



UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC



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UArctic Report to the Ministers of the Arctic Council

Salekhard, Russia
26 October, 2006

University of the Arctic
International Secretariat
University of Lapland
Rovaniemi, Finland



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The University of the Arctic (UArctic) is a cooperative network of universities, colleges, and other organizations committed to higher education and research in the North. Its members share resources, facilities, and expertise to build post-secondary education programs that are relevant and accessible to northern students. Its overall goal is to create a strong, sustainable circumpolar region by empowering Northerners and northern communities through education and shared knowledge.

UArctic promotes education that is circumpolar, interdisciplinary, and diverse in nature, and draw on our combined strengths to address the unique challenges of the region. It also recognizes the integral role of indigenous peoples in northern education, and seeks to engage their perspectives in all of its activities.

The original idea for the University of the Arctic was pitched to the Senior Arctic Officials in 1997, and was approved by the Arctic Council the following year. Known as a “university without walls”, UArctic was officially launched in 2001 in Rovaniemi, Finland, in conjunction with the first SAO meeting of the Arctic Council during Finland’s chairmanship and the celebration of the 10th Anniversary of the Rovaniemi process. Since that time, UArctic has grown rapidly in all areas: membership, programs, and student enrollment.

Five Years of Growth

In June 2006, UArctic celebrated its 5th Anniversary during its Council meeting hosted by Bodø University College in Bodø, Norway. UArctic had cause for another celebration at the same meeting: after starting with 33 members in 2001, UArctic welcomed 15 more members, bringing the total membership to 101. Out of those members, 81 are in the higher education category. All together, the higher education members have 619,000 students and 39,500 staff members—that represents quite a bit of potential for the sustainable development of the region! The meeting marked yet another milestone for UArctic: the first 17 graduates of the Circumpolar Studies Program received their certificates.

During the first five years UArctic has focused on consolidating its governance structure, its programs, as well as its organization. All members of UArctic are represented in the Council of UArctic which gives strategic guidance on academic priorities, and acts as a forum for cooperation on the implementation of UArctic programs through members.

The Council of UArctic has met nine times since 2001. The most recent meeting was in June 2006 in Bodø Norway. So far, the Council has had meetings in Finland, Russia, Norway, Sweden, Iceland and Canada. The next Council of UArctic meetings will take place in Spring 2007 in Arkhangelsk, Russia, and in Spring 2008 in Edmonton, Canada.

UArctic members by country and type of member (Higher Education institution or Other):

| | CA | DK | FI | IS | NO | RU | SWE | UK | US | TOTAL |
|-------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|----|----|------------|
| Higher education institutions | 19 | 3 | 10 | 4 | 10 | 26 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 81 |
| other | 7 | | | 1 | 4 | 3 | | | 5 | 20 |
| Members TOTAL | 26 | 3 | 10 | 5 | 14 | 29 | 4 | 1 | 9 | 101 |

