

The background of the slide is a photograph of a coastal landscape. It shows a wide, sandy beach in the foreground, with waves breaking onto it. In the middle ground, there are several large, dark rocks. The background features a range of forested hills or mountains under a hazy, overcast sky.

Résumés and Cover Letters for Sustainability Scholars Applications

Samantha Ogrodnik
Career Educator for Graduate Studies
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Agenda

Welcome

Developing a Targeted Résumé

Crafting a Tailored Cover Letter

Q&A

Conclusion & Resources



Meet your career educator

| Samantha Ogrodnik

Samantha supports students in the
Faculty of Graduate Studies.

**As part of UVic Career Services, she can give
you one-on-one help with:**

- ✓ writing résumés, CVs & cover letters
- ✓ exploring academic & non-academic careers
- ✓ preparing for interviews and more!

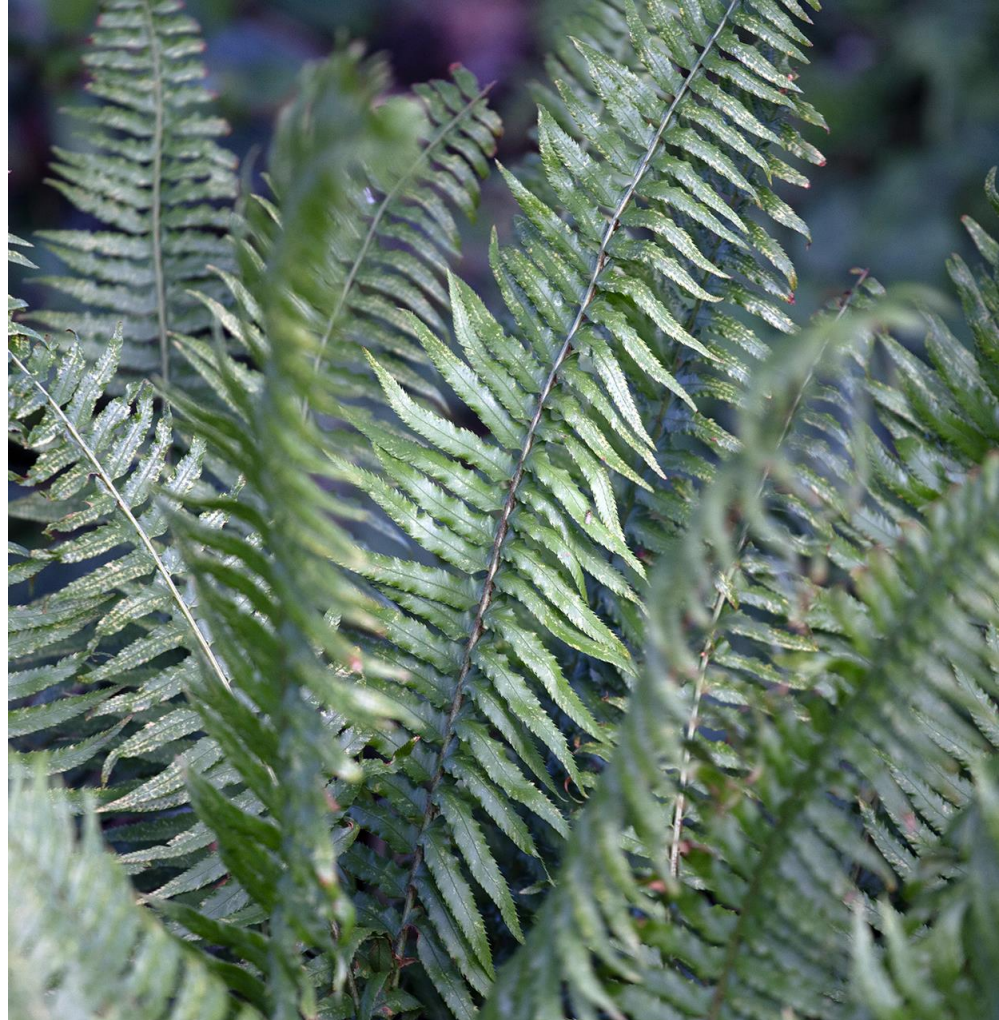


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Developing a Targeted Résumé

