

University of the Arctic – External Review Team

# Report from the University of the Arctic's External Review Team

31 January 2013



**UArctic**  
uarctic.org

Photo: Lauri Lajunen



UArctic and the authors wish to express their thanks to the University of Lapland, the Danish Agency for Science Technology and Innovation (Ministry of Science Technology and Innovation), the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research for their support of this External Review.

# Foreword

The University of the Arctic (UArctic), which came into being in 2001 through an initiative endorsed by the Arctic Council, is in the process of developing its Strategic Plan 2020. To guide this process, the Board of Governors for UArctic requested external input in the form of an independent and constructively critical review of the progress, quality, and prospective plans of UArctic. The Board has recognized the need for continuity and feels that the next strategic plan should serve to build on the strengths of the current plan, incorporating lessons learned and adapting to current issues in order to ensure that UArctic continues to be a constructive agent at the forefront of development in the Arctic. The External Review Team was provided with a set of documents and materials to guide their deliberations, and it was asked both to pay attention to progress achieved within the current five-year strategic plan as well as to consider a draft outline of the Strategic Plan 2020. We looked to the review team to provide its independent advice on the way forward for UArctic, providing a 'direction check' on many of UArctic's fundamental elements.

In asking individuals to serve on the External Review Team, the Board sought a wide range of expertise in matters dealing with the North and with international organizations, as well as broad geographical representation among Arctic nations. Materials were sent to team members during the late summer and fall of 2012, with the aim of having the major work of the External Review Team done at a joint meeting with members of UArctic's Board of Governors and UArctic Strategic Area leads (Ma-Mawi) toward the end of the year. That meeting was held in Levi, Finland on December 8-11; then in January 2013 the Review Team sent an "Exposure Draft" to the UArctic's President and Chair of the Board, to allow for the correction of any factual errors in the draft, and the final report was submitted at the beginning of February.

The Board is highly appreciative of the work done by the External Review Team, and we want to express our thanks both for the time that its members put into this task and for the quality of the work that they produced. The report offers a concise but thorough examination of UArctic and contains valuable observations that the Board will be taking into consideration as it works on UArctic Strategic Plan 2020. In the coming months we also look forward to broad discussions on the External Review Team's report and on the draft Strategic Plan; we are confident that those discussions will result in a stronger Strategic Plan 2020 that will provide guidance to UArctic for much of its second decade.

**Barry Scherr**

Chair, UArctic Board of Governors

February 2013

**The Board of Governors  
University of the Arctic**

**President of the University of the Arctic  
Lars Kullerud**

*All members of the review team thank the University of the Arctic Board and staff for the opportunity to work with them on this external review of the University of the Arctic as it enters its second decade. The University of the Arctic was born of the Arctic states and is nurtured by its 142 member institutions, who foster higher education, research opportunities and student mobility around the Circumpolar North. We hope that a fresh look at the University of the Arctic's plans and programs by supportive northern experts and scholars will assist the Board in refining its goals, objectives and operations for the coming decade.*

*We have enjoyed the task: it has been a process providing much learning for us. In this report, we have formulated a list of general recommendations, generic suggestions, many of which may be applicable also to other organizations, including some of our own.*

*It has also been mentioned by Team members that it might be a good idea to use the report for a debate about the University of the Arctic and its mission with its clients, students and teachers, political and indigenous leaders, and representatives for trade and industry. Some have also said that they would be willing to take part in such discussions now or in connection with later reviews.*

Vancouver/Oslo  
31. January 2013



**Tony Penikett**  
Chair  
External Review Team



**Ingvild Broch**  
Coordinator  
External Review Team

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# Executive Summary

The University of the Arctic (UArctic) was launched in 2001 and celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2011. In 2012, UArctic's Board of Governors began work on a new Strategic Plan for the years up to 2020. The Board wishes to build on UArctic's strengths, incorporate lessons learned and adapt to emerging realities, all to ensure that UArctic continues to be a constructive agent in the development of the Arctic regions.

To guide this process, the Board invited an External Review Team (ERT) of educational, public policy and scientific experts from the Arctic states and northern Europe to join them at Levi, Finland, in December 2012. At Levi, the ERT spent several days studying documents, interviewing Board members and staff and discussing how it might advise UArctic on its Strategic Plan 2020. This report documents the ERT's advice to the UArctic Board.

The ERT believes UArctic has achieved much in its 10 years of existence. With 142 member institutions, 25 Thematic Networks, a diversity of courses for the Circumpolar Studies Program (BCS) degree, student (north2north) and staff exchange mechanisms, and specialized administrative offices in most Arctic Council States, UArctic is well on its way to becoming an effective instrument for many purposes: academic collaboration; providing undergraduates with a working knowledge of the North; and constructive communication with northern communities, politicians and organizations about future possibilities for cooperation, student exchanges and special research projects.

