Job Title: Quantifying the Impacts of Food Waste – Student Consultant

Hours per week: 30 – 37.5
Pay per hour: $18 – 22
Duration: 3 – 4 months (to be completed between May-August, 2014)
Work Location: Metro Vancouver area

Project Description
An enormous amount of food is wasted every day. Food waste, which occurs at every point along the supply chain, is a significant source of GHG emissions and has a negative impact on our global climate.

To date, the numbers required to quantify food waste at each point in the food supply chain have not been available. A student consultant is sought to (a) review existing research and estimates of discarded food that could otherwise have been diverted from disposal by donation, composting, etc., (b) develop a method of measuring/estimating potentially divertible food discarded from homes and businesses on an ongoing basis, including estimates of the environmental and economic benefits of food diversion, and (c) propose an ongoing method of tracking performance using measurable indicators.

Understanding the types and magnitudes of food waste along the various points of the supply chain will help policy makers, and industry-based decision makers in better evaluating the underlying causes of food waste, and subsequently, the development and implementation of tools/strategies that could be used in preventing unnecessary food waste, and the associated environmental and economic impacts. Reducing food waste is an immense challenge, and will require changes in business strategies and government policies, as well as coordination at all government levels, and within and between industry sectors. The strategies that are most likely to succeed will be those that reflect the business case, and achieve environmental and social targets.

Background on Metro Vancouver
Metro Vancouver’s planning and operational activities are driven by sustainability imperatives. Through the Sustainability Framework, and its various regional management plans, Metro Vancouver works towards developing a zero waste region, sustainable communities, and the highest quality of life embracing cultural vitality, economic prosperity, social justice and compassion, all nurtured in and by a beautiful and healthy natural environment. Metro Vancouver takes a progressive approach to finding realistic solutions through collaboration and innovation.

Job Description
The focus of the Student Consultant will be to research and report on food waste quantification methods. Building on existing research, this position will produce the following deliverables:

1) A review of current estimates of food waste, its GHG and other environmental impacts, and the direct and indirect economic value of food waste diversion. The review should include recommendations for improved methodologies, and changes in legislation and or public policy to cost-effectively increase food waste diversion.

2) Relevant consultation with a selection of key stakeholders involved in the food supply chain.
3) A recommended method for public local governments to use in estimating quantities, environmental impacts, and overall economic values of food waste diversion on an ongoing basis. This should be based on the review of past research, and in consultation with stakeholders, and should include template communication materials (Eg., spreadsheets, presentations, data tables) for conveying ongoing measurement/estimates.

4) A final presentation of the above products to stakeholders.

Qualifications

- Independent worker, self-motivated, ability to set and meet measurable targets
- Strong communication skills (verbal, written, data display)
- Knowledge and experience in the following areas of study are an asset:
  - Business Case Analysis
  - Environmental Science/Engineering and/or GHG Accounting
  - Environmental Policy and/or Resource Management
  - Mathematics and Statistics (basic level)
- Demonstrated research, and analytical skills
- Ability to think critically using a systems perspective
- Ability to use creativity in solving problems
- Ability to constantly adapt to changing situations
- Ability to engage stakeholders in a meeting/interview
- Experience in visual, written, and verbal communication of ideas, including visual mapping, data display, and presentations

This position is being funded by the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions (http://pics.uvic.ca/).

Applicants must be:

- Currently registered at a PICS partner institution: UVIC, UBC, SFU, UNBC
- Returning to any level of studies in fall 2013.

To apply, send a cover letter and resume to:
Emme Lee, Zero Waste Implementation, Metro Vancouver
Email: emme.lee@metrovancouver.org

In your letter, please be sure to include how your experience and skills relate to the Qualifications and Job Description details listed above. Please include the job title in the subject line of your email.

Submissions must be received by the end of day Monday April 28th.

We thank all applicants for their interest in this position. Only those short-listed for interviews will be contacted.