- everything must be relevant to the employer
- tailor your points to the position you are seeking
- must be customized, concise, factual and organized by relevance



Serena Science

Address, City, Province, Postal code

Phone number

Email address

Portfolio, blog, website, LinkedIn (optional)

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Fourth year biochemistry student at the University of Ottawa
- Problem-solving skills developed through two years of experience in laboratory research
- Excellent communication skills honed through two years of mentoring and tutoring
- Very good technical skills in Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Internet research tools
- Fluent in English and French, intermediate-level Italian
- Member of the Canadian Society of Biology

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science, Honours in Biochemistry

year - present

University of Ottawa, ON

- Major projects:
 - Assessed the genetic composition of micro-organisms including bacteria and fungi
 - Conducted research on the structure of animal and plant tissue cells
 - Participated in field and lab work to identify organisms in the Mer Bleue Conservation Area
 - Evaluated the structure and functioning of animal pathogens and toxins
- Expected date of graduation: month, year

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant CO-OP

year - present

Organization, City, Province

- Researched and analyzed new information and resources related to the ramifications of infestation-related crop destruction to prepare weekly update reports for the research team
- Conducted experiments and data collection in plant heredity and breeding in collaboration with the senior researcher in order to update departmental databases
- Identified and classified plant species by *Plantae* and *Magnoliophyta* to facilitate further research on the specimens

Laboratory Assistant

year - year

Organization, City, Province

- Collected, analyzed and interpreted results of plant samples to study the effects of common pesticides on plant development using spectrophotometry techniques
- Worked independently with minimum supervision as well as in a team to accomplish weekly goals, such as updating data logbooks and creating laboratory reports
- Participated in weekly health and safety inspections to maintain sanitization and safety standards

Biology Mentor

year - year

Organization, City, Province

- Taught effective study techniques to students who needed guidance throughout the academic session
- Mentored first-year science students on biology and chemistry courses on a weekly basis
- Provided academic and emotional support to first year students to help them transition to the university environment

Contact Info

Summary of Qualifications / Professional Profile

Education

Experience (Professional/Work/Relevant/Volunteer)

Tutor year - year
 Organization, City, Province

- Explained biological concepts to high school students on a weekly basis after school hours
- Devised alternative methods of teaching based on student learning styles to facilitate and accommodate to students' various learning needs

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Nurse Assistant year - present
 Organization, City, Province

- Escorted patients to various tests and appointments at the hospital
- Assisted nurses with patient care by entering patients in logbooks and meeting basic and immediate patient and visitor needs
- Classified patient documents with discretion to facilitate the nurses' workload

Facilitator summer year
 Organization, City, Province

- Organized a variety of fundraising activities such as volleyball tournaments, bake sales and talent concerts
- Visited elementary schools in underprivileged areas of Zambia to assess community schooling needs
- Helped build a school and a cultural centre to provide the region with necessary education and community engagement facilities
- Participated in cultural events with local students to gain a better understanding of the culture and the needs of the community

LABORATORY SKILLS

- | | |
|--|--|
| • Aseptic techniques | • Microscope work |
| • Biochemical assays | • Spectrophotometry |
| • SDS-PAGE, PCR | • Nuclear Magnetic Resonance and Mass Spectroscopy |
| • HPLC, Flash Column, Ion Exchange and Thin Layer Chromatography | • Simple and differential staining |
| • Electrophoresis | • Titration |
| • Sequencing | • Recombinant DNA technology |
| • Restriction Endonuclease Digest | |

AWARDS

Fourth Annual Poster Day Winner, Department of Biochemistry, University of Ottawa, ON year
 Dean's Honour List, University of Ottawa, ON year - year
 Admission Scholarship, University of Ottawa, ON year - year