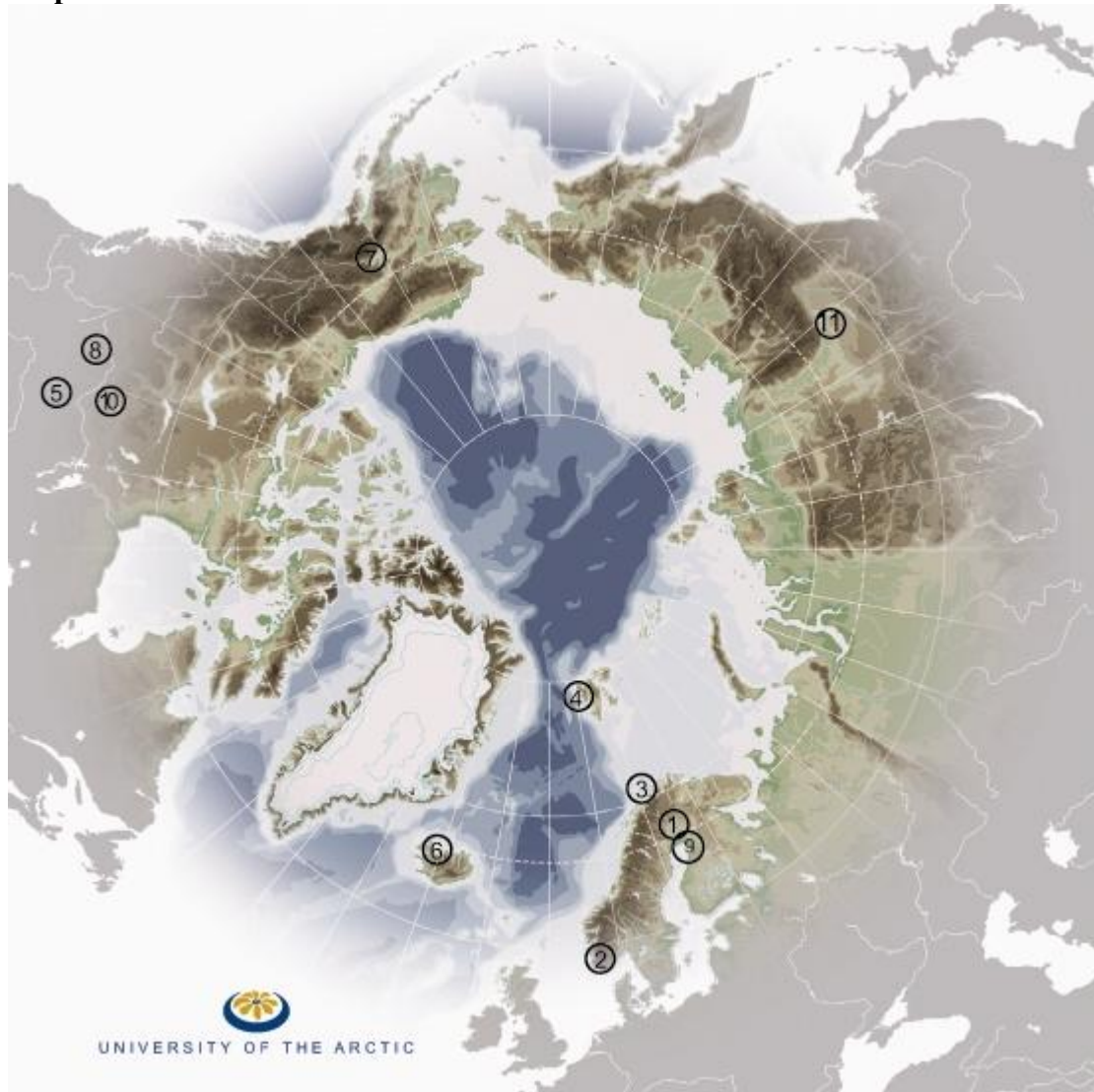
UArctic's highest decision-making body is the Board of Governors, elected by the Council of UArctic. The Board has responsibility for the strategic development and institutional priorities of UArctic. Professor Oran Young has been chair of UArctic's Board since the Launch. The following individuals have served on the Board of UArctic since 2001:

- Oran R. Young, USA, Chair (June 2001-)
- Shirley Adamson, Canada, (June 2001-)
- Lloyd Axworthy, Canada (June 2001-)
- Arthur Chilingarov, Russia (October 2003-June 2006)
- Ekaterina Evseyeva, Student Representative, Russia (September 2004-)
- Antero Ikäheimo, Finland (May 2004-)
- Marit Henriksen, Student Representative, Norway (June 2006-)
- Jan Henry Keskitalo, Norway (June 2001-)
- Audrey McLaughlin, Canada (June 2001-)
- Erling Olsen, Denmark (June 2001-)
- Mary Simon, Canada (September 2003-)
- Rune Rydén, Sweden, ex officio (June 2001-)

The University of the Arctic is a decentralized organization: all offices, programs and other functions are hosted at member institutions. The daily operations are entrusted to a light and distributed administration consisting of the President's Office in Norway, the International Secretariat in Finland, the International Academic Office and UArctic Press offices in Canada. In October 2006 Sakha State University, as a part of their 50th anniversary celebration, announced that they will host the UArctic Russian Information Centre which will be an integral part of UArctic's overall information service.

