

ACCELERATING COMMUNITY ENERGY TRANSFORMATION (ACET): TRANSDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATIVE PH.D. COHORT

An Open Call for Applications

Are you passionate about transforming society through the energy transition? Interested in inspiring changemakers to adopt regenerative energy practices? Seeking a collaborative, transdisciplinary experience in graduate education alongside like-minded people? Want to explore innovative ways to foster hope, agency, and appealing futures for society? If so, this PhD position could be a perfect fit for you.

Call for Applicants

Five fully funded PhD students are invited to engage in transdisciplinary collaborative cohort with research focused on various aspects of the current energy transition.

Context

The global climate emergency calls for a rapid transition to clean energy through interconnected sociocultural, technical, educational, and scientific approaches. With escalating socio-ecological challenges in the 21st century, research and education must embrace broader multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches to co-create knowledge and drive collaborative change.

Accelerating Community Energy Transformation ([ACET](#)), a multi-partner research initiative, supports small- and mid-sized communities in reaching their clean-energy goals. Professors [Naoko Ellis](#) and [Derek Gladwin](#), leaders of the [Collaborative Transdisciplinary PhD Cohort in Energy Transition](#), are inviting applications to join ACET research team at The University of British Columbia ([UBC](#)) on Point Grey Campus (located on Musqueam Territory). PhD students will work on developing a relational research model through a cohort-based, transdisciplinary collaborative project focused on energy transitions.

This project will fully support a cohort of PhD students researching various aspects of energy transitions—spanning technical, socio-cultural, arts-based, economic, political, and scientific efforts to shift from fossil fuels to renewable energy systems that reduce carbon emissions and address climate change. The funding will unite students from diverse disciplines to

collaborate and engage with external stakeholders, offering opportunities for transdisciplinary research, internships with industry, government, and civil society partners, specialized courses, and mentorship from internationally recognized interdisciplinary faculty.

Position Overview

Applicants are invited to work on several projects under the ACET funding focused on energy transition. A full description and scope of the projects will be developed in consultation with the selected students and possible supervisors. These positions offer PhD students a unique chance to engage in collaborative, transdisciplinary research with the following parameters:

- Robust research experience focused on complex societal challenges
- Readiness to collaborate across disciplines
- Receiving supervision by two faculty members from different but complementary fields (assigned upon program acceptance)
- Interest in co-authoring elements of doctoral research, such as publications and theses
- Active participation in transdisciplinary workshops led by program leaders
- Desire to research in partnership with external stakeholders, including industry, government, and civil society organizations
- Expertise in working with interdisciplinary teams, working outside of a disciplinary identity
- Willingness to explore uncertain academic domains and face various cognitive, socio-emotional, and behavioural frameworks that integrate various ways of thinking about energy transition

Possible Areas of Research

While the specific topics are yet to be decided, given the breadth of the lead researchers and collaborators, we anticipate amplifying the following general areas in this project. Other areas not listed below are also welcomed.

- Energy transition communication and education
- Energy systems modelling and evaluation
- Social change and innovation supporting energy transition
- Energy transition through understanding complexity – nexus of government, communities, and organizations
- Transdisciplinarity in energy transition – understanding process-oriented pathways
- Arts-based and/or cultural approaches to energy transition
- The role of systems change or approaches in energy transition
- Economic and/or political implications of community-based energy projects

Financial Support

Students accepted into the Transdisciplinary Collaborative Ph.D. Cohort on Energy Transition will receive a competitive annual doctoral salary of \$35,000 CAD (including benefits) for up to four years, contingent on continued satisfactory performance.

Eligibility

Applicants are particularly welcomed from diverse disciplinary backgrounds, including those from interdisciplinary fields, and those with various methodological and epistemological expertise. Applicants are also expected to have:

- Successfully completed a thesis-based Master's degree
- Relevant experience in energy transitions
- Knowledge of and experience with quantitative, qualitative methods, and/or post-qualitative methods
- Excellent writing, communication, and presentation skills
- A strong command of the English

How to Apply

The application for the interview is done through Qualtrics survey and includes your intent, abilities, a few questions, academic CV, and unofficial transcripts. For more information and to submit your application, please visit [our website](#). **Please note that only short-listed applicants will be contacted for a team interview.**

An online team interview will be conducted with the short-listed candidates as a pre-screening process with the program leads. Once you are selected from the team interview process, you will then apply officially through their chosen graduate programs through [Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies](#). If a specific disciplinary department (chosen program) is not as relevant, then we encourage students to apply and enroll through the Interdisciplinary Studies Graduate Program ([ISGP](#)) at UBC.

Application Timeline

Information Session: October 10, 2024

Application Deadline: October 17, 2024

Starting Date: September 2025

Why study at UBC?

The University of British Columbia ([UBC](#)) is a global centre for research and instruction, consistently ranked among the top 20 public universities globally. UBC is a vibrant academic community that attracts exceptional scientists, artists, and leaders, offering wise mentoring and fostering lasting friendships for graduate students. With over 300 diverse programs, UBC encourages innovative transdisciplinary study. As a research powerhouse, it secures \$759 million annually in funding and files over 250 patents, allowing students to engage in meaningful scholarship. UBC promotes global citizenship and sustainability, with graduate students playing a vital role in these values. Nestled in beautiful British Columbia, the campus provides a safe, cosmopolitan environment enriched by a diverse cultural scene.

University of British Columbia, Point Grey Campus (Vancouver), is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam) People.