how they further the UBC Wellbeing Priority Areas and the goals and principles in the[Okanagan Charter for Health Promoting Campuses & Universities](https://wellbeing.ubc.ca/okanagan-charter), [UBC’s 20-Year Sustainability Strategy](https://sustain.ubc.ca/sites/sustain.ubc.ca/files/uploads/CampusSustainability/CS_PDFs/PlansReports/Plans/20-Year-Sustainability-Strategy-UBC.pdf)*,* and [People and Places](https://strategicplan.ubc.ca/core-areas/people-places/).
* The scope offers sufficient challenge to a graduate student, allowing them to engage in larger, meaningful projects with minimal routine clerical work.
* The deliverables are manageable within the allotted 250 hours of work.
* The value to the organization and how the Scholar’s work will be actionable is evident.
* A mentor from within the organization who has the relevant expertise will be available to provide guidance to the Scholar throughout the project.

**CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION**

As a partner organization/project mentor participating in the UBC Sustainability Scholars program, you are required to undertake the following:

* Between March 1 and 22 interview short listed candidates, perform reference checks, and inform the UBC Sustainability Initiative Program Manager of your chosen candidate.
* Where possible provide your scholar with a workspace for a portion of the term of their appointment.
* Work with your scholar to establish clear objectives and boundaries for their project.
* Spend time with the scholar to guide and mentor their work. Note that the first few weeks will require the greatest amount of your time to refine the project, orient them, develop the project plan and connect them to the relevant information sources. After that, anticipate meeting with the scholar on a regular basis by phone or in person to stay on top of the project. Time permitting, a minimum of 1 hour per week is ideal.
* Ensure the scholar provides the agreed upon deliverables on time and of suitable quality. Note that UBC does not warrant the quality of the student’s work or provide project management of the students. It is the mentor’s responsibility to provide the support necessary for satisfactory completion of the project.
* Reimburse USI for your share of the student’s salary costs (invoices are sent out in late September/early October).

You will notice that the deliverables include a public facing document (either a final product or an executive summary) which will be included in the UBC online project library. Please visit the project [library](https://sustain.ubc.ca/get-involved/students/internships-and-employment/ubc-sustainability-scholars-program/project-library) for examples of other UBC Sustainability Scholars projects.

A project proposal template with examples is provided below. Please use it to develop your own project proposal.

**Deadline to submit Wellbeing-funded project proposals for the summer 2019 program is January 17, 2019, although applicants are encouraged to submit earlier.**

We will be in contact with you if any clarification is needed.

**Research project title**

Feasibility Study and Implementation Plan on Baselining Food Insecurity at UBC

**Goal or Operations Plan objective**

Eliminate Severe Food Insecurity

Objective: Help support the achievement of Goal 4 of UBC’s Action Framework for a Nutritionally Sound Campus: No member of our community experiences hunger due to severe food insecurity.

**Please specify the strategic area(s) this project supports:**

Okanagan Charter:

20 Year Sustainability Strategy:

UBC Wellbeing Priority Area:

UBC People and Place Strategy:

**Outline scope of project and why it is of value to your organization. Describe how and when the scholar’s work will be actionable.**

* Conduct a literature and best practices review of food insecurity at the national, regional and local level – particularly in Higher Education, including
  + Interviews with faculty experts who have done research on food insecurity at UBC to inform a UBC-specific context
  + Literature review that includes research on the methodology of how to best measure and baseline food insecurity, how to connect it to data on student achievement and post-secondary outcomes, as well as how to measure food insecurity amongst other members of the community in academic institutions
* Review existing validated instruments to measure food insecurity
* Design a food insecurity survey with appropriate measures for students, faculty, and staff audiences
* In consultation with faculty experts and staff mentors, design a food insecurity survey suitable for dissemination to students, faculty and staff.
* Work with UBC Stakeholders to identify opportunities for including the instrument in existing UBC surveys for students (undergrad and graduate), staff, and faculty on both UBC campuses.
* Make recommendations to address potential gaps.

**Deliverables**

*Note that a final deliverable either a full report or, if the report contains confidential information, an executive summary is required by the end of the program (August 12, 2019). The deliverable will be archived in the online Scholars Project Library and made publicly available.*

* A final report, containing a summary of completed work with survey instrument, and further recommendations complemented by a final PowerPoint presentation to key stakeholders
* Literature and best practices review of food insecurity in Canada and in post-secondary settings
* Summary report of interviews with stakeholders
* Final report [or Executive Summary] for the UBC Sustainability Scholars online project library

**Staff Mentor and Department**

*If you plan to take time off over the duration of the project, please specify who will act as an alternate mentor for your Scholar during your time away.*

Mentor: Name, Job Title, email address, unit location, phone number

Alternate (if applicable): Name, Job Title, email address, unit location, phone number

**Time Commitment**

*Please indicate the total numbers of hours your scholar will need to complete the project, the time frame (between April 29 to August 12), any critical dates for the project, and the optimal schedule for your scholar’s work.*

* This project will take **250\*** hours to complete.
* This project must be completed between (start and end date)
* The scholar is to complete hours between (work hours for your department, and days of week), approximately **##** hours per week.
* If applicable, list dates of any mandatory meetings, special events, etc. that you require your Scholar to be available

**\*\***The standard duration of a Scholars internship is **250** hours. If your project requires more time, you may increase the number of hours (up to an additional 250 hours or 500 in total) to be completed during the term of the program (April 29 – August 12). Student hours beyond the base 250 **must be fully funded by the project partner**. Note that at 500 hours the Scholar will be working at a near full-time basis.

**Skill set/background required/preferred**

*This section will be used to match students with your project. Please be as specific as possible in describing the skillsets you require—they will be used to guide the application shortlisting and in developing skills training and professional development workshops. Feel free to add to or delete from the list below as necessary.*

Excellent research and writing skills.

Demonstrated interest in health and wellbeing.

Experience conducting stakeholder engagement events, including facilitation skills, is an asset.

Familiarity with research methodologies and survey techniques

Statistical analysis

Excellent public speaking and presentation skills

Community engagement experience

Familiarity conducting focus group research

Strong analytical skills

Ability to work independently

Deadline oriented

Project management and organizational skills

Chemical engineering background

Programming skills

Website creation and design skills

Familiarity with WordPress, Drupal, or other website content tools.

Strong technical and drafting skills

Demonstrated experience in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

GIS training or experience.

Familiarity with benchmarking methods and tools

Comfortable interacting with strangers to conduct public/in person surveys

Strong technical writing skills

Familiarity preparing feasibility studies

Experience with financial modelling and analysis

Design and layout skills

Criminal Record Check [note that the project partner is responsible for reimbursing student’s expenses pertaining to getting a criminal record check done]

Class 5 driver’s licence and access to a vehicle [note that the project partner is responsible for reimbursing mileage or car share expenses incurred by the Scholar]

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