UArctic operations are focused on five Strategic Areas: Undergraduate Studies, Graduate Studies, Mobility, Access, and Knowledge and Dialogue. Each consist of one or more programs, Several of UArctic's programs have program offices to provide support for program implementation. These include the Undergraduate Office in Canada, the north2north International Coordination Office and Field School Office in Norway, the Thematic Networks Coordination Office in Finland and Northern Research Forum Secretariat in Iceland.

Map 1: UArctic's Offices



- 1. UArctic International Secretariat:** University of Lapland, Rovaniemi Finland
- 2. UArctic President's Office:** GRID/Arenal, Arendal Norway
- 3. North2north International Coordination Office:** Finnmark University College, Alta Norway
- 4. UArctic Field School Office:** UNIS, Svalbard Norway
- 5. Undergraduate Office:** University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon Saskatchewan Canada
- 6. Northern Research Forum Secretariat:** Steffanson Arctic Institute, Akureyri Iceland
- 7. IPY Higher Education and Outreach Program Office:** University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks, Alaska USA
- 8. UArctic Press Editorial Office:** University of Alberta, Edmonton Alberta Canada
- 9. UArctic Thematic Networks Office:** Thule Institute University of Oulu, Oulu Finland
- 10. International Academic Office:** Northlands College, LaRonge Saskatchewan Canada
- 11. UArctic Russian Information Center:** Sakha State University, Yakutks, Sakha, Russia

Major Accomplishments in First Five Years

Lars Kullerud started as the first Director of UArctic in May 2002. That same year, the first students took the Circumpolar Studies (BCS) 100 course Introduction to the Circumpolar World, and the first north2north student exchanges took place. Both programs have since then been growing steadily both in student numbers and number of institutions participating.

UArctic's first Strategic Plan was published in 2002. As programs evolved, the need to revise the plan quite soon became evident, and UArctic published its strategic plan for 2005-2010 in May 2005. The document outlines UArctic's goals and strategies for growth and development. The Council took the decision to embark on a new strategy process in June 2006; the Graduate Strategic Area in particular will undergo a big shift towards more and more engagement in Master level joint initiatives.

On the online discussion boards, everyone gives a background of themselves and their ideas of what the Arctic is. It's how you see the perspectives of the other students. You can go back and forth and get your answers. – Sarabeth Burns, Bachelor of Circumpolar Studies student

Apart from the stable and increasing delivery of its education programs and the diversification and growth of its mobility programs, UArctic has made several new openings into education outreach and research networking. This includes strong involvement in the Second International Conference on Arctic Research Planning (ICARP II) with leadership in Working Group 11 "Arctic Science on the Public Interest", chaired by UArctic President Lars Kullerud. The working group developed a science plan, with Council of UArctic member Chris Southcott as the lead author. The plan highlighted the need for a serious review of how science interacts with the society it is supposed to serve. A major issue highlighted in ICARP II was the need for more education outreach within the scientific community – a clear mandate for UArctic.

With strong support from the Arctic Parliamentarians and the Arctic Council, UArctic has incorporated the findings of the Arctic Human Development Report (AHDR) into the Circumpolar Studies curriculum. Further, the Northern Research Forum (NRF) has organized several town hall meetings on Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA) and AHDR and has facilitated the translation of AHDR into Russian and Finnish. Furthermore, with financial support from the Nordic Council of Ministers, UArctic has established a Thematic Network on Global Change in the Arctic, now actively developing new curriculum on global change and incorporating it into requirements both in UArctic programs as well as in helping education programs at member institutions to be relevant and up to date.

2006 has been a significant year for UArctic. The Circumpolar Studies Program celebrated its first graduating class of 17 students from across the Circumpolar North during the Council of UArctic meeting in Bodø, Norway, in June 2006. Also, UArctic launched its newly redesigned website (www.uarctic.org), making information about the organizations, its programs and ways to participate more accessible to all of UArctic's stakeholders: students, faculty, members, policy makers and the general public.