INTERESTS AND ACTIVITIES

- Enjoys playing Ultimate Frisbee and practising yoga
- Portaged in Algonquin Park for a week
- Wildlife amateur photographer

Relevant / Volunteer /Community Engagement / Leadership Experience

Relevant Skills (both technical & people/soft skills)

Suggested: Training, Certifications, Professional Memberships, Professional Development

Optional (if you have space) : Awards & Achievements

For these applications: include references (1 academic, 1 professional)

Professional Profile / Summary of Qualifications

- Your professional identity or educational status, including field of study
- Relevant skills or traits developed through specific experiences
- Soft skill strengths, along with where they were cultivated
- Technical skills, software proficiency, or tools expertise

Can be a short paragraph or bulleted statements
(3-4 sentences or bullet points)



Summary of Qualifications

- Master's Degree in Education (Educational Counselling) from the University of Ottawa
- Over 2 years' personal counseling-related experience
- Two years of career counseling-related experience and over 3 years of teaching/tutoring/mentoring
- Experience in brief therapy model, current counselling theories and practices
- Experience in working in emotionally challenging environments and crisis situations
- Proven ability to work both independently and as part of a team by working as a teacher
- Excellent organizational, time management and multitasking skills, as demonstrated by organizing weekly workshops as an intern counsellor
- Certified member of the Canadian Counselling Association (CCA)
- Excellent knowledge of Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Windows and Internet research
- Fluently bilingual in both official languages

Too long.
What can be
removed?

Master's-level Educational Counsellor with expertise in personal and career counseling, teaching, and mentoring. Skilled in brief therapy models, crisis intervention, and current counseling practices. Strong organizational and multitasking abilities; experienced in facilitating workshops and working in emotionally challenging environments.

[Professional Title or Degree] with expertise in [key skill areas]. Skilled in [specific technical or soft skills], with experience in [relevant experience or industry knowledge]. [Personal work style or strength], demonstrated through [specific achievement].

Skilled in [specific **soft skills**], with experience in [relevant experience or industry knowledge].

Academic Expertise: Graduate studies in urban planning with a focus on sustainability, climate resilience, and environmental policy.

Project Coordination: Demonstrated success managing large-scale initiatives, including coordinating hundreds of team members and ensuring accessibility in project deliverables.

Stakeholder Engagement: Skilled in communication and facilitation, fostering collaboration among diverse groups and stakeholders in complex decision-making processes.

Leadership and Teamwork: Led a team in a high-performance environment for two years, showcasing strengths in leadership, collaboration, and team motivation toward shared objectives.

Event Planning and Facilitation: Proficient in designing and delivering programs and training materials, with an emphasis on creativity, inclusivity, and adaptability.

Examples



Skilled in [specific **technical skills**], with experience in [relevant experience or industry knowledge].

- **Project Management:** Event coordination, scheduling, resource allocation, and team training for large-scale initiatives.
- **Stakeholder Communication:** Clear and effective correspondence with diverse groups, including training, manual development, and dispute resolution.
- **Research and Analysis:** Skilled in qualitative and quantitative data analysis, information synthesis, and policy evaluation.
- **Administrative Tools:** Proficient in managing online applications, invoice processing, and payment systems (e.g., POS machines).
- **Technical Systems:** Experience with electronic tabulator machines, including testing, troubleshooting, and user training.
- **Engagement Tools:** Facilitation of workshops, activity planning, and behavioral management for youth programs.
- **Accessibility Planning:** Experience incorporating equity and accessibility principles in project design and execution.

Examples



Skills

Choose 3 categories of skills relevant to the position
(Focus on sustainability, project management, data analysis, stakeholder engagement, etc.)

Include examples from your academic, extracurricular, professional or research experience.