In UArctic the ERT sees a thriving collaborative network with considerable potential. The Team acknowledges the hard work and enthusiasm that has been invested in building UArctic thus far. The ERT also sees that UArctic has arrived by unconventional approaches at

a pivotal point, where the Board must face crucial strategic decisions about future directions if UArctic is to realize its full potential.

UArctic's 10th anniversary presents an excellent opportunity to celebrate its successes and consider future strategies. It is a moment to reflect on certain key issues concerning UArctic's vision and values, clients and mission, programs and performance, as well as finances and fundraising. The External Review Team hopes this report will assist the UArctic Board in these deliberations.

## Summary of Recommendations:

1. The ERT believes that a moment of reflection and consolidation is in order for UArctic. This moment will give UArctic's Board, Chair and President, Council and staff time for a clear-headed assessment of UArctic's strategic vision and values, its clients, priorities and performance indicators, its structures and staff needs, and its funding prospects.

2. UArctic should settle the question of who its clients are: members, researchers, teachers, students, communities or funders, and how they rank in its priorities.

3. The ERT would urge the Board to adopt, within a year, a concise version of UArctic's Strategic Plan 2020. It should describe UArctic's vision, clients, mission, priorities and performance indicators, organization structure, as well as its branding, marketing and fund-raising plans. This should be communicated to every UArctic member institution, interested researcher, curious student or employee.

4. Once the Strategic Plan 2020 is completed, the Board and President should begin the work of branding, marketing and fundraising for the UArctic Network, and everything UArctic touches should carry its brand or name, whether it

is a course offering, research partnership, print or online publication, or mobility agreement.

5. The ERT suggests that, as a maturing organization, UArctic should adopt a shorter list (3-5) of priorities and a tighter set of (5-10) performance indicators. The Board might usefully measure not just numbers of students but also numbers of institutions accessing BCS; the number of peer-reviewed articles, or their equivalents, produced by each Thematic Network; and numbers of agreements signed for the north2north and other mobility programs.

6. In implementing Strategic Plan 2020, the Board should consider whether UArctic needs a management audit to examine whether the current organizational structures meet the priority needs of the next period.

7. In any event, the Board should establish an audit committee and create a multi-year audit plan. For the foreseeable future an audit committee, consisting of two or three Board members, and assisted by a finance officer from a member institution, can carry out any necessary internal audit function.

8. The ERT recommends that the current Board Chair makes it his responsibility to prepare a succession plan for the President and Vice-Presidents so that UArctic can respond quickly should any senior officer leave the organization.

# Introduction

In November 2012, as it began work on its Strategic Plan 2020, the Board of the University of the Arctic (UArctic) appointed a nine-member External Review Team (ERT). Over three days in December 2012, at Levi, Finland, the ERT engaged in discussions with the UArctic Chair, President and Board members, consulted with UArctic staff, and examined UArctic documents including budgets, reports and strategies.

The ERT members agreed to approach their task not as auditors or critics, but rather as outside observers, supporters and friends. The team entered the dialogue on UArctic's future at the ten-year point, a pivotal moment in UArctic's history. The ERT truly hopes that a fresh look at UArctic's plans and programs by supportive northern experts and scholars will aid the UArctic Board in refining its goals, objectives and operations for the coming decade.

The ERT received 26 guiding questions, but resolved to focus on those that it considered the most significant about UArctic and its future rather than discussing all the questions proposed in the Terms of Reference (TOR). We hoped that our responses to the major questions might also suggest answers to many of the minor questions we did not have time to directly address.

After reviewing existing UArctic strategies, the ERT met with the UArctic Board, the President, and the administration to hear presentations on their core programs and activities and to pose questions to Board members arising from the document reviews. After these meetings, ERT members first considered basic questions about UArctic's identity and goals before moving on to performance indicators and structures. During this process, clarifying questions were raised with the Board Chair and the President.

After discussion of a report outline, the ERT Chair and Coordinator drafted a report for consideration by Team members. Following further editorial advice from ERT members, the Chair presented an "exposure draft" to the UArctic Board in January 2013. Shortly thereafter, the ERT completed and transmitted a final report to the UArctic Board.

All members of the Team thank the UArctic Board and staff for assembling this interesting group and for the opportunity to work together on this important initiative. All expressed a high regard for UArctic, a network which was conceived by the Arctic states and nurtured by its 142 member institutions and organisations, and which fosters higher education, research opportunities and student mobility across the Circumpolar North.

However, ERT regrets that we had no opportunity to interview any students participating in UArctic programs. Future reviews should include students.