UArctic also started the Online Studies Catalogue, uarctic.studies.org, with financial support from the United Nations Environment Programme. The course catalogue is a one of a kind tool for researchers, educators and students, and lists courses about the Arctic and arctic issues across the North. During the first phase of the project, 14 UArctic member institutions have 200 courses on the catalogue and the catalogue is expected to grow into a user-friendly and comprehensive resource on studies in UArctic member institutions on Arctic and the North. The catalogue also lists courses specifically on sustainable development, compiled in cooperation with the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) and the UN Decade of Sustainable Development.

"I discovered that Northerners are unique. We all share a strong sense of community. We've got incredible determination, strength, resourcefulness and strong links with our environment." – Kirsten Macdonald, north2north student from Canada

The Catalogue works hand in hand with UArctic's newest mobility program: GoNorth!. UArctic's GoNorth Program gives students from non-circumpolar areas information about the opportunities to experience living and studying in the Circumpolar North through exchanges at

UArctic member institutions. The Program's pilot, the GoNorth! Erasmus Mundus Project, started in the autumn of 2005.

Progress in the Five Strategic Areas

UArctic currently offers 13 programs in five strategic areas: Undergraduate Studies (Circumpolar Studies, Open Learning), Graduate Studies (Field School, PhD networks), Mobility (north2north, GoNorth, northTREX), Access (Arctic Learning Environment), Knowledge and Dialogue (Thematic Networks, MIMIR, Northern Research Forum, Circumpolar Universities Association).

Undergraduate Studies

Undergraduate Studies programs at UArctic focus on building human capital and knowledge about the North among its residents and others.

The Circumpolar Studies Program, led from the UArctic Undergraduate Office in Saskatoon, Canada, offers interdisciplinary Bachelor-level curriculum focusing on issues, challenges, and research questions concerning the North. Rather than draw the brightest young adults to southern institutions, the Circumpolar Studies program provides a cost effective means to provide Northerners with full degree access

After starting with 66 students during its launch in 2002, the Circumpolar Studies Program has grown rapidly. 2006 has been a major milestone year for the Program: the Program celebrated its first graduating class of 17 students from across the Circumpolar North during the Council of UArctic meeting in Bodø, Norway, in June 2006. Enrollments in the Program also reached a new record with 1700 enrollments in Circumpolar Studies courses online and onsite since the Program's launch in 2002. During the 2005-2006 academic year, there were 150 enrollments in BCS online courses.

Number of BCS Online Enrollments by Country – 2005-2006 Academic Year

| Country | Canada | Finland | Norway | Russia | USA | Total |
|----------------------------------|--------|---------|--------|--------|-----|-------|
| Number of online BCS Enrollments | 55 | 5 | 3 | 79 | 8 | 150 |

One quarter of online students were of indigenous background in 2005.

Several UArctic members are currently offering Circumpolar Studies courses onsite. The members are:

- Yukon College (Whitehorse, Yukon, Canada)
- University of Akureyri
- Sakha State University
- Lakehead University (Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada)
- University of Lapland (Rovaniemi, Finland)
- University of Saskatchewan (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada)
- University of Northern British Columbia (Prince George, British Columbia, Canada)
- Bodø University College (Bodø, Norway)
- Finnmark University College, Norway

The Circumpolar Studies program also offers various advanced emphasis courses which focus on advanced research on an area, issue, or problem of particular relevance to the North and its people. The courses currently available are:

1. Arctic Governance
2. Northern Scandinavian Politics and Society
3. Arctic Environmental Technology
4. Polar Oceanography and Meteorology
5. International Project Management
6. Arctic Perspectives on Norwegian Arts and Crafts
7. Nature, Life and Culture in Arctic Norway
8. Aboriginal Public Administration
9. Northern Land Contaminants
10. Northern Peoples and Environments
11. Designated Emphasis

Several Advanced Emphases are currently being developed, including one on Arctic Climate Change, Aboriginal Public Administration, Northern Policy and Governance as well as Local Government Training for planned online delivery.

