

Summer 2024 Internship Opportunity

Title

Climate Equity by Design: A Collaborative Planning Internship

Organization

Community Social Planning Council (CSPC)

Project Background & Overview

The Community Social Planning Council (CSPC) of Greater Victoria is dedicated to fostering sustainable and equitable community development. One of our notable initiatives is the Transportation ACES (Access, Climate, and Economic Security) program, which underscores our commitment to promoting sustainable transportation solutions. Our collaborative venture with the City of Victoria on the "Climate Equity by Design" (CEbD) project aligns with our broader goals of enhancing community resilience and addressing climate change impacts.

The CEbD project emerged from the recognition of the pressing need for climate adaptation strategies, especially in light of recent extreme weather events which have underscored the disproportionate risks faced by vulnerable populations. The initiative builds upon the City of Victoria's existing community-based adaptation planning process, aiming to pilot new approaches that embed equity into municipal climate adaptation planning and implementation.

Through this collaborative effort, we seek to create a model that not only addresses the unique climate adaptation needs of Victoria's diverse communities but also serves as a replicable framework for other municipalities. This initiative represents a step towards more inclusive and effective climate adaptation strategies that prioritize the needs and voices of the most vulnerable segments of our population.

Project Description

Purpose:

The "Climate Equity by Design" project aims to develop and pilot innovative practices that embed equity into municipal climate adaptation planning and implementation. By focusing on the needs and insights of vulnerable populations, this project seeks to enhance the effectiveness and inclusivity of climate adaptation strategies in Victoria.

Value:

Addresses the critical need for climate adaptation amid increasing extreme weather events. Fosters inclusivity and community resilience by centering the needs of vulnerable populations. Provides a replicable model for equity-driven climate adaptation for other municipalities. Contributes to the broader sustainability goals of the CSPC and the City of Victoria.

Actionability:

The project's actionable phases include community engagement, development of best practices, implementation of these practices in collaboration with the City of Victoria, evaluation for continuous improvement, and dissemination of the model to other municipalities.

Timeline:

May - August 2024: Community engagement, best practices development, and initial implementation stages.

September 2024 - April 2025: Further implementation and ongoing evaluation.

May 2025 onward: Dissemination and promotion of the model for wider adoption.

The scholar will be heavily involved in the community engagement phase and the development of best practices, providing a valuable opportunity to contribute to meaningful climate adaptation efforts and to gain practical experience in the field of municipal climate adaptation planning and climate equity.

Project Scope

This project entails a collaborative initiative between the Community Social Planning Council (CSPC) and the City of Victoria to address climate adaptation through an equity lens. The primary activities for the scholar include:

Community Engagement:

- Conduct outreach to engage vulnerable populations in Victoria.
- Facilitate discussions to gather insights on climate risks and adaptation preferences.
- Document findings from community engagement activities.

Development of Equity-Driven Best Practices:

- Review existing climate adaptation plans and identify gaps in addressing the needs of vulnerable populations.
- Collaborate with the CSPC and City of Victoria to develop best practices for embedding equity in climate adaptation planning.
- Draft guidelines and recommendations for equity-driven climate adaptation.

Initial Implementation and Evaluation:

- Support the implementation of developed best practices in collaboration with the City of Victoria.
- Gather feedback from stakeholders and evaluate the effectiveness of implemented strategies.
- Document the process and outcomes for continuous improvement.

Dissemination:

- Prepare a comprehensive report documenting the community engagement process, developed best practices, initial implementation, and evaluation findings.
- Develop materials to share the project outcomes with other municipalities and stakeholders.

Key Research Questions:

- What are the unique climate risks and adaptation preferences of vulnerable populations in Victoria?
- How can equity be effectively embedded in municipal climate adaptation planning and implementation?
- What are the impacts of the implemented equity-driven climate adaptation strategies on the community?
- How can the developed best practices be replicated or tailored for other municipalities?

The scholar will work closely with the CSPC Climate Equity Team and the City of Victoria's climate adaptation planning team to ensure the project aligns with both the community's needs and the city's sustainability goals.

Deliverables

The core deliverable will be a comprehensive report due by August 15, 2024, outlining the project objectives, background, research findings, analysis, and recommendations. This report will serve as a foundational document for both the Community Social Planning Council and the City of Victoria in advancing equity-driven climate adaptation planning.

