



UPDATE: UBC President's Pandemic Recovery Initiative

Source: CDC via Unsplash

UBC'S RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

APRIL 2021

Providing Student Relief

SUPPORTING UBC STUDENTS IN THEIR MOMENT OF NEED

In spring 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic came to British Columbia, it created financial emergencies for many people, including students who often live on tightly restricted budgets, and who faced losing part-time work and co-op positions. UBC created the President's Pandemic Recovery Initiative to respond to the enormous increase in requests from students for emergency funds — for everything from adjusting home resources to accommodate online learning, to unplanned trips home, among many other unforeseen costs. At the onset of the pandemic, over 21,000 students inquired about emergency financial aid and support, with some needing assistance in multiple areas due to unexpected loss of income and COVID-19-related expenses.

Fortunately, in the first few months of its establishment, many generous donors made immediate contributions to the UBC President's Pandemic Response Initiative. These have been used to support UBC students throughout 2020/21 to relieve their financial pressures, adjust to online learning during the summer and fall, and help them better cope with adversity.

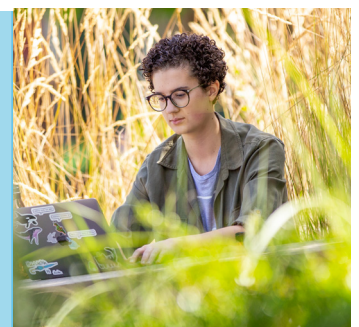
GENEROSITY IN ACTION

In 2020/21, responsive donors contributed \$1.1 million from over 1,500 gifts to assist students. These donations, combined with UBC emergency funds, resulted in more than 4,000 students across both campuses receiving \$4.5 million — of which almost one quarter was from donors — to help them weather the pandemic crisis.

At all levels of enrolment — undergraduate and graduate, domestic and international — donors have shown UBC students that their community wishes them to thrive, now and in the future.

"April was definitely one of the most stressful months of this year. The uncertainty around COVID was at its peak, and as if the pandemic was not enough, we, students, had to also consider our final examinations. COVID also affected the financial situation of my family back home, preventing my parents from providing me with financial support. The emergency fund was not only crucial for my groceries and basic costs of living, but also for my mental health as I was able to focus a bit more on my studies."

- Student quote, 2020



ACCELERATING RESEARCH

Locally and globally, the UBC research community is collaborating across campuses, health research sites, and between the public and private sectors. They are playing a critical role in confronting COVID-19—not only to overcome the pandemic, but to recover sustainably and equitably.

Over \$3.2 million dollars in donor gifts were directed to UBC researchers across all disciplines to respond to the pandemic. These funds helped to leverage more funding from the government and the community to help develop treatments and prevent the spread of COVID-19, and to lead collaborations to gain a deeper understanding of its cultural, social and economic impacts.

IMPACT THROUGH GENEROSITY

More than 350 UBC researchers are engaged in 250 research projects and initiatives related to COVID-19 treatment and prevention.

- AbCellera, founded at UBC, developed an antibody discovery platform to support the development of treatments. One of these treatments began clinical trials in June.
- A partnership between researchers at UBC Okanagan and BC industry partner Advanced BioCarbon 3D is developing sustainable filtration masks from medical-grade wood products.

UBC researchers have also played a prominent role in the public dialogue on the virus. Through various media and platforms, UBC researchers are correcting misinformation about COVID-19 and helping the public keep informed and safe.

- Professor Amy Hanser (Sociology) [gave advice on dealing with awkward conversations with friends and family who may not be adhering to safety guidelines.](#)
- A collaborative study between Steven Rogak (Mechanical Engineering) and Dr. Jing Wang (Faculty of Medicine) [revealed the best mask materials for safety and comfort.](#)

UBC researchers are also building a roadmap for recovery. Some are developing a range of tools and innovations to help communities across the province adapt to disruption and plan for recovery.

- Professor Steven Taylor (Psychology) [discussed how wearing masks has changed the way people communicate with each other.](#)
- Henry Siu and David Green (Economics) [have created a tool to measure COVID-19 risk in B.C. jobs.](#)
- Jordi Honey-Rosés and Erick Villagomez (Community and Regional Planning) [are envisioning what cities will look like after the pandemic subsides.](#)



THANK YOU!

No matter the circumstances we find ourselves in, your support for UBC demonstrates your belief in the power of knowledge, research and education to create a better future — and we are honoured to be creating that better future with you. Thank you!

[Click here for more information on UBC's President's Pandemic Recovery Initiative.](#)