Graduate Studies

Graduate Studies programs at UArctic focus on networking between students, improving cooperation and sharing of education capacity among member institutions, and improving the quality and relevance of existing graduate studies programs.

The UArctic Field School and PhD Networks provide advanced and graduate study opportunities for students interested in northern research. In a follow up to the 2004 Reykjavik Declaration of Ministers of Education and Science of the Arctic Council Member States, led by the Nordic Council of Ministers, it is recommended that the Nordic region allocates seed funds to support the development of a joint education program at master level in areas focusing on quality of life, resources and resource management, and Indigenous peoples. They further suggest that the University of the Arctic administers this function. The Council of UArctic has established a Task Force to develop concrete responses to this and look into ways of implementing Master's program cooperation in the framework of UArctic.

Currently the core of the PhD-network programme consists of three networks – CAES: Circumpolar Arctic Environmental Studies, CASS: Circumpolar Arctic Social Sciences, and IPSSAS: International Ph.D. School for Studies of Arctic Societies. The PhD-network activities are focused on two major activities:

- the promoting and facilitating collaboration between a group of professors, researchers, research students and Northerners belonging to different institutions with a long time involvement in the study of Arctic Societies and Arctic Environmental problems
- the arrangement of a series of conferences, workshops and courses in the fields of Environmental Sciences, Social Sciences, and Humanities.

With the 2005 and 2006 activities the total number of courses and workshops throughout the years has reached 16, involving a total number of participants including more than 210 advanced Master degree and PhD students representing first of all the 8 Arctic nations, but including at the same time a substantial number of students from other countries, focusing on Arctic issues. The students involved in the PhD-network activities, are constituting the backbone of an important network in relation to the endeavors of the University of the Arctic. In addition to the above mentioned courses, the network has contributed to such activities as curriculum development, collaborative research projects, student mobility, international networking, alone and in cooperation with other institutions and networks already involved in the study of Arctic environmental science, social science and humanity related activities. It has become still clearer, however, that an institutional framework for such activities within the University of the Arctic would be beneficial, for instance in the form of the advanced graduate program.

“Participating in this exchange program made me more open and forward and it helped me in building a network and getting to know people from different cultures.” – Anders Näsström, north2north student from Sweden

In addition another major challenge is the preparing for IPY related activities. One of the vehicles for this is the IASSA – International Arctic Social Science Association – and its ICASS -International Congress of Arctic Social Science – which will take place in Nuuk, Greenland in 2008. To the international arctic social sciences community, ICASS VI will act as a major forum for reviewing the contribution to the overall IPY effort; to discuss the status of the ongoing social programs under IPY 2007-2008; and to make plans for further actions. ICASS VI will bring together many hundred social scientists from every field of social and human research, advanced students from over 20 countries, as well as indigenous and non-indigenous

stakeholders. Similarly, it creates an excellent opportunity for course arrangements which will be pursued by the PhD- networks.

Mobility

Mobility is crucial to creating shared knowledge and building a shared regional identity. UArctic Mobility programs promote and implement increased mobility among teachers, researchers, interns and students.

The north2north student mobility program allows students studying at UArctic members institutions the chance to experience living and studying in another part of the Circumpolar North in an environment that is both similar and different from their own. The Program has reached many students who traditionally would have not had access to international exchange opportunities. The program has expanded rapidly since it sent the first 16 students on exchanges in 2002-2003. In 2005-2006, 101 students participated in north2north exchanges. Eighty percent of those students ranged in age from 20 to 26 years of age. The north2north student mobility program has great potential for growth in student numbers; at the same time, it needs to be true to its original purpose of providing opportunities to more northern students who do not necessarily have many such opportunities and who would benefit from spending time in an academic program in a region that is similar to their own.

| Year | Number |
|---------------|---------------|
| 2002- | 16 |
| 2003- | 30 |
| 2004- | 89 |
| 2005- | 101 |
| Total: | 236 |

The GoNorth! program gives students from non-circumpolar areas information about the opportunities to study at higher education institutions in the North. The pilot for the program, the GoNorth! Erasmus Mundus Project lead by the University of Tromsø, is using funding from the EU Erasmus Mundus program to develop promotional materials and create other marketing means to attract southern students to the North. The following UArctic member institutions are involved with the GoNorth! Erasmus Mundus Project:

