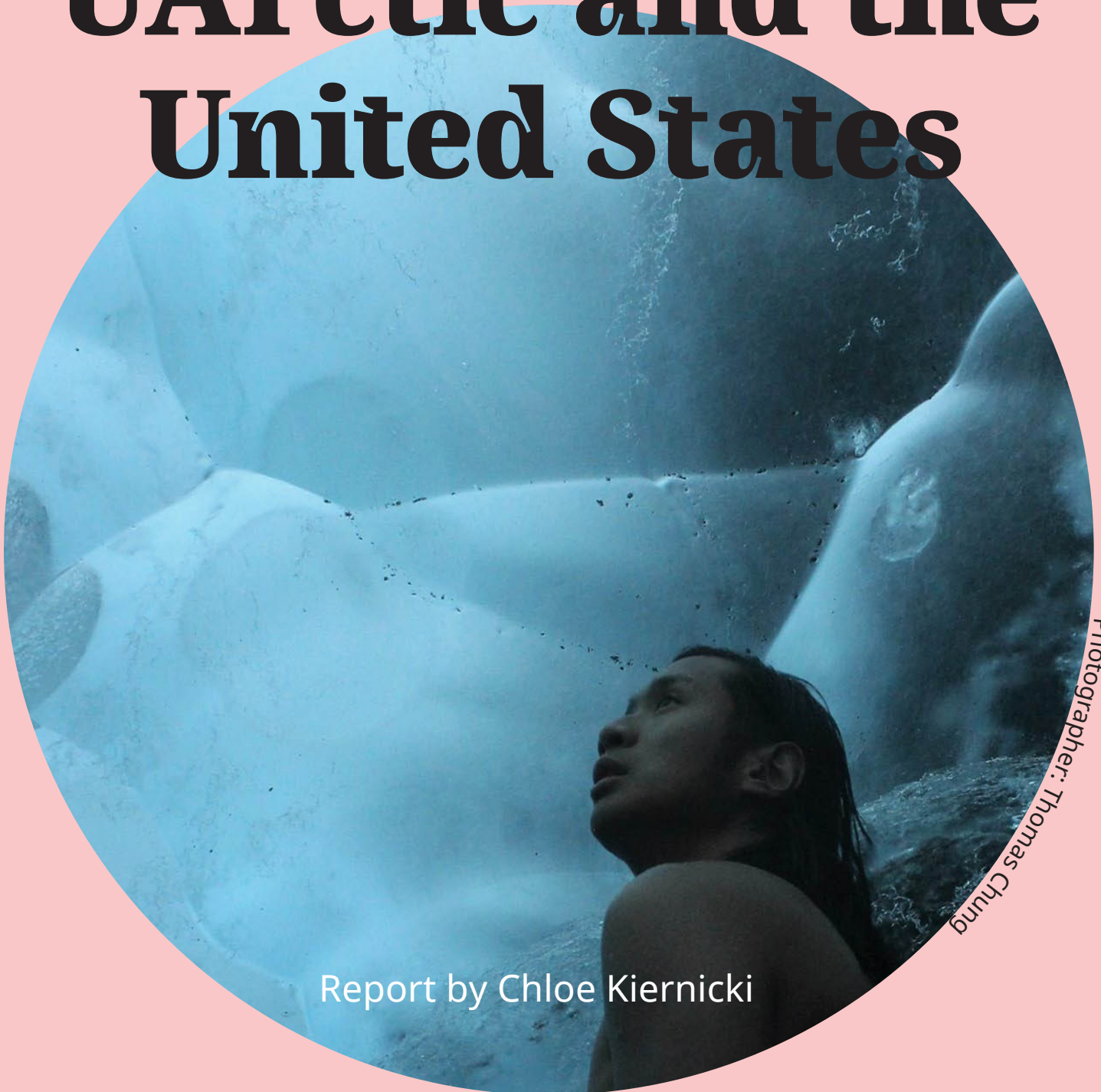


UARctic and the United States



Report by Chloe Kiernicki

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Foreword

In autumn 2021 the University of Lapland and the US Embassy in Helsinki formed a cooperation agreement in recognition of 20 years since the Launch of UArctic at the University of Lapland in June 2001. The agreement established the American Arctic Connection between the University of Lapland and the US Embassy in Helsinki. One of the activities planned under the American Arctic Connection was a US intern working at the University of Lapland to enhance ties between the University of Lapland and the United States, primarily focused on Arctic expertise and UArctic members in the US.