Research & Analytical Skills

- Qualitative and quantitative research
- Policy analysis and evaluation
- Environmental impact assessments
- Data visualization and interpretation
- Literature reviews and case study analysis
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

Technical & Scientific Skills

- Climate modeling and sustainability metrics
- Renewable energy systems knowledge
- Life Cycle Assessment (LCA)
- Carbon accounting and emissions tracking
- Statistical analysis (R, Python, SPSS)
- Environmental monitoring and reporting

Project Management & Coordination

- Grant writing and funding proposals
- Program evaluation and impact assessment
- Budgeting and resource allocation
- Deliverables tracking and reporting
- Event planning and facilitation



Stakeholder Engagement & Communication

- Community outreach and consultation
- Cross-sector collaboration (Indigenous, government, nonprofit)
- Public speaking and workshop facilitation
- Report writing and policy briefs
- Social media and knowledge mobilization

Sustainability & Environmental Policy

- Climate adaptation and mitigation planning
- Circular economy and zero-waste strategies
- Urban sustainability and green infrastructure
- Environmental justice and Indigenous governance
- Biodiversity and conservation policy



Leadership & Teamwork

- Cross-functional collaboration
- Conflict resolution and mediation
- Volunteer and community engagement
- Equity, diversity, and inclusion in sustainability



Digital & Technical Tools

- GIS Mapping (ArcGIS, QGIS)
- Data analysis (Excel, Tableau, Power BI)
- Programming languages for data science (Python, R)
- Graphic design for sustainability reports (Canva, Adobe Illustrator)



Organizational skills

- Coordinated logistics, catering and transportation for an annual conference on health promotion to ensure the smooth running of the event
- Managed the schedule for a group of 40 volunteers attending the...
- Organized focus groups for a study on... to help implement the marketing strategy

Research and analytical skills

- Researched and collected data on the integration of children with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder in primary schools, resulting in the development of a resource document for teachers
- Collected and analyzed information to formulate a qualitative research report on...
- Researched...resulting in a publication on...

Communication skills

- Delivered presentations to groups of over 50 participants for the Annual Health Promotion Fair to promote the event and recruit volunteers
- Wrote and edited advertisements for...
- Collaborated with partner institutes and associations to organize...

- Use accomplishment-based statements (with an outcome or result)
- Use past –tense action verbs

Education

- ✓ Include past degrees, diplomas, certification programs, if conferred to you by a post-secondary institution.
 - ✓ You may also have a Certifications section for additional credentials you've gained through industry certification programs or courses.
- ✓ Include title of degree/diploma, or certification, university or college, location, and date.
 - ✓ Date = year completed and conferred.
 - ✓ Date = year started to present if in process of completing.
 - ✓ Date – year started to year of expected completion.
- ✓ For international credentials that may not be familiar to an employer:
 - ✓ You are welcome to put an asterisk (*) below the degree/diploma, or certification, and share a few details about the credential.
 - ✓ Specialization, area of focus, relevant educational learning.

Education

Degree title

year – present

University of Victoria, BC

- Relevant courses, projects, title of thesis, GPA out of 9 (if impressive)
- Scholarships, awards, Dean's list
- Expected graduation date: month, year

Education

Master in Community and Regional Planning

2024 – present

University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC

- Relevant coursework: Urban Design and Sustainable Development, Land Use Planning and Policy, Transportation Planning and Policy, Housing Policy and Community Development, Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation, Disaster and Resilience Planning, Indigenous Community Planning, Environmental Impact Assessment.

Bachelor of Arts, International Relations

2020-2024

Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, BC

- Dean's Honour List (2021-2024)
- Recognized for achieving distinction as Captain of SFU Volleyball Team (2023)
- Undergraduate Research Post Presentation at SFU International Relations Undergraduate Research Symposium (2023)
- Relevant Coursework: Land Use Planning, Environmental Planning, Indigenous Community Planning, Urban Design, Transportation Planning.

