

Graduate Internship Opportunity

SUMMER 2026

Project Title

Historic Ecological Baseline of the Saanich Inlet and Surrounding Watersheds

Organization

Malahat Nation, Saanich Inlet Forum

About the Opportunity – Sustainability Scholars Program Info

These 250-hour internships are offered in partnership with community organizations and provide UVic graduate students from any discipline with opportunities to gain applied sustainability research experience. Scholars work under the guidance of a partner mentor and contribute to projects with real community impact.

The 2026 pay rate is approximately \$34.72/hour. To apply, visit the [Sustainability Scholars Program website](#) and review the application guide to confirm eligibility and required materials. Applications close at 11:59 pm PT on Sunday, February 1, 2026. Questions? Contact Laurel Currie: sustainability-scholars@uvic.ca.

Project Background

The Saanich Inlet Forum (Forum) is a collaboration between Malahat, Tsartlip, Tseycum, Tsawout and Pauquachin First Nations (Partner Nations) and the Province of British Columbia. A key objective of the Forum is to develop a shared approach for a Saanich Inlet cumulative effects assessment that values and acknowledges the integration of ecological values with cultural and human wellbeing recognizing that everything is interconnected.

The Forum is applying for two Sustainability Scholars, who will be mentored by Pauquachin and Malahat First Nations. Scholars will support the development of foundational information needed to assess cumulative impacts to the Saanich Inlet and, by extension, to the First Nations' Treaty and Aboriginal Rights.

Project Description

The Saanich Inlet is susceptible to cumulative impacts of urban, transportation and energy infrastructure in a fast-growing part of BC. This area is also the home of the WSÁNEĆ peoples, who hold historic Treaty rights to fish and hunt as formerly.

The Sustainability Scholar will develop a literature review of publicly available historic baseline information related to the Saanich Inlet and the surrounding watersheds, with a focus on pre-contact conditions. Where possible, the literature review should include relevance and contribution of ecological baseline conditions to Indigenous food systems. Project outcomes

will include a narrative report/summary, an annotated bibliography, and compilation of relevant literature.

Project Scope

This work will provide a foundation for the Forum to qualitatively and quantitatively describe disruptions to traditional food systems from development in and around the Saanich Inlet. This in turn will enable the Forum to inform restoration planning and inform future development decisions.

The Scholar will work closely with the Saanich Inlet Forum Coordinator to complete the deliverables. The Coordinator will assist in accessing appropriate resources, including from communities if needed.

Deliverables

- A narrative report/summary of the work
- An annotated bibliography
- A compilation of the relevant literature

Time Commitment + Timeline

- The project will take approximately 250 hours between May 1 and August 15, 2026.
- All deliverables must be completed by August 15.
- A detailed schedule and timeline will be developed with the Scholar at the outset of the project.

Required / Preferred Skills and Experience

- Excellent research and writing skills
- Demonstrated interest in sustainability
- Familiarity with research methodologies and survey techniques
- public speaking and presentation skills
- Community engagement experience
- Familiarity conducting focus group research
- Ability to work independently
- Deadline oriented
- Project management and organizational skills
- Strong technical skills
- Comfortable interacting with strangers to conduct public/in person surveys

Additional Information

Priority will be given to indigenous students. Knowledge of WSÁNEĆ Nations and history, Douglas Treaty, and indigenous culture is ideal and will help applicant but is **not essential**. Most likely no additional costs will be associated with this project; however, if they come up the Saanich Inlet Forum will cover the costs.