Covid-19 slowed this commencement of the internship program somewhat, but in March 2023 University of Lapland and its UArctic International Secretariat welcomed Chloe Kiernicki to Rovaniemi. This report was produced by Chloe during her internship and is based on information she was able to pull out from the UArctic International Secretariat records and databases as well as from various UArctic offices that coordinate UArctic activities.

Several universities from the United States were actively involved in the very creation of UArctic, and the US membership has grown steadily both in Alaska and in the Lower 48. We hope that this report can serve as a stimulator for discussion in the US about deepening the US engagement also at the federal level.

The University of Lapland and UArctic are deeply grateful to the US Embassy in Helsinki for making this report possible through the funding of the American Arctic Connection at the University of Lapland.

Rovaniemi, 28 August 2023

Outi Snellman
Secretary General
UArctic

Special Advisor
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UArctic and the United States

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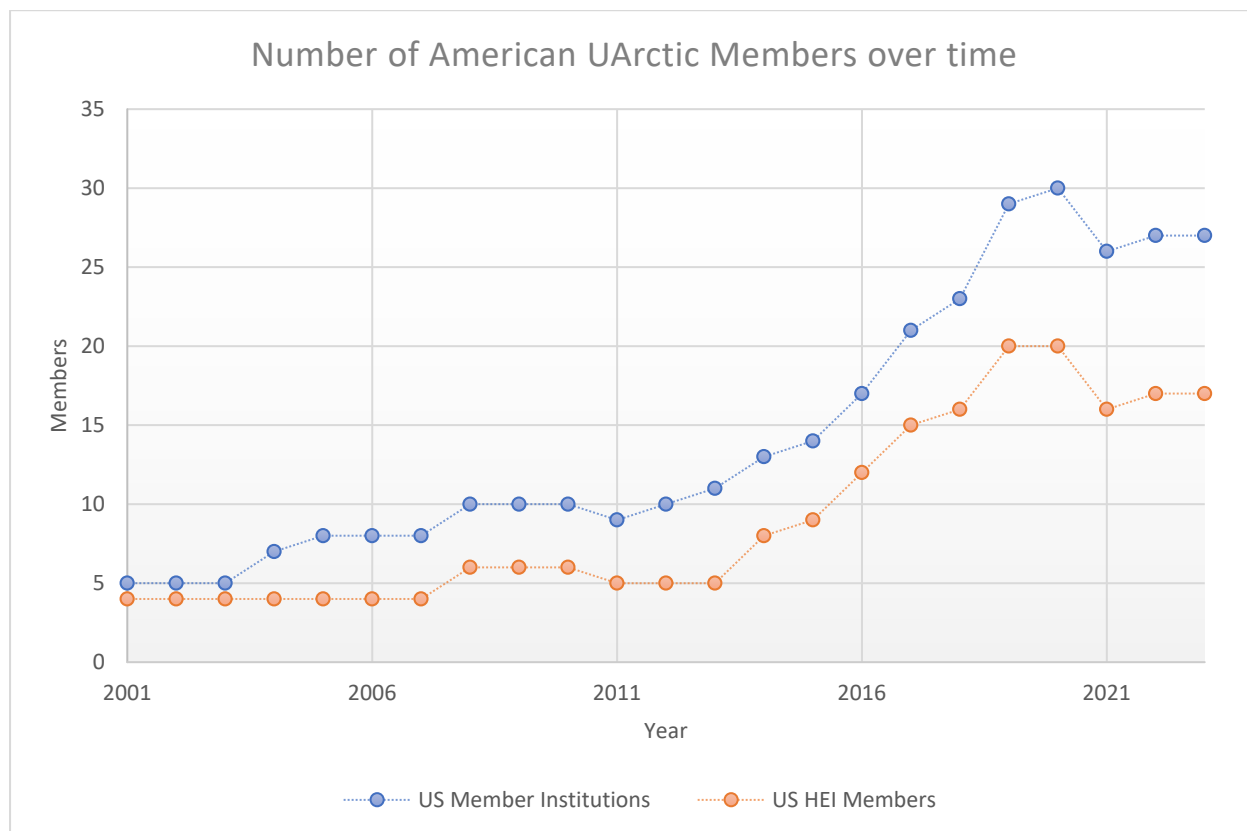
Brief History of UArctic

