

Fast Track Research Program - Aligning COVID Recovery with Local Government Climate Action

The Community Energy Association (CEA) and the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions (PICS) are seeking a researcher to investigate opportunities and synergies between community-scale climate action and local economic development. This work will be used to directly support local governments seeking to sustain climate action while creating jobs during and after the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Background:

COVID-19 has had an enormous impact on the lives and livelihoods of British Columbians across the province. Job losses have disproportionately impacted youth, women, immigrants and unskilled workers, demanding new and innovative job creation strategies. At the same time, climate change continues to accelerate and demands attention from all levels of government and the private sector. Over 30 BC local governments have declared climate emergencies and many more have committed to catalyzing local climate action.

The [Community Energy Association](#) (CEA), on behalf of the BC Municipal Climate Leadership Council (BCMCLC) has developed the [Climate Leaders Playbook](#) to provide guidance to local government decision makers on the “[Big Moves](#)” for high impact climate action:

- Zero-emission transportation
- Zero-emission buildings
- Close the loop on waste

As a response to COVID, CEA is developing a supplemental suite of local climate action initiatives that will maintain momentum on climate mitigation and adaptation while contributing to local job creation. The goal of this work is to identify municipal level dial turners—actionable policies that reduce greenhouse gases (GHGs) while contributing to local economic development in the wake of COVID-19. The resource will also highlight overlaps with health and equity.

[PICS](#) aims to enhance climate solutions in light of COVID impacts, and is partnering with CEA to support applied research that will contribute actionable strategies for local governments.

Research Needs:

CEA and PICS are calling for applications from researchers¹ to support this work. We are open to

¹ The researcher can be a graduate student, post-doc, faculty (including adjunct faculty) or staff with relevant expertise at any of the four PICS universities: UBC, UNBC, SFU, and the University of Victoria.

proposals covering a variety of potential projects. The proposed project should involve one or more of the following:

- Synthesize existing research to integrate the GHG mitigation and job creation potential of local government policies. This will support refined estimates for the Climate Leaders Playbook “Big Moves” based on existing academic research and could also serve as a foundation for further analysis by local governments and consultants.
- Work with CEA to develop guidance in the form of memos or fact sheets for locally elected officials on communicating climate initiatives and cultivating broad-based support for them. This may be tested through online workshops.
- Work with CEA to develop guidance for urban and rural local governments on integrating land use and transportation planning to mitigate GHGs while responding to the shift in commuting patterns, mode shares and the use of public space resulting from COVID-19. This should take equity considerations and job creation strategies into account.

The research will be applied across a variety of the CEA’s resources and programs and will be used to:

- Provide direct action-oriented training and coaching to mayors, councilors and area directors.
- Inform provincial funding program design.
- Improve GHG modelling and analysis including online self-service community energy planning for small communities.

Proposal requirements and submission details for Fast Track Program:

- Applicants should submit a CV with references and two-page letter addressing the researcher’s fit for the position and specific research proposal to picsfasttrack@uvic.ca. Please address inquiries to picsfasttrack@uvic.ca also.
- The research proposal in the letter should identify specific areas where the researcher could provide an analysis of GHG reduction potentials and/or job creation estimates of policy initiatives related to the Big Moves (zero-emissions transportation; zero-emissions buildings; and closing the loop on waste).
- The researcher should plan to consult monthly with PICS and CEA to ensure that the work is fulfilling the project goals.
- Maximum project support is \$20,000. Please provide a brief budget.
- Researchers can include graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, faculty (including adjunct or sessional faculty) or staff with relevant expertise at any of the four PICS universities.
- One to two awards will be made.
- Projects should be complete by the end of December 2020.
- The deadline for proposal submissions is **August 31, 2020** at 11:59 p.m. Notification of decisions will be made by **September 15, 2020**. This short timeline is driven by local government needs.