# Strategy

## A. Vision, Values, Voice

### Observations:

The ERT's examination began with the question of UArctic's identity, mission and measures of success. After the Cold War ended, several new circumpolar entities emerged, the most important of which, the Arctic Council, came into being in 1996 as a result of the Ottawa Declaration. Some northern scholars see UArctic as the first concrete achievement of the Arctic Council's member states and a reconnected Circumpolar North. At UArctic's 10th birthday in 2012, the project could be seen as continuing to embody much of the idealism and optimism of its founders. Even today, it remains "dream-driven".

The ERT observed that, in 2012, UArctic is:

- a consortium or network that works through collaboration;
- a catalyst for institutions, scholars and students to work together on northern research, education and mobility projects;
- a generator and transmitter of knowledge through four key programs and activities:
  - Circumpolar Studies Program (BCS);
  - Thematic Networks;
  - Mobility Programs (north2north); and
  - UArctic Institutes.

For further clarity, the ERT also considered the reverse question: What is UArctic not? The Team concluded that UArctic

- is not a conventional university;
- has not yet voiced a consistent and coherent vision, mission statement and strategy;
- has no adequate funding so the vulnerabilities will persist; and
- lacks a recognizable brand and has no alumni association or research legacy, so that fund-raising will remain a challenge
- and has a weak statutory foundation, where its Secretariat and legal entity the UArctic

Association are based in one country – Finland – where Finnish law provides for its legal basis; still with a flexible and widely distributed organization, UArctic remains structurally vulnerable.

What is UArctic's vision? What are its values? Who gives voice to that vision and those values? The ten-year point in UArctic's history is a good time for the Board to revisit its vision and values statements. Are the stated values of circumpolarity, diversity and holism adequate, and are they faithfully reflected in UArctic's structure and activities? Do these attributes accurately capture UArctic's personality?

Since "circumpolarity", as opposed to "circumpolar", may mean different things in different parts of the Arctic and sub-Arctic, how reliable can the term be as the expression of a shared value? And how do Russians and Americans, or Greenlanders and Finns, visualize "holism"? Why not the "northern knowledge network" or some other description in plain language?

One alternative value offered to the ERT was "reciprocity", which is defined as a two-way interaction linking Arctic and sub-Arctic communities in ways that would add value to UArctic Thematic Networks and allow isolated settlements to benefit from knowledge transfers. The ERT suggests that one element could be better reflected as follows: "The residents of the Arctic in general and indigenous people in particular, their organizations, their active participation and use of their languages, may be crucial to the value of research in the Arctic, as a resource for knowledge of problems and solutions."

At the moment, UArctic's mission statements communicate no clarity of purpose, and "diversity", a positive value, can be no defence against dispersion of energy and focus. The mission statement could include the following:

"To establish development of knowledge for development of the Arctic that ensures the future of the inhabitants, the residents in general and indigenous people in particular, and their active participation."

Because the language sometimes varies from one document to the next, the ERT had difficulty in identifying UArctic's key goals. To illustrate, "Strategic Implementation Plan 2009-2013" describes seven strategic priorities but does not rank them. Some priorities cover more than one program. This in itself could create an evaluation challenge. In total, this document includes 131 goals and 89 indicators. However, a different document, "UArctic Strategic Plan 2009-2013", offers a different focus, described as "Values, Mission, Roles, and Strategic Focus".

What UArctic calls "Strategic Areas" in the Strategic Implementation Plan is labelled "Structure" (i.e. Undergraduate and Graduate studies, Mobility, Knowledge and Dialogue, Service to Members, Rectors' Forum and Charter) in the UArctic Strategic Plan. The former appears to be an internal document, while the latter is intended for public consumption. Ideally, a reader should be able to easily relate one to the other.

A defining moment for the ERT occurred when a Team member asked how the Board would spend an extra 10 million euros. Individual Board members articulated a very varied wish list, suggesting an absence of a singular vision. In a more mature organization, one would expect greater agreement on overall strategy and key priorities.

As part of UArctic's mission, the Board should encourage the creation of knowledge for development of the Arctic that ensures the future of the inhabitants – the residents in general and indigenous peoples in particular – and their active participation, while

observing opportunities to build and benefit from resources of local experience and knowledge.

UArctic should pay attention to the need for indigenous and other languages to keep local residents informed and enable them to take initiatives in matters of concern. To the degree that research may have an impact on Arctic communities, UArctic should try to enlarge its picture of stakeholders and their opinions.

In any event, UArctic's stated goal for 2013, namely, "UArctic has developed into a well-recognized circumpolar training and higher education network", remains on the horizon.