University of the Arctic ('UArctic') was established through the Iqaluit Declaration, which was published as a result of the first meeting of the Arctic Council in 1998. UArctic was established as a 'university without walls' with a secretariat located in Finland. In 1999, the secretariat's office was officially opened in Rovaniemi, Finland. The first American member institutions joined in 2001, when UArctic officially launched; there were 5 American institutions among the initial group of 26. In 2023, there are 173 members and 27 in the United States.

The north2north student mobility program was established in 2000, and the first group of students participated in 2002. Also, in 2002, UArctic was granted observer status to the Arctic Council and the first Circumpolar Studies courses were launched. Thematic Networks were established in 2005 as the key program activity of UArctic; today there are 60 established Thematic Networks and Institutes.

United States Member Participation in UArctic

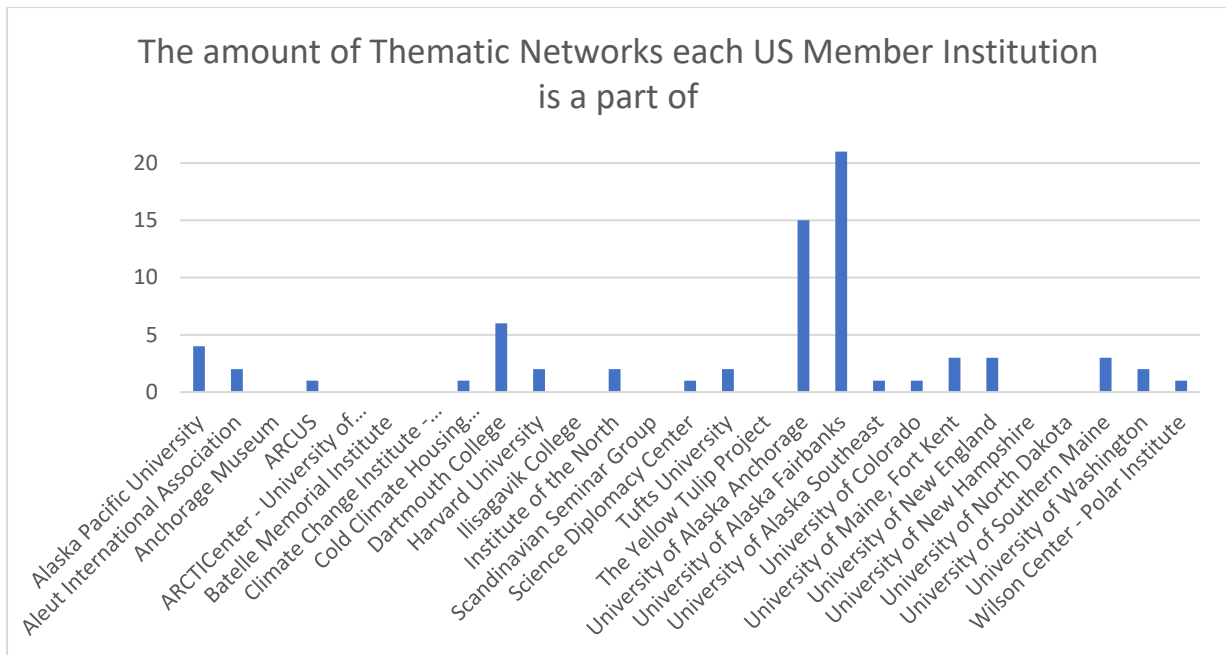
A. Membership of UArctic:



In 2023, there are currently 27 members of UArctic that are located in the United States. Of those member institutions, 17 are higher education institutions (HEIs). This has steadily increased since the creation of UArctic, but has been impacted by the cut in budgets and programming in response to Covid-19.

B. Thematic Network Activity:

Thematic Networks are organized around relevant themes across varying Arctic disciplines. They are organized within UArctic and are led by researchers from member institutions. Researchers are eligible to join and partner on topics of interest; Thematic Networks bring global Arctic researchers together to serve as platforms for communication and collaboration. On average, each American member institution is part of 2,63 different Thematic Networks; the median number of Thematic Networks that each American member is a part of is 1. University of Alaska Fairbanks and Anchorage are members of the most Thematic Networks.



