

## Summer 2024 Internship Opportunity

# UVic Sustainable Procurement Initiatives: Developing an Implementation Strategy for Supplier Code of Conduct and EcoVadis Supplier Sustainability Assessments

## Organization

UVic Purchasing

## Project Background & Overview

Public procurement accounts for a significant share of the global economy and possesses the potential to shape markets towards more sustainable production and consumption practices. UVic, committed to sustainability, has set ambitious goals to reduce its environmental impact. Purchasing Services at UVic plays a pivotal role by providing procurement, strategic sourcing, and supply management services across the university, supporting sustainability and climate mitigation practices. Our approach incorporates a triple bottom line framework, considering the financial, social, and environmental impacts of major purchasing decisions.

In 2019, Purchasing Services established a Supplier Code of Conduct, outlining conduct standards for UVic suppliers. In 2020, UVic became the first Canadian university to collaborate with [EcoVadis](#), a global leader in business sustainability ratings, to assess key supplier performance. This research internship project aims to further UVic's sustainability objectives by advancing the implementation of the Supplier Code of Conduct and encouraging suppliers to participate in EcoVadis sustainability assessments. The significance of these initiatives is underscored by Bill S-211, which mandates certain Canadian companies to report on forced labour in their supply chains.

UVic recognizes its role as an environmental steward and prioritizes the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Sustainable procurement, characterized by ethical sourcing, environmental responsibility, and social equity, emerges as a crucial lever for the university to drive meaningful change and contribute to mitigating climate change risks.

## Project Description

The Sustainability Scholar will take the lead in examining sustainable procurement practices at UVic. The focus will be on identifying ways to enhance these practices, with a specific emphasis on minimizing the environmental impact of purchases and fostering positive social outcomes. Key objectives researching ways to disseminate the Supplier Code of Conduct widely across the UVic campus and among stakeholders and strategies for promoting the adoption of EcoVadis

sustainability assessments among key suppliers. This project aims to yield valuable insights that contribute to the advancement of UVic's procurement processes, aligning closely with the university's overarching sustainability goals.

## **Project Scope**

The Scholar will be responsible for researching best practices in sustainable public procurement, particularly within post-secondary institutions. Responsibilities include conducting a literature review, supporting the development of an outreach strategy to raise awareness of the Supplier Code of Conduct at UVic, targeting stakeholders and decision-makers. Additionally, the Scholar will explore strategies to promote the adoption of the EcoVadis business sustainability assessments among UVic suppliers. Two key research questions are:

1. How can UVic stakeholders and decision-makers be effectively engaged to consider the environmental and social impact of our purchases, while raising awareness of the Supplier Code of Conduct?
2. What are the most effective approaches to encourage UVic suppliers to participate in EcoVadis business sustainability assessments?

## **Deliverables**

The Scholar will develop a report that outlines the research findings, analysis, and future recommendations for:

1. Enhancing awareness of sustainable procurement practices at UVic based on UVic's Supplier Code of Conduct.
2. Engaging key suppliers to be rated by EcoVadis.

The report will be due August 15, 2024

## **Time Commitment**

The project will run from May 1, 2024, to August 15, 2024, and will require a total of 250 hours of work. The Scholar's work schedule will be flexible, but key project milestones and meetings will need to be scheduled in advance. If necessary, an earlier start date can be arranged.

## **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

- 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
- Familiarity with WordPress, or other website content tools
- Strong technical and drafting skills
- Comfortable interacting with strangers to conduct public/in person surveys
- Familiarity preparing feasibility studies

## Additional Information

This project will provide a practical, actionable way for UVic to advance its commitment to sustainable procurement and the UN SDGs, in particular:

1. **Sustainable Consumption and Production:** The project aligns with SDG 12, which aims to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns. By implementing a Supplier Code of Conducting and adopting the EcoVadis supplier sustainability assessments, UVic can ensure that its procurement processes are sustainable and that its suppliers are adhering to environmental and social standards.
2. **Climate Action:** The project also supports SDG 13, which calls for urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. Sustainable procurement can help reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with the production and transportation of goods and services.
3. **UVic's Sustainability Goals:** UVic has set ambitious targets in greenhouse gas emissions, sustainability, and the advancement of the UN SDGs. This project will help UVic to achieve these targets by making its supply chain and procurement processes more sustainable.

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## 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](mailto:sustainability-scholars@uvic.ca).

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