## **B. Clients**

### **Observations:**

A coherent strategy starts with a common understanding derived from certain questions. The first such question that UArctic needs to visit is, "Who does UArctic consider to be its clients: member institutions, research networks, BCS students, circumpolar communities or funding governments?" How does it rank these clients in order of importance? How does it benefit or serve each of them, directly or indirectly? What is its relation to other stakeholders, that is, regional leaders and linguistic minorities?

The existing strategic plan proposes to increase "leadership of Indigenous peoples in operation and governance as well as programmatic activities of UArctic." If local residents, including indigenous peoples, were to become a priority client, might UArctic serve this constituency in one of the following ways: a Thematic Network on minority languages or traditional knowledge; examining environmental and climate-change implications of major developments; or indigenous language materials in BCS courses or UArctic publications and websites? Should UArctic decide to respond to this challenge, it

could do so only in association with member institutions, because it currently lacks the capacity to do so on its own. However, UArctic has appointed a Vice-President for Indigenous Affairs, who attends Board meetings and presumably advises the President on priorities, programs and activities.

The ERT notes that many northern students do not have sufficient knowledge of English to participate in UArctic activities, and this significant problem of language, or rather languages, needs attention.

One ERT member thought more study materials in Russian would probably appeal to a larger number of students from that country. For the moment, UArctic seems determined not to compete with its member institutions in course delivery, but is joint delivery or UArctic/institution partnerships an option? If so, might UArctic offer circumpolar leadership or management courses to northern communities, especially those facing huge developmental and environmental challenges? Currently, UArctic may not have the necessary resources but member institutions might and, in future, UArctic could choose to be a partner or participant in such initiatives.

## C. Priorities and Performance Indicators

### Observations:

The ERT found it difficult to verify UArctic's main priorities, in part because statements and terminology sometimes shifted from document to document. Such imprecision can undermine efforts to develop relevant performance indicators and, worse, effective implementation plans.

As a general observation, the Review Team finds that UArctic has too many priorities and not enough of the right kind of performance measures. Some stated priorities seem to exist only as ideas and some performance indicators are in practice unused. Successful organizations usually have focused priorities and employ only the most relevant performance indicators.

UArctic staff informed the ERT that they do not use all the indicators listed in their implementation plan. Indeed, they also use some others that may not all be relevant, for example, the number of participants in international meetings, graduates with the six courses of the BCS as well as the BCS introductory course, online enrolments, locally delivered enrolments, and students in Thematic Networks with developed graduate programs.

The ERT notes a need for improvement in the organization of data. A minor failing is the absence of publication dates in some UArctic documents.

The ERT believes that relevant performance indicators for UArctic ought to be those for a network of universities, not a single university as such.

Each of UArctic's programs and activities ought to provide measurable benefits to clients. UArctic can best demonstrate these benefits through realistic and relevant performance indicators. Relevant performance indicators

should provide the Board and President with solid data on the effectiveness of UArctic's principal programs, that is, the BCS, Thematic Networks and north2north student mobility.

At this point, UArctic has no students of its own, so numbers of institutions accessing the BCS might better indicate success than raw numbers of BCS students. That said, UArctic would also benefit from knowing how many BCS students complete a degree or go on to graduate studies.

Similarly, when it comes to the north2north mobility program, perhaps numbers of agreements between other institutions and UArctic might count as a highly relevant indicator, in addition to the number of students exchanged. Although the total numbers are not large, the statistics for north2north exchange do provide a reliable indication of steady growth.

With Thematic Networks, the number of scientific articles, courses offered, or other educational activities on the part of each network's researchers might more accurately indicate its vitality. Further, the ERT heard widely divergent views about the number of "very active," "active," "inactive" and "watch list" of Thematic Network members. Effective evaluation requires hard data. Numbers of publications would partially meet that need.

Finally, the Review Team observes that a mature organization should have a shorter list (3-5) of priorities and a slightly longer set of (5-10) relevant performance indicators.

## D. Branding, marketing, fundraising

### 1. Branding

#### Observations:

ERT members asked: How aware are students in BCS courses of the UArctic connection? Do events associated with Thematic Networks publicize the UArctic brand? How successfully do the UArctic and Arctic Council websites promote the UArctic brand? The Board will need to think through these questions.

The ERT heard that not all participants in UArctic programs are fully aware of the network. UArctic might broaden knowledge of its activities and strengthen its brand by encouraging all teachers, students and researchers to acknowledge UArctic's contributions.

Has UArctic canvassed member institutions to inquire why they decided to join UArctic, and how, in future, they intend to use UArctic's programs to make their institutions more international?

Clearly, north2north exchanges contribute to student recruitment, but they can also burnish the brand. Many exchange programs are bilateral, whereas north2north is multilateral.