C. north2north Engagement:

Of the 17 HEIs, 6 are part of the north2north exchange network: Alaska Pacific University, University of Alaska Anchorage, University of Alaska Fairbanks, University of New England, University of Southern Maine, and University of Washington. Through the north2north network, students and staff are eligible to receive financial support for studying or researching at north2north member institutions across the other Arctic countries.

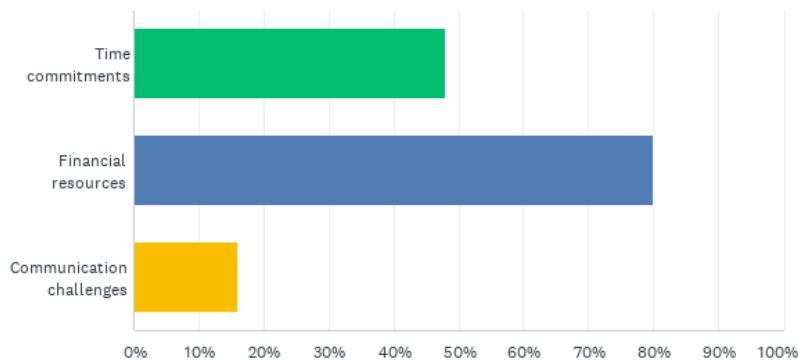
American institutions enable participation for students in north2north exchange by providing tuition fee waivers for incoming international students. These waivers are provided by the universities themselves and come from their internal budgets. There are typically 2 waivers per university available per year. Waivers remove the tuition fee for international students to attend the American university on exchange.

D. Membership Survey to US member institutions:

A survey was sent to representatives from the UArctic members in the United States. Of the 135 representatives contacted, UArctic received 32 responses from 12 different member institutions.

Below are data from questions relevant to funding:

From your perspective, what are the barriers to your current involvement [with UArctic]?



The 3 options, in addition to open comments, were: time commitments, financial resources, and communication challenges. Respondents could select as many options as they felt applied to them. 48% of respondents felt constrained by time, 76% by finances, and 14% by communication.

What could be done to improve the way that your institution engages with UArctic?

Tags	+ New Tag
advertising	3.85% 1 View all Edit Delete
clear processes	15.38% 4 View all Edit Delete
communication	23.08% 6 View all Edit Delete
course processes	3.85% 1 View all Edit Delete
engagement from univer...	19.23% 5 View all Edit Delete
funding	30.77% 8 View all Edit Delete
looking for more inform...	7.69% 2 View all Edit Delete
north2north outreach	7.69% 2 View all Edit Delete
workload support	3.85% 1 View all Edit Delete

This was an open-ended question in which respondents replied in an open text box. Based on the content of free-form responses, tags were derived and applied to answers. Multiple tags could be applied to the same answer. The tags that were identified are listed above. The most common recommendations for improving engagement are: funding, communication, and engagement from institutional colleagues themselves. 31% of responses involved financial barriers.

What activities would you like to see more stable funding for?

conferences		11.54%	3	View all	Edit	Delete
engagement		7.69%	2	View all	Edit	Delete
field research		7.69%	2	View all	Edit	Delete
indigenous leadership		7.69%	2	View all	Edit	Delete
meetings		19.23%	5	View all	Edit	Delete
north2north		38.46%	10	View all	Edit	Delete
research proposals		19.23%	5	View all	Edit	Delete
research travel		15.38%	4	View all	Edit	Delete
thematic networks		11.54%	3	View all	Edit	Delete
topic: tourism		3.85%	1	View all	Edit	Delete

Based on the content of free-form responses, tags were derived and applied to answers. Multiple tags could be applied to the same answer. The tags that were identified are listed above. The most common requests are funding for north2north student exchange, research proposal development, and meetings amongst UArctic members. 38,5% of responses included student exchange; 54% of responses included exchange in some regard (student, faculty, research).