Specific deliverables from the scholar include:

- Community Engagement Summary: Detailed documentation of the community engagement process, including methodologies used, stakeholders engaged, and findings.
- Equity-Driven Best Practices Guide: A guide on best practices for embedding equity in climate adaptation planning developed in collaboration with CSPC and City of Victoria teams.
- Evaluation Report: An evaluation report analyzing the effectiveness of implemented equity-driven climate adaptation strategies, with recommendations for continuous improvement.
- Dissemination Materials: Materials such as presentations, infographics, or briefs to share the project outcomes with other municipalities and stakeholders.

- Interactive Online Mapping Tool: An interactive tool that maps local adaptive capacities, identified risks, and proposed adaptation actions based on community input.
- Project Timeline and Milestones Documentation: Documentation of project timelines, milestones achieved, challenges encountered, and how these challenges were addressed.
- Final Presentation: A presentation summarizing the project's objectives, methodologies, findings, and recommendations to be delivered to the CSPC, City of Victoria, and other stakeholders.

All deliverables should be provided in a digital format, and where applicable, be prepared for publication or dissemination to broader audiences. The scholar will work closely with the CSPC Climate Equity Team and the City of Victoria's climate adaptation planning team to ensure all deliverables align with project objectives and stakeholder expectations.

Time Commitment

The Summer 2024 program runs from May 1 to August 15, 2024, within which the scholar is expected to complete 250 hours of work on the project. The following are critical dates and an optimal schedule for the scholar's work:

- May 1 - May 15, 2024: Project Onboarding: Familiarization with the CSPC, City of Victoria, and key stakeholders. Understanding project objectives and expectations.
- May 16 - June 30, 2024: Community Engagement: Conducting community outreach, facilitating discussions, and documenting findings.
- July 1 - July 31, 2024: Development of Equity-Driven Best Practices: Reviewing existing plans, drafting guidelines and recommendations, and initial implementation of strategies.
- August 1 - August 10, 2024: Evaluation and Preparation of Deliverables: Gathering feedback, evaluating implemented strategies, and preparing the final report and other deliverables.
- August 11 - August 15, 2024: Final Presentation and Project Wrap-up: Presenting project outcomes to stakeholders and wrapping up the project.

It's important to note that while these dates provide a general framework, there's flexibility to adjust based on the scholar's progress, unforeseen challenges, and stakeholder availability. Regular check-ins will be scheduled between the scholar, CSPC, and City of Victoria teams to ensure the project is on track and to provide the necessary support and guidance.

Required/Preferred Skills and Background

- Excellent research and writing skills
- Demonstrated interest in sustainability
- Experience conducting stakeholder engagement events, including facilitation skills, is an asset

- Familiarity with research methodologies and survey techniques
- 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
- Comfortable interacting with strangers to conduct public/in person surveys

Additional Information

We are seeking a candidate with a strong interest in climate adaptation planning and equity, especially as it intersects with municipal policy and community engagement. In addition to the skills listed in the previous section, the following attributes would make a candidate particularly well-suited for this project:

- Knowledge in Municipal Climate Adaptation Planning: Understanding the principles and practices of climate adaptation planning at the municipal level will be crucial for navigating the project's objectives.
- Understanding of Equity and Inclusion Principles: A foundational understanding of equity and inclusion principles, especially as they relate to climate adaptation and community engagement, is essential for the success of this project.
- Synthesis and Communication Skills: The ability to synthesize complex information into clear, accessible formats for diverse audiences will be valuable in ensuring the project's findings and outcomes are effectively communicated.
- Familiarity with Interactive Online Mapping Tools and Data Visualization Techniques: Experience or willingness to learn about interactive online mapping tools and data visualization techniques will be beneficial for the project's objective of creating an interactive online mapping tool.
- Collaborative Work with Diverse Communities: Experience or willingness to work collaboratively with Indigenous communities, racialized minorities, and other equity-denied communities is vital for ensuring the project is inclusive and representative of the diverse voices within Victoria.
- Community Engagement Experience: Prior experience in community engagement, especially in a context of environmental sustainability or climate adaptation, would be advantageous.

These additional skills and experiences will not only contribute to the success of the project but will also align well with the overarching goals of fostering equity and inclusivity in climate adaptation

planning. The ideal candidate would be enthusiastic about working collaboratively with a diverse team and engaging with the community to drive meaningful change in climate adaptation planning through an equity lens.

UVic Sustainability Scholars Program

All current UVic graduate students are invited to apply for an impactful sustainability research project. Sustainability Scholars Program internships are designed and mentored by partner organizations and paid at a rate of \$30.87 per hour (after deductions) for 250 hours from May 1 to Aug 15. Explore details on our [website](#) and review eligibility criteria before applying. Contact Laurel Currie, Program Manager, with any questions: sustainability-scholars@uvic.ca.