The ERT heard another suggestion for a mechanism whereby researchers could spend sabbaticals (not necessarily a whole year) at UArctic member institutions. This need not involve much money and could support Thematic Networks and strengthen community involvement.

Once the Board has crafted a concise version of its strategy, which readily answers any "who are you, and what do you do?" questions, building the UArctic brand will become progressively easier.

## 2. Marketing

### Observations:

Among the suggestions the ERT heard on marketing UArctic were:

- transforming the web site to a truly multilingual source, including indigenous languages as well as English and Russian, which would make it accessible to more of the people that UArctic wants to reach and much more interesting to readers; and
- establishing, on a GoNorth webpage, a listing of all member institutions' northern studies courses. If this list were updated on a regular basis it would help UArctic branding and marketing while supporting the smaller institutions of higher learning.

## 3. Fundraising

### Observations:

The new UArctic membership fee structure is a positive step.

One ERT member wondered whether UArctic, if it is the educational project of the Arctic Council, could seek direct financial support of its circumpolar activities, beyond the funding supplied by the Arctic States.

### Recommendations:

1. UArctic should settle the question of who its clients are: members, researchers, teachers and students, communities or funders, and how they rank in its priorities.
2. Strategic Plan 2020 should describe UArctic's vision, clients, mission, priorities and performance indicators, organization structure, as well as its branding, marketing and fund-raising plans.
3. The ERT suggests that, as a maturing organization, UArctic should adopt a shorter list (3-5) of priorities and a tighter set of

(5-10) performance indicators. The Board might usefully measure not just numbers of students but also numbers of institutions accessing the BCS; the number of peer-reviewed articles, or their equivalents, produced by each Thematic Network; and numbers of agreements signed for the north2north and other mobility programs.

4. The ERT would urge the Board to adopt, within a year, a concise version of Strategic Plan 2020 which should be a document containing a concrete goals statement, as well as a document with reliable indicators and a refined implementation plan that could be communicated to every UArctic member institution, interested researcher, curious student or employee.

5. Once the Strategic Plan 2020 is completed, the Board and President should begin the work of branding, marketing and fundraising for the UArctic Network.

6. Everything UArctic touches should carry its brand or name, whether it is a course offering, research partnership, print or online publication, or mobility agreement.

7. When it is timely the UArctic Board might launch, in partnership with member institutions, an international online Arctic research journal to transmit knowledge and promote the UArctic brand.

8. Branding, marketing and fundraising are related activities. With a brief strategy statement from UArctic in hand, plus a revised set of priorities and performance indicators, the Board and President will be better positioned to seek new sources of revenue.

# Organization and Governance

## Observations:

As noted initially, the ERT concluded that UArctic is a network of educational institutions. The UArctic network must thus justify its existence by the value it adds to its member colleges and universities, their students, teachers and researchers, and other clients or constituents. Accordingly, the number of UArctic members is a key indicator of success.

UArctic currently has a decentralized administration at 16 offices, each of which is hosted by a member institution within the Circumpolar North and regulated through Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) between UArctic and the member institutions on the specific duties of each office. The system has vulnerabilities in that a key collaborator can be difficult to replace, and because funding for a position may be restricted and unavailable for another person in another location. On the other hand, it counts as strength that UArctic has widely dispersed representatives in the regional homes of the member institutions. For a network this organizational structure may operate better than one that places all administrators in one location.

Diversified administration may help in the recruitment of students and assist in branding. However, monitoring the regional offices and communicating about daily tasks will challenge the energies and abilities of the President and Vice-Presidents.

UArctic wants to build strong links with its main clients, but does it have any plans for dealing with other stakeholders, such as industrial actors, regional governments and social movements?

UArctic has an unusually flat organizational profile, but certain external pressures, including perhaps this review, may tend

over time to promote a more conventionally hierarchical structure. Additional Vice-Presidents and performance indicators of a kind commonly employed by established institutions of higher learning could contribute to this. In pursuing success over the next decade, UArctic's Board will need to be mindful of the risk of eroding the unique character of the UArctic organization.

The ERT remained unclear about the extent to which UArctic's President and three Vice-Presidents actually supervise the staff in these distant offices. If they act as coordinators of part-time work by the employees of member institutions rather than as supervisors of full-time UArctic staff, there might be a more appropriate title than "Vice-President", a label that normally describes a senior executive with a significant staff complement.