US Roles in UArctic Governance

Over the years, numerous American individuals from member institutions have held management and governance positions within UArctic. Today, every governance body has at least one American member. Below is an overview of the posts and the way that American members are involved:

a. The Board

The Board of UArctic oversees UArctic's administration, development, and core activities. The Board is comprised of elected representatives, who are chosen at the annual UArctic Assembly meeting. Board Members are selected for three-year terms, with the option for a one-term renewal. The Board is led by one Chair and two Vice Chairs.

The first four Board Chairs were from the United States: Oran Young (2001-2007), Stephen Jones (2007-2009), Barry Scherr (2009-2013), Brian Rogers (2013-2016). The Board, including the Chair, has fluctuated in size from the initial 7 to currently 15, now including 3 student representatives. Since its inception, there have been 10 other American members of the Board. Currently, one of the 3 student representatives is from an American member institution. American Board members have been from university administration, academic research, and non-profit organizations across the continental United States and Alaska.

I. The Board Executive Committee

The Board Executive is in charge of the points of discussion for Board meetings and is comprised of: Board Officers (Chair, Vice Chairs), the President, the Secretary General, and the Vice President Indigenous. Currently, there is one American member on the Executive Committee: Pat Pitney, the President of the University of Alaska system.

II. The Finance Policy Advisory Group

The Finance Policy Advisory Group is responsible for the financial oversight and transparency of UArctic's fiscal policy matters. The Group is comprised of 3 members and 3 advisors. The current Chair of the Group is Pat Pitney, who also is a member of the Board Executive Committee and a member of the Board.

III. Philanthropic Fundraising Advisory Group

Týr is the Philanthropic Fundraising Advisory Group. Its mission is to provide independent advice on fundraising goals, strategy, and external donations. There are 5 members of the Group, including Ross Virginia, the Director of the Institute of Arctic Studies at Dartmouth College.

b. Assembly

The UArctic Assembly is the platform through which member institutions are represented in the decision-making of UArctic. The goal of the Assembly is to lead program development. Each institution has a primary representative, as well as a stand-in secondary representative, regardless of

the member institutions' size. Therefore, every American UArctic member has an Assembly representative.

I. Nominations Committee

The Nominations Committee oversees UArctic's member nomination policies and procedures. It operates independently from other core bodies of UArctic. There are 6 members of the committee, and one of them is from the United States. Sven Haakanson is a professor at the University of Washington and a member of the committee.

II. Toyon

Toyon is the Assembly Executive Committee and consists of the Officers of the Assembly and the Chairs of the Membership and Nominations committees. There are 6 members. The current Chair of Toyon is Lindsay Whaley, the Associate Provost for International Initiatives at Dartmouth College.

c. Ma-Mawi

Ma-Mawi is the senior leadership team of UArctic, comprised of the President, the Vice Presidents, the Secretariat Office leadership. Of the 10 members, 1 is from the United States: Diane Hirschberg from the University of Alaska Anchorage is the Vice President Academic. The purpose of Ma-Mawi is to oversee daily operations of UArctic.

I. Mimir

Mimir is the Academic Advisory Board to UArctic and provides high-level strategic leadership to Ma-Mawi. Currently, 2 of the 8 members represent the United States. One representative is the founding UArctic Board Chair Oren Young, and the other is National Science Foundation Assistant Director Robert Corell.

II. Avatitsinni Committee

Avatitsinni is the Indigenous Advisory Board, and it works with the Vice President Indigenous and Mimir. Currently, 2 of the 6 members are from the United States. Sean Asiqtuq Topkok is at the University of Alaska Fairbanks and Terzah Tippin Poe is at the University of New England.

d. Chairs

UArctic Chairs are recognized for their research and academic work: their prerogative is to advance relevant areas of Arctic matters within UArctic. Chairs are selected in their specific fields and advocate for related research activity among UArctic members and Thematic Networks. There are currently 14 Chairs, and 2 are based at American institutions. Melody Brown Burkins of Dartmouth College is the Chair in Science Diplomacy and Inclusion, and Karl Kreutz of the University of Maine is the Chair in Arctic Ice, Climate, and Environmental History.

National Funding Schemes for UArctic

Member nations Canada, the Kingdom of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden have established national funding for UArctic through various ministries and mechanisms. Their funding systems and structures are detailed in Sections A-D.

