

Sustainability Catalyst Internship Program

Graduate student opportunity: Summer 2025

The Sustainability Catalyst Internship Program offers University of Toronto graduate students paid opportunities to work with partners on real-world sustainability solutions faced by their organizations. The internships run part-time from May to September and are managed by the President's Advisory Committee on the Environment, Climate Change, and Sustainability (CECCS) for students in the Greater Toronto Area. Students will move through the internship as a cohort and will receive career development and project management support from a dedicated mentor within the partner organization, as well as from the CECCS Sustainability Catalyst Project Manager.

The pay rate for the summer 2025 program is \$32.31/hour for a 250-hour project. Internships are open to all graduate students enrolled in a full-time program in the 2024-2025 academic year at U of T. This is a non-appointed role with the University of Toronto.

Visit sustainability.utoronto.ca/catalyst to learn how the program works and be sure to confirm your eligibility before applying.

Applications close at 11:59 PM on Sunday March 30, 2025.

Project Title: *Expanding Toronto's Home Energy Loan Program to Enhance Community Flood Resilience*

Organization: City of Toronto - Environment, Climate & Forestry Division

Work Location: Hybrid - remote and onsite at Union Station, 65 Front Street, Toronto

Work term:

This is a 250-hour position. The intern is expected to work an average of 14 hours per week between May 1 and August 29, 2025 with core office hours from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday to Friday.

Project Description:

Urban flooding poses significant risks, often resulting in property damage, health and safety hazards, displacement and increased financial burdens. In addition to the large-scale municipal resiliency projects, such as upgrading storm water infrastructure and expanding and modernizing sewer systems, The Environment, Climate & Forestry (ECF) team is looking to offer targeted supports at the property level through the City's existing home retrofit program, the Home Energy Loan Program (HELP). HELP currently offers Toronto homeowners low-interest loans of up to \$125,000 to cover the cost of a variety of home retrofit measures, including energy efficiency and decarbonization projects such as building envelope

upgrades and heat pumps. In response to the increasing frequency of extreme weather events and flooding in Toronto, ECF is looking to expand and enhance the scope of the existing Home Energy Loan Program to empower and enable homeowners to implement effective flood resilience measures, reduce flood risks, and build long-term resilience at the community level.

Project Activities & Deliverables:

The intern will provide direct support to City staff in the research and development of the expanded program offerings. Over the course of the summer term, the intern will prepare a written report and virtual presentation on expanding Toronto's Home Energy Loan Program. Components of the report include:

Target Audience/Demographic Identification

- Identification and mapping of flood-prone neighbourhoods, with a focus on areas that would benefit most from home retrofitting.
- Demographic analysis of flood-prone areas including income levels, housing types, and social vulnerability indicators.

Jurisdictional scan

- Review and summarize existing flooding resources and supports available to Toronto residents.
- Conduct a comprehensive scan of residential flooding resiliency programs and supports across various jurisdictions with similar flooding risks.
- Summarize key components of the identified programs and assess applicability in Toronto.
- Identify equity considerations and community engagement strategies in other programs.

Best Practice Review - Home Waterproofing and Resiliency Measures

- Develop a comprehensive summary of basic to advanced home waterproofing techniques and flood mitigation solutions.
- Provide technical specifications and cost estimates for each recommended measure.
- Identify potential health risks and hazards associated with common flood mitigation solutions and provide best practices for their maintenance and use.

Home Energy Loan Program (HELP) Resiliency Recommendations

- Based on the findings of deliverables 1-3, provide recommendations for the following:
 - Additional flood protection and resiliency measures, to be incorporated as eligible measures and financed through the City's Home Energy Loan Program.
 - Minimum incentive levels required to encourage and/or enable program participation in high-risk areas.

Stakeholder Engagement Plan

- Stakeholder mapping and identification of key community partners (e.g. local organizations, neighbourhood associations, environmental groups).
- Communication strategies and materials tailored to effectively engage the identified communities and stakeholders in the program design process.

Preferred Background and Skills:

- Demonstrated research and writing skills
- Familiarity with research methodologies and survey techniques
- Statistical analysis
- Excellent public speaking and presentation skills
- Community engagement experience
- Strong analytical skills
- GIS mapping
- Project management and organizational skills
- Familiarity and experience working with vulnerable populations

Sustainability Catalyst Internship Program Requirements:

- Students are enrolled in a full-time graduate program at U of T in the 2024-2025 academic year
- Students are in good academic standing and not on academic probation
- Students are legally entitled to work in Canada and will be residing within the Greater Toronto Area during the internship
- Students have confirmed their eligibility to work the required hours by checking the guidelines of any graduate student funding they hold. It is the award recipient's responsibility to comply with the rules and regulations of their award(s).

Application Procedure:

Applicants should email their cover letter including why this internship is of interest to them, and their resume highlighting relevant skills and experience, as a single PDF document to keagan.urbanowicz@utoronto.ca no later than 11:59 on March 30, 2025, noting the project title in the email subject line. Only applicants selected for an interview will be contacted. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. Early applications are encouraged.

If you are applying for more than one Sustainability Catalyst Internship position, you must also [fill out this internship project ranking form](#) by the application deadline to indicate your preferred projects.

Diversity Statement

The University of Toronto embraces Diversity and is building a culture of belonging that increases our capacity to effectively address and serve the interests of our global community. We strongly encourage applications from Indigenous Peoples, Black and racialized persons, women, persons with disabilities, and people of diverse sexual and gender identities. We value applicants who have demonstrated a commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion and recognize that diverse perspectives, experiences, and expertise are essential to strengthening our academic mission.

Accessibility Statement

The University strives to be an equitable and inclusive community, and proactively seeks to increase diversity among its community members. Our values regarding equity and diversity are linked with our unwavering commitment to excellence in the pursuit of our academic mission.

The University is committed to the principles of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). As such, we strive to make our recruitment, assessment and selection processes as accessible as possible and provide accommodations as required for applicants with disabilities. If you require any accommodations at any point during the application and hiring process, please contact uoft.careers@utoronto.ca.

Resources:

CECCS and U of T Career Exploration & Education invite prospective Catalyst intern applicants to participate in the following workshops (participation in the workshops is not a requirement to apply):

- **Friday March 21, 1:00-2:30 PM - Job Applications Workshop (online).** This workshop will provide students with tips on how to highlight relevant skills and experience and tailor your application to the position(s) you are applying for. [Please register for the March 21 Job Applications workshop here.](#)
- **Monday April 7, 12:00-1:30 PM – Job Interviews Workshop (online).** This workshop will provide students with the opportunity to practice their interview skills and prepare for the internship roles they have applied to. [Please register for the April 7 Interview Workshop here.](#)