- University of Tromsø, Norway
- Finnmark University College, Norway
- Luleå University of Technology, Sweden
- Murmansk Humanities Institute, Russia
- Roskilde University, Denmark

- Scandinavian Seminar Group, US/Denmark
- Syktyvkar State University, Russia
- University of Alaska Fairbanks, US
- University of Northern British Columbia, Canada
- University of Lapland, Finland
- University of Oulu, Finland
- University Center in Svalbard, Norway

Recently, the GoNorth! Erasmus Mundus representatives participated in the European Association for International Education (EAIE) Conference in Basel Switzerland. The project had its own information stand at the conference to inform participants about GoNorth! and study opportunities in UArctic member institutions. During the four days of the conference, about 500-600 participants visited the stand.

Access

Access programs seek out new and innovative ways to overcome the geographical, physical and cultural challenges of the Arctic and improve access to higher education for Northerners.

The Arctic Learning Environment (ALE) program completed the publication of *On Top of It: Overcoming the Challenges of ICT and Distance Education in the Arctic*, a 185- page peer reviewed book with 16 papers by a total of 29 experts in the field. The ALE team chair is a member of the Arctic Council's Information and Communications Technology Network (ICTN). The Arctic Council ICT -Network was set up during the 2005 and ALE and UArctic member institutions have played an important role in the working group. To be able to make sustainable, realistic and concrete plans for fostering ICT development in the Arctic, an assessment of the current ICT situation was suggested (AICTA: Arctic Information and Communications Technology Assessment).

ALE has participated into preparing a proposal and a feasibility study for the proposed assessment. The overall goal is to determine how ICTs can increase the human and social capital in the North, contribute to northern economic development and improve the quality of life in the Arctic. These goals correspond with the goals of the Arctic Council in order to support the sustainable development in the Arctic in social, economic and environmental issues. It will provide a significant baseline study for the future and add the Arctic to the map of recognition in the ICT world. The AICTA study will focus not only on the technologies and infrastructure of ICT as so many other studies tend to do, but will connect ICT to the other sectors of social, economic and cultural activity important and significant to the Arctic peoples and nations.

Knowledge and Dialogue

Knowledge and Dialogue programs bring Northerners and their experiences together to generate new ideas and understandings that form the basis of UArctic's education programs.

Thematic Networks encourage faculty and institutional cooperation on subjects of shared interest among UArctic members. The University of Oulu is the home to the Thematic Networks Coordination office. Currently eight Thematic Networks have been approved (lead institution and contact person given for each)

- The Verdde Thematic Network
Kristine Nystad Sámi University College, Norway
- UArctic Indigenous Thematic Network on community based natural resource co-management
Liv Østmo Sami University College, Norway
- UArctic Thematic Network on Arctic Medicine
Arja Rautio University of Oulu , Finland
- UArctic Thematic Network on Arctic Agriculture and Nature Use
Olavi Junttila , University of Tromsø , Norway
- Thematic Network on Global Change in the Arctic
Kirsi Latola, Thule Institute, University of Oulu, Finland
- Thematic Network on Social Work
Ståle Sårheim, Bodö University College, Norway
- Thematic Network on World Images of Indigenous Peoples of the North
Loudmila Zamorshikova, Sakha State University, Russia
- Thematic Network on Local and Regional Development in the North, contact person Tor Gjertsen, Finnmark University College, Norway

The Verdde exchange program is the oldest Thematic Network. It was already established during the 2004 UArctic Council Meeting to promote international cooperation among institutions delivering programs for indigenous teacher education. In 2005, it was expanded as a Thematic Network with a goal for student and teacher exchanges. Currently, Nunavut Arctic College (Iqaluit Canada) and Sami University College (Kautokeino Norway) are involved but plans include making the program more circumpolar.