A. Canada

Organization of the Canadian Initiative:

The national Canadian funding for UArctic comes from a grant from Global Affairs Canada (GAC). The amount of this funding is nearly \$1,000,000 CAD/year (equivalent to about \$750,000 USD/year) to support activities related to the goals and directive of [Canada's Arctic and Northern Policy Framework](#). Global Affairs Canada, Transport Canada (TC), and Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) launched the [horizontal initiative](#) in 2019, called the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework, aiming for targets in 2030. The mandate of TC and GAC include establishing governance structure, financial parameters, and reporting activities. From 2022-2023, GAC allocated \$8.3 million CAD to the Global Arctic Leadership Initiative (GALI), which manages operational projects and new projects (Theme 1 and 4). The new project funding is organized by theme: (1) Canadian Arctic and northern Indigenous peoples are resilient and health, (2) knowledge and understanding guides decision making, (3) strengthened infrastructure that closes gaps with other regions of Canada, and (4) an international rules-based order in the Arctic that responds effectively to new challenges and opportunities.

UArctic's grant falls under Theme 1. The expected outcomes for Theme 1 are: northern indigenous peoples have achieved post-education level comparable to other Canadians; increased availability of post-secondary education in Canada's 3 northern territories; and increased contributions to international Arctic research, discussions, and events by northern Canadians, including Indigenous peoples, women and youth. Over the course of the project, GAC is allocating a total of \$12,585,715 CAD toward Theme 1 through GALI, and the funding for the horizontal initiative activity related to UArctic is \$6,165,715 CAD in total. The activity is: creating opportunities for Indigenous peoples to be active in circumpolar higher education and research cooperation; the expected activity result is: increased participation of northern Canadians, including Indigenous peoples, with UArctic education and research programs.

Organization of UArctic's Grant:

Yukon University and Memorial University of Newfoundland coordinate the funding from GAC. The contribution agreement is renewed at 5-year intervals. The title of the grant is: Securing Knowledge and Impact for the Future of Circumpolar Education and Research Cooperation. At a broad level, the goals of the grant focus on engagement with UArctic member institutions in Canada, increasing indigenous representation, and mobility through north2north. The funding for fiscal year 2021/2022 was provided for the work packages focusing on the following topics: reporting and evaluation on north2north student mobility and Thematic Network activity, visual representation, north2north mobility impact study, graduate education, and project-specific funding for research activities carried out by Canadian partner universities. The funding for fiscal year 2022/2023 is provided for work packages addressing the following themes: Arctic cooperation, knowledge sharing on UArctic's impact, an online study catalogue of open-access learning materials, an external evaluation leading to a Strategic Plan, and evaluating the states and impact of Arctic science.

The ultimate outcomes of the project are: greater participation in Arctic research planning by northern people and communities; improved awareness of the contributions made by northern peoples and institutions to Arctic higher education and research; and higher value impact and relevance from research to those living in the region. Intermediate outcomes include: delivery of more relevant programs and activities by UArctic members; improved access to northern-relevant education programs, increased cost-sharing of crucial Arctic research infrastructure, and improved outcomes for northerners (especially Indigenous northerners); and assessment of impact for a more fair and just Arctic research. Immediate outcomes include: generating ideas for future strategic planning through events; production of a body of knowledge to demonstrate the organization's impact and act as a resource for members and external partners to build on the experiences through cooperative networking; bibliometric and research funding reports on the Arctic focusing on actors and identifying trends over the past decade.

B. Kingdom of Denmark

Organization of the Danish Initiative:

The Kingdom of Denmark, which includes Denmark, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands, provides funding to UArctic through the Danish Agency for Higher Education and Science (DAHES). DAHES supports the development of Danish research, research-based innovation in higher education, and collaborates internationally in research and education. The Agency oversees universities and other higher education institutions, public research foundations, Danish research and technology organizations, and smaller state institutions relating to student life. Funding for UArctic is organized through the Division for National Coordination and International Research Policy.

In 2016, the Minister for Higher Education and Sciences launched a new Arctic strategy ([Strategy for Research and Education concerning the Arctic](#)) to bolster Denmark's global reputation as a leader of Arctic research and education. It was launched as part of the larger Kingdom of Denmark Strategy for the Arctic 2011-2020. The Ministry structured its activities to supplement, support, and strengthen the initiatives already taking place in the Danish realm and internationally as well as launch new initiatives. The strategic guidelines focus on the following themes: high-quality research and education in and about the Arctic that is relevant to society; Denmark as a strong Arctic actor and international partner; and responsible and sustainable societal development of the Arctic region.