A relatively new feature of the organization, the Rectors' Forum, has already become a popular assembly of higher education institution leaders in that it provides a welcome opportunity to discuss educational challenges in the circumpolar regions. It might also come to function as a meeting ground between academic leaders and government funding agencies. Because UArctic programs (the BCS, Thematic Networks and mobility agreements) create functional links with discrete faculties, individual research programs and students at individual member institutions, the advent of the Rectors' Forum has had the effect of reinforcing the UArctic network by connecting the leaders of member institutions.

Could the Rectors' Forum eventually replace the Board as UArctic governors? This is perhaps unlikely because in different countries rectors play very different roles. Moreover, some are elected and some not. However, over time, the Rectors' Forum could come to replace the Council, a body

including representatives from every member institution or, which is more likely, become a Senate or "upper house" to the Council or "parliament."

Although a recent organizational chart does not show it, UArctic has one President and three Vice-Presidents, all dedicated professionals. The ERT recognized that the Board, and the UArctic network, might be excessively dependent on this tiny group of people and that they would be hard to replace.

At the appropriate time, the UArctic Board could undertake a review of personnel and management at UArctic to assess if there is alignment in mission and cooperation among the parties and if roles and responsibilities are clear.

## Recommendations:

9. In implementing Strategic Plan 2020, the Board should consider whether UArctic needs a management audit to examine whether the current organizational structures meet the priority needs of the next period.

10. In any event, the Board should establish an audit committee and create a multi-year audit plan. For the foreseeable future an appointed audit committee, consisting of two or three Board members, and assisted by a finance officer from a member institution, can carry out any necessary internal audit function.

11. The ERT recommends that the Board Chair make it his responsibility to prepare a succession plan for the President and Vice-Presidents so that UArctic can respond quickly should any senior officer leave the organization.

# Finance

## Observations:

UArctic has two primary funding streams: unrestricted funds controlled and directed by the Board (2012: 465,000 euros) and restricted funds, directed to UArctic activities by member institutions (2012: 5,741,200 euros). The sources for the unrestricted funds include membership fees (65,000 euros), UArctic endowment earning (25,000 euros), and a Danish government grant (300,000 euros). The restricted funding consists mainly of government grants to support named activities (such as mobility). The member institutions also contribute in-kind funding, for example, for UArctic member representatives to attend the annual meeting of the Council of UArctic.

In 2009, after much debate, UArctic had adopted a new membership fee to provide the organization with some important own-source revenue.

UArctic can count itself a success in that many Arctic governments support its work, mainly through member institutions in their home countries. Most of UArctic's work is done in the different administrative offices and underwritten by host nations (restricted funding). However, this creates a problem for the Board, which consequently has little money to direct towards its own strategic priorities.

Over the last two years, new membership fees and the direct allocation from the Danish government have placed more money at the Board's disposal.

To date, UArctic has not often applied for funds in competition with its member institutions. The ERT wonders, however, whether the Board would consider a policy for entering into project funding partnerships with member institutions.

## Recommendations:

12. Ideally, UArctic budget priorities should match the strategic priorities set out in Strategic Plan 2020. With a concise strategy statement in one hand and a budget in the other, any observer should be able to match a UArctic priority and activity with the planned expenditure.

13. To be able to fund its own priorities, UArctic must work to increase unrestricted funding.

14. With UArctic's Strategic Plan 2020 as a mission statement, funding agencies will more readily respond to the network's needs.

15. The ERT believes that a moment of reflection and consolidation has arrived for UArctic. This moment will give UArctic's Board, Chair and President, Council and staff time for a clear-headed assessment of UArctic's strategic vision and values, its clients, priorities and performance indicators, its structures and staff needs, and its funding prospects.

## Additional Comments from ERT Members

The following comments were offered by various team members after the team departed Levi. These observations cover select areas of the mission and function of the University of the Arctic. After discussion among the team, it was decided to include these comments in an appendix rather than in the body of the report. These comments do not necessarily represent the views of all team members.

### **Daniel J. Julius** **Academic Affairs Assessment and Evaluation**

There is a need for centralized academic assessment and evaluation of courses and programs that are associated with UArctic offerings. This means quality control measures on academic programs and courses, with rough measures of what UArctic students who complete courses or programs should “know”. It also implies criteria to evaluate faculty and UArctic academic and research networks to assess whether they are effective (sustainable and of sufficient academic rigor). Criteria for the latter could be created by bringing together a representative group of those responsible for academic courses/research/networks and devising evaluation and assessment instruments appropriate for UArctic courses and students. A long-term academic plan would be very helpful, as would an outline of what UArctic hopes to accomplish from an academic perspective and a roadmap to accomplish planned goals and objectives. The decision-making architecture to ensure academic coordination is presently not sufficient.