Experience

- ✓ Consider how you wish to organize these sections based on what is most relevant to the job posting.
 - ✓ Relevant Experience
 - ✓ Relevant “X” Experience
 - ✓ Industry Experience
 - ✓ Research Experience
 - ✓ Relevant Technical Experience
 - ✓ Relevant Project Experience
 - ✓ Additional Experience
 - ✓ Volunteer Experience
 - ✓ Leadership Experience
- ✓ Organize your experiences within sections you include in your resume, and use the same formatting. throughout each section
 - ✓ Include title of role, company/organization, location, and date.
- ✓ Provide bulleted statements that showcase actions taken to complete responsibilities and positive outcomes.

Experience

Title of position

month year – month year

Name of organization, City, Province

- Use accomplishment-based statements
- Use action verbs that demonstrate specific skill sets
- Be consistent with your verb tenses
- 3 – 5 bullet points

Accomplishment Statements

[VERB + TASK + **RESULT**]

RESULTS illustrate the value provided to the employer and can be quantitative or qualitative:

- Outcomes
- Goals
- Numbers
- Metrics
- Feedback
- Skills learned

Accomplishment Statements

Verb + Task

Coordinated stakeholder engagement processes by designing training manuals and facilitating workshops for over 400 participants

Verb + Task + Result

Coordinated stakeholder engagement processes by designing training manuals and facilitating workshops for over 400 participants, resulting in improved understanding and alignment with sustainability-focused initiatives.



Accomplishment Statements

Municipal Elections Clerk

Mar. 2022 – Apr. 2023

City of London

- Determined, inspected and contracted dozens of polling locations while accounting for accessibility, proximity to voters and feedback from stakeholders
- Designed and managed three online election worker applications and coordinated the interviews of over 1500+ election workers
- Crafted three training manuals and effectively trained over 400 workers
- Processed invoices and payments for workers and candidates as well as operated a POS machine
- Managed the electronic tabulator machines including testing accuracy, training and troubleshooting
- Clearly and impartially communicated the Municipal Elections Act, relevant bylaws and the election process to candidates, third parties and electors in person and via phone and email correspondence

Accomplishment Statements

Challenge - The situation (problem or opportunity) that needed to be addressed

Action - The **step(s)** that you took to address the challenge

Result - The **outcome and impact** of the action you took to address the challenge

?

Laboratory Assistant
Organization, City, Province

year - year

- Collected, analyzed and interpreted results of plant samples to study the effects of common pesticides on plant development using spectrophotometry techniques
- Worked independently with minimum supervision as well as in a team to accomplish weekly goals, such as updating data logbooks and creating laboratory reports
- Participated in weekly health and safety inspections to maintain sanitization and safety standards

ChatGPT support

Dos this statement follow the CAR format? Collected, analyzed and interpreted results of plant samples to study the effects of common pesticides on plant development using spectrophotometry techniques



Yes, the statement follows the **CAR** format (Challenge, Action, Result) to some extent, but it can be improved by making the **Challenge** and **Result** more explicit. Here's how the statement currently fits into the CAR format:

- **Challenge:** Implied, but not explicitly stated. The challenge appears to be studying the effects of common pesticides on plant development.
- **Action:** "Collected, analyzed and interpreted results of plant samples using spectrophotometry techniques."
- **Result:** Implied but not explicitly mentioned. The result could include what was discovered or how the analysis contributed to understanding the effects of pesticides.

ChatGPT support

Revised Statement for Better CAR Alignment

To make it fully CAR-compliant, you can revise it as follows:

"Investigated the impact of common pesticides on plant development by collecting, analyzing, and interpreting spectrophotometry data, which identified significant changes in growth patterns and informed recommendations for pesticide usage."

- **Challenge:** Investigating the impact of pesticides on plant development.
- **Action:** Collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data using spectrophotometry.
- **Result:** Identified changes in growth patterns and informed recommendations.

This version explicitly states the **Challenge** and **Result**, ensuring it follows the CAR format thoroughly.



That's too long. Make it more concise please.

ChatGPT support

That's too long. Make it more concise please.