UArctic is explicitly mentioned several times in the Strategy, relating to activities surrounding: high quality and relevant research and education in and about the Arctic; joint Nordic education programs and existing exchange programs, including north2north; knowledge-sharing initiatives concerning Arctic resources, including investments in research and research infrastructure; collaboration on teacher and student exchanges and education programs with an Arctic perspective; international exchange programs focusing on the Arctic. The Strategy laid out an action plan, which included the action point to increase funding for north2north mobility to pinpoint Denmark as an important international partner and establish the framework for acting on new opportunities that emerge.

Organization of UArctic's Grant:

The Kingdom of Denmark provides a sum of 3,000,000 DKK/year (equivalent to about \$433,000 USD/year) through the national office DAHES. The funding is subdivided as follows: 750,000 DKK is allocated to the University of Lapland for UArctic's operational expenses; 750,000 DKK is allocated to mobility through the north2north program; and 1,500,000 DKK is allocated

toward supporting networking activities related to Arctic research and education, across all fields of sciences and including UArctic member institutions both within and outside of the Kingdom of Denmark. Permanent funding from DAHES requires biannual budget decisions and is allocated as grant letters to UArctic.

Funding for networking activities facilitate the collaboration between Thematic Networks of UArctic, member institutions, and outside organizations to work together to address shared challenges. Per the [funding guidelines](#), the main applicant must come from a UArctic member university in the Danish realm, involve stakeholders from multiple Arctic countries, relate to existing Thematic Networks or develop a new Thematic Network, and fulfill the values of UArctic. Recent recipients of this funding focused on topics such as community-based arts, circumpolar health research, and maternal and infant healthcare in indigenous communities.

C. Norway

Organization of Norwegian Initiative:

The Royal Ministry of Education and Research oversees basic education, higher education, and research as an arm of the national Norwegian government. Within the Ministry, the Minister of Research and Higher Education oversees the national priorities relevant to UArctic's initiatives on student and researcher mobility. One of the Ministry's goals is to provide opportunities for 50% of higher education students throughout the entire country to go on academic exchange in another country. This is promoted, in part, through allocating funds to UArctic and specifically north2north programming and staff infrastructure.

Organization of UArctic's Grant:

Norway contributes 10,800,000 NOK/year (equivalent to around \$1,028,000 USD/year) to UArctic, as of 2023. Permanent funding from the Ministry of Higher Education and Research is allocated to UArctic through the budget of UiT, the Arctic University of Norway; UiT has been mandated and given authority from the Ministry to distribute funding according to discussions with the Ministry and shared Arctic goals. This funding organizes national north2north coordination, hosts the Vice President Mobility, and leads the national project funding coordination. The capital is distributed as such: 5,000,000 NOK for north2north, 2,500,000 NOK for project funding, 1,800,000 NOK to GRID-Arendal for the salary of the UArctic President and infrastructure, 500,000 NOK to Nord University and the University Center in Svalbard (UNIS) for project funding, and remaining funds of 1,000,000 NOK for other activities including the Vice President Mobility and infrastructure at UiT. The State Auditory reviews the account on an annual basis.

In 2019, Norway drastically increased north2north funding from 1,400,000 NOK to 5,400,000 NOK. The goal of the additional funding was to further develop outgoing mobility of students and staff from Norwegian north2north member institutions: the funding allowed for Norwegian institutes in the south of Norway to participate in north2north, in addition to the norther Norwegian institutes that already were members of the network.

Beyond north2north, the project funding scheme is similar to that of Denmark: new cooperative projects and networking activities across multiple countries are eligible to apply for a maximum of 400,000 NOK for support. The main applicant must be part of a Norwegian UArctic institution, and all projects must expand the activity of existing UArctic Thematic Networks or establish new networks to target specific unmet niches. Recipients of the 2021-2023 funding round addressed topics related to: circumpolar education, ship routing, short-term education opportunities, governance, pollution remediation, and social work.

D. Sweden

Organization of Swedish Initiative:

Swedish funding to UArctic is directed from the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This funding provides national support for north2