### **Student and Faculty Identity**

UArctic should strive to create student identity and commitment through a shared student/faculty experience. One step in developing this might be a student survey asking what students know about UArctic, why taking a UArctic related course is important, what they obtain, what they hope to

accomplish, and how the student experience might be enhanced. The student and faculty identity issue is necessary for long-term sustainability of UArctic and will be directly related to quality measures and performance outputs, the ability to seek external funding, and the like. Identity also leads to growth in enrolment and greater numbers of institutions who may wish to join UArctic. Lastly, committed and loyal alumni are important for the future development of UArctic, including the raising of funds.

### **Arnaq Grove** **Empowerment of Arctic Residents**

The residents whose future is in the Arctic have a basic interest in a sustainable and healthy environment. The Arctic nature is exceptionally vulnerable and so are the people who dwell in the region. The development of the Arctic is driven through interplay mainly between private organizations and governmental institutions. In some matters, such as environmental challenges, the interests of local residents may not be covered adequately. As scattered and small populations, they lack the means of powerful organizations and institutions. The cultures of indigenous people in these areas were formed to survive in harsh conditions, with limited food. With regard to these matters and the empowerment of local residents, their inclusion in UArctic (planning, coordination of efforts, academic affairs) must become an essential part of UArctic’s general mission; this might also mean treating the local residents as clients or focusing courses, resources and activities on the needs of local residents. A survey to assess the needs and concerns of local residents might be considered. Following that, UArctic might discuss ways to increase representation of such residents in UArctic activities and plans.

### **Traditional Knowledge**

UArctic might find ways to promote greater respect for “traditional knowledge”. This could entail additional courses or programs on native languages. The knowledge and the experience of local residents are of value to the academic world. UArctic might consider ways to enhance collaboration in program-related areas or in thematic networks.

### **Vladimir I. Pavlenko** **The Arctic Council**

It is not clear how the UArctic strategy and activities correlate with the priorities and tasks of the Arctic Council. This might be an area for further collaboration and program-related growth. UArctic academic programs, research and outreach could perhaps benefit from additional interaction with the Arctic Council.

### **New Regional Offices**

The UArctic operates with a diversified and decentralized organizational structure. The organizational structure accommodates differences between UArctic states in, for example, education, science and intellectual property. Therefore UArctic should consider establishing regional UArctic offices, which might be hosted by UArctic member institutions and rotate every few years. Such offices may assist with academic coordination, student and faculty assessment, course evaluation, the promotion of thematic networks, and the like. If regional offices are contemplated, they should be incorporated with criteria that align with the mission of UArctic and coordination of such offices should be managed by the current administration. Criteria for the establishment of regional offices might include indicators such as numbers of students, study programs at each academic level, number of teaching staff, research turnover, and international activities.

## Composition of the External Review Team:

- **Tony Penikett**, Canada (Chair), Arctic Security Program Advisor, Walter & Duncan Gordon Foundation, Toronto
- **Ingvild Broch**, former Director of Research University of Tromsø and leader of BEAR Working Group for Higher Education and Research (Team Coordinator)
- **Bernd Waechter**, Director of Academic Cooperation Association, Belgium
- **Daniel J. Julius**, Executive Director of the LEVIN INSTITUTE, State University of New York (SUNY) Levin Institute.
- **Olav Orheim**, former director, Norwegian Polar Institute, Norway
- **Arnaq Grove**, Associate professor, University of Copenhagen; University of Greenland
- **Anni-Siiri Länsman**, Director, Giellagas Institute, University of Oulu, Finland
- **Björn Dahlbäck**, Director, Swedish Polar Research Secretariat
- **Vladimir Pavlenko**, Director of the Center for Arctic Studies, Ural Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences

**Guðfriður Lilja Grétarsdóttir**, Member of Parliament, Iceland, and **Dmitry Berezhkov**, Center for Nordlige Folk AS, Fossen, Norway were also appointed to the ERT but were unable to take part in the Levi meeting. They have consequently not participated in the ERT's deliberations.