"Analyzed plant samples using spectrophotometry to study pesticide effects, identifying growth pattern changes and informing recommendations."



This version is concise while still following the **CAR** format:

- **Challenge:** Study pesticide effects on plants.
- **Action:** Analyzed plant samples using spectrophotometry.
- **Result:** Identified growth changes and informed recommendations.



Research Experience

- Conduct in-depth research on urban planning strategies, focusing on sustainability and resilience in disaster-prone communities, as part of graduate coursework at UBC.
- Analyzed and synthesized qualitative and quantitative data related to climate change impacts on urban infrastructure, producing actionable insights for community resilience planning.
- Developing a comparative framework to evaluate municipal sustainability policies, identifying best practices for greenhouse gas reduction and community engagement.
- Prepared comprehensive reports and presentations on environmental justice and reconciliation in planning, incorporating stakeholder perspectives and Indigenous knowledge systems.
- Designed GIS maps and visual data representations to support research on land use planning and climate adaptation strategies.
- Collaborated with faculty and peers to assess the effectiveness of public transportation systems in reducing urban carbon footprints, leveraging statistical tools to identify key trends.
- Engage with stakeholders through surveys and interviews to collect data on public attitudes toward green building initiatives and urban sustainability programs.
- Authored a literature review on global climate change politics, highlighting the intersection of policy, equity, and environmental outcomes.

References

1 academic and 1 professional reference are required for the résumé used for Sustainability Scholars applications

References

Dr. First Name Last Name – Title, University/Department

Email: email@example.com | Phone: (XXX) XXX-XXXX

First Name Last Name – Job Title, Organization

Email: email@example.com | Phone: (XXX) XXX-XXXX

Optional Sections

DISTINCTIONS (SCHOLARSHIPS, AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS)

- ✓ Prioritize (“Selected Awards”) and don’t allow this section to dominate page space

MEMBERSHIPS & AFFILIATIONS

- ✓ Typically relevant and active ones

CERTIFICATIONS & ADDITIONAL TRAINING

VOLUNTEERING / COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/LEADERSHIP

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIPS

ACTIVITIES & INTERESTS

- ✓ Not all recruiters care about this section, but those who do, care A LOT
- ✓ Use this section as a conversation starter, personal touch, and sense of who you are as a well-rounded person

An effective (and tailored) cover letter

Describes a story from your past experiences and connects the skills and lessons learned to the requirements of the role

Helps the reader to visualize you in the position



Jane Student

Victoria, BC | 987 654-3210 | jane.student@scott.edu

January 1, 20XX

Mr. John Smith
Director, Talent Acquisition
Company XYZ
12 East 3rd Street
New York, NY, 10001

Dear Mr. Smith:

Paragraph 1 (Introduction) – Clearly state who you are and why you are writing, referring to the specific position. Incorporate research you have done about the company, including individuals with whom you have spoken. Answer “why this company/industry.” Pique the reader’s interest, creating a hook that begins to tell the story of why you are qualified and how you can create value for the organization.

Paragraph 2/3 (Body) – In one to two paragraphs, draw the connection between your own skills, experiences and attributes and the requirements of the position. Use specific examples to bring these to life in a compelling way. If you used to work in a different industry/function, state your case for making the switch.

Paragraph 4 (Closing) – Restate your interest and recap what you can do for them. Make a specific ask of the employer (for example, request an invitation for an interview). Outline your next steps for follow-up. Always thank the reader.

Sincerely,

Jane Student

Format for a Cover Letter

Use the same “letterhead” set-up as your résumé
(name, address, email, phone number, LinkedIn address)

Date of writing

Employer’s address including title of contact person (if given)

Subject line (Re: stating the position, Job ID#)

Salutation including name of contact person (if unknown, you can skip this or use a generic one such as, “Dear Hiring Manager”)

Do not just list all your qualifications, like in your résumé, because they’ve probably read your résumé before reading your cover letter.

Closing, (e.g. Sincerely, Regards, etc.)

Your signature (if hard copy; if submitted electronically, use a digital signature or it can be omitted)

Your name, typed in full

Writing a cover letter

Example of a job posting


Position: Fraser Estuary Research Collaborative Student Internship

Organization: Fraser Estuary Research Collaborative (FERC).

Project Title: Advancing Flood Resilience for the Lower Mainland: Best Practices Research & Workshop Series.

Focus: Protecting the Fraser River estuary through research, workshops, and developing governance, policy, and technical solutions in collaboration with NGOs and Indigenous partners.

In-Person Requirement: Attend workshops and events in the Lower Mainland.



Role Responsibilities:

1. Research:

1. Conduct literature reviews and analyze case studies.
2. Seek additional research via interviews, desktop research, or surveys to fill knowledge gaps.

2. Workshop Support:

1. Assist in workshop planning.
2. Attend workshops as a note-taker or table facilitator.

3. Report Development:

1. Synthesize workshop outcomes and research into an engaging best practices report.
2. Optionally create multimedia content for knowledge sharing.

Preferred Qualifications:

1. Strong research and writing skills, especially for qualitative data.
2. Interest in flood resilience, salmon conservation, and ecosystem protection.
3. Ability to facilitate discussions and synthesize information for diverse audiences.
4. Experience with workshop coordination or stakeholder engagement is an asset.

Writing a tailored cover letter

An Example - Introduction

As a Master of Community and Regional Planning student at UBC, I have become a committed researcher of sustainability, with a focus on stakeholder engagement and research-driven solutions. I am very interested in applying for the student position with the Fraser Estuary Research Collaborative to support the "Advancing Flood Resilience for the Lower Mainland: Best Practices Research & Workshop Series" project. In particular, I am eager to contribute to the vital initiative of addressing climate resilience and ecosystem health in the Lower Fraser watershed.

Writing a tailored cover letter

An Example – Body Paragraph

I have cultivated expertise in areas central to your project, including planning for disaster-resilient communities, sustainability in urban systems, and engagement facilitation. My academic experiences have honed my skills in conducting qualitative research, synthesizing complex data, and producing actionable reports. For example, in my coursework on climate adaptation, I developed a framework to evaluate municipal resilience strategies, balancing ecological preservation with community needs.

Writing a tailored cover letter

An Example – Body Paragraph

Beyond academia, my professional experience brings skills directly transferable to supporting workshop development and facilitating discussions. As a Municipal Elections Clerk for the City of London, I designed and managed application systems, trained over 400 staff members, and ensured seamless communication with diverse stakeholders. These tasks required meticulous attention to detail, clear communication, and an ability to facilitate collaborative processes—skills I look forward to utilizing to capture meaningful results for this initiative.

Writing a tailored cover letter

An Example – Body Paragraph

I am particularly passionate about integrating Indigenous perspectives into sustainability efforts and addressing the impacts of climate change on vulnerable communities—priorities that align with FERC's mission. I am also drawn to this project not only because of its interdisciplinary approach to flood resilience but also because of its commitment to actionable solutions through collaboration with cross-sector networks.

Writing a tailored cover letter

An Example – Concluding Paragraph

Thank you for considering my application. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss how my experiences and skills align with the goals of this project. I am confident that my dedication to sustainability and my ability to translate research into meaningful action will make a valuable contribution to your team.



Q & A



Conclusion

Meet your career educator

| Samantha Ogrodnik

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Faculty of Graduate Studies.

**As part of UVic Career Services, she can give
you one-on-one help with:**

- ✔ writing résumés, CVs & cover letters
- ✔ exploring academic & non-academic careers
- ✔ preparing for interviews and more!



Learn more at
uvic.ca/career-services



Additional Resources

[Resume, CV and cover letter templates from the UBC Grad Studies Career Centre](#)

[Resume and Cover Letter Toolkit from the University of Toronto](#)



Thank you!