“There is such a great need for exchanges programs such as Verdde in the North. It gives students, especially those with indigenous backgrounds, an opportunity to see another part of the world without having to abandon their responsibilities back home. I hope the program continues to grow.” – Aura Nordberg, Verdde student from Finland

One of the newest and by far the largest thematic network is the Thematic Network for Global Change in the Arctic. In May 2006, the Network had its kickoff meeting in Rovaniemi, Finland. The network received 500 000 DKK/year from the Nordic Council of Ministers Arctic Co-operation Program for 2006-08. The network is coordinated from the University of Oulu, and has partners in all Nordic Countries. All together 14 Nordic organizations are involved and in addition six organizations from Canada, USA and Russia. The network is currently working on new curriculum for the Master level on Global Change for UArctic members, based on a thorough analysis on gaps in the existing curriculum.

The Northern Research Forum (NRF) promotes dialogue, research, and international scientific networking. The 4th Open Meeting of the NRF was held in Oulu and Tornio in Finland and Haparanda and Luleå in Sweden on October 5-8, 2006. The forum had sessions on a variety of topics, including technology in the North, the ACIA and the

AHDR reports, as well as societal impacts of climate change in the North. The 4th Open Meeting of NRF was attended by Presidents of two Nordic countries: Mrs. Tarja Halonen, President of Finland and Dr. Olafur Ragnar Grimsson, President of Iceland. Other speakers included Mr. Alexey Artyev, Vice-Governor, Yamal Nenets Autonomous Okrug, Russia, Mr. Mead Treadwell, Chair, US Arctic Research Commission, and Senior Fellow, Institute of the North, Alaska, USA, as well as Lars Kullerud, President of UArctic.

UArctic is also actively involved in the International Polar Year (IPY). UArctic submitted its proposal “Providing Higher Education and Outreach Programs for the International Polar Year” in September 2005. In November 2005, the International Polar Year (IPY) Joint Committee endorsed UArctic’s proposal. UArctic has since been given the lead for the Cluster on Education and Outreach in the Arctic, endorsing all IPY initiatives in this cluster. UArctic holds a seat on the IPY Education and Outreach Committee.

The University of Alaska, Fairbanks, established the UArctic IPY Education and Outreach Coordination Office in 2005. A major breakthrough for UArctic and IPY was the announcement in September 2006 that the US State Department has allocated substantive funds to UArctic through the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, to support this activity.

UArctic Funding

UArctic’s member institutions cover the costs of services to students, including on-campus delivery of programs. Short-term project funding is able to, for the most part, cover the costs of new course and program development. The value of the self-contribution of UArctic members for participation in UArctic’s governance, operation and program implementation and delivery is estimated to be two times the value of the total of project and national UArctic funding.

However, stable long-term funding is needed for UArctic offices and administration, and in particular student mobility grants and some joint online delivery. The current target is ½ million euros per Nordic country and USA in core funding; three times this sum for the proportionally much larger Canada and sums adjusted to northern population and national economy for Iceland and Russia. Core funding needs to come from long-term stable sources, for most countries state and or province government sources.

Good progress has so far been made in Canada, Norway and Finland but Sweden, Denmark, Russia and the US continue to be a challenge. The new government in Canada doubled its contributions to UArctic, from \$375,000 to \$750,000, last spring and have committed to establishing a long term solution for stable UArctic operations in Canada. Until recently, the US funding has been fully based on strong self-contributions from the member institutions. However, in the fall of 2006 the US State Department also allocated multi-year funds to UArctic core operations.

UArctic, like all HE institutions, is actively seeking funds for the implementation of its education and mobility programs from sources like the Nordic Council of Ministers, the European Union, and also increasingly the private sector. However, to

be successful in raising these kinds of funds it is vitally important that the core of UArctic's operations can be sustained with a guaranteed long-term shared commitment from the governments of the Arctic Council member states.

"We all need more opportunities to study and learn our environment. It's vital nowadays to make sure the Arctic's educational potential is secured for the future. Education is a power for people, a key for better life in some way. That is why an institution like UArctic is crucial to the people of the Arctic - it offers an education in the context of the Circumpolar World and further defines an Arctic resident's way of life." - Ekaterina Evseyeva, Student Representative to UArctic Board of Governors