Pierre-André Forest / UArctic

*Tony Penikett*

Tony Penikett

*Ingvild Broch*

Ingvild Broch

*Bernd Waechter*

Bernd Waechter

*Daniel J. Julius*

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*Olav Orheim*

Olav Orheim

*Arnaq Grove*

Arnaq Grove

*Anni-Siiri Länsman*

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*Björn Dahlbäck*

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*Vladimir Pavlenko*

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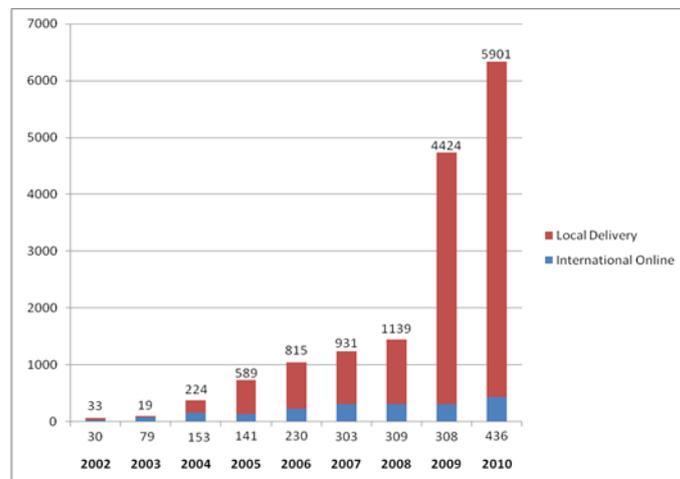
[uarctic.org](http://uarctic.org)

## UARctic Student Numbers Overview 2012

### Thematic Networks

Students not tracked by International Academic Office

A number of networks are either developing or operating joint graduate programs, field schools, or graduate conferences/workshops. Estimated 50 in graduate programs, another 120 participants in graduate activities annually. This includes new joint degree programs like the Masters in Health and Well-being in the Circumpolar Area that have been developed directly through Thematic Networks.



### Circumpolar Studies Program

Locally-delivered student enrollments (2010): 4952

Online International Delivery (2011): 312

Total enrolments to date (online and locally-delivered): 16,376+<sup>1</sup>

Graduates: 162 Certificates of Completion 36<sup>2</sup>

### Graduate Area

Students not tracked by International Academic Office

Currently 3 Endorsed Graduate Programs:

**Masters Program in Comparative Social Work** (University of Lapland, Northern (Arctic) Federal University, Karelian State Pedagogical University, Petrozavosk State University, Murmansk Humanities Institute, Murmansk State Humanities University, Murmansk State Technical University, University of Oulu)

**Health and Wellbeing in the Circumpolar Area (MCH)** (University of Oulu, Center for Health Education (Greenland), Luleå University of Technology, Northern State Medical University, Northern (Arctic) Federal University, NORUT Social Science Research Ltd. (Norway), University of Lapland, University of Manitoba, University of Southern Denmark)

<sup>1</sup> Does not include locally-delivered students from 2011 (estimated 3000-4000)

<sup>2</sup> Confirmation of Completion: completing a Bachelor degree with the Circumpolar Studies seven core courses and an Advanced Emphasis. Confirmation of Achievement: completed the entire seven Circumpolar Studies courses.

**Northern Tourism Programme** (Finnmark University College, University of Oulu, University of Lapland, Umeå University, University of Northern British Columbia, Lakehead University, University of Iceland, University of Akureyri)

### ***Mobility***

*north2north* Student Exchanges

<b>Year</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Exchanges</b>	16	30	85	101	133	100	109	167	197	165 <sup>3</sup>	<b>1103</b>

### ***UArctic Studies Catalogue***

292 Courses and 188 Study Programs

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<sup>3</sup> End of Canada north2north pilot program



## **UARctic 2012 Finance Description In-brief**

(Reported in Euros)

### **Primary Funding Streams**

1. Unrestricted Funds: Funding controlled and directed by the Board of Governors (465,000)
  - a. Sources include: membership fees (65,000), UArctic endowment earnings (25,000), Danish government grant (300,000).
  - b. Funds are received and disbursed by the UArctic Secretariat using ULapland systems. Funding for UArctic offices and projects is arranged through memorandum of understanding agreements between UArctic and member institutions. Funds transferred to member institutions are managed through the recipient institution business offices and according to the policies and practices of those institutions.
2. Restricted Funds: Funding directed to UArctic activities by member institutions (5,741,200)
  - a. Sources include: institutional resources (compensation, travel, and other cost of individual faculty and staff working on UArctic activities, etc.), government grants to institutions to support named UArctic activities (*e.g.*, Norway's funding of the international mobility office), government grants to institutions for institution activities that are also UArctic activities (*e.g.* Master of Northern Governance, ICNGD).
  - b. Funds are controlled and disbursed by member institutions.
  - c. In-kind contributions are funds expended by member institutions in support of UArctic activities or administrative functions. For example, the funds expended for UArctic member representatives to attend the annual Council of UArctic meeting.

### **Expenditures by Strategic Area**

Thematic Networks: 2,344,602 (Restricted)

Undergraduate: 243,460 (Restricted)

Graduate: 136,516 (Restricted)

Knowledge & Dialogue: 135,055 (Restricted)

Mobility: 1,050,000 (Restricted)

Services to Members: 634,444 (Restricted)

UARctic Organization: 1,359,123 (757,123 Restricted, 602,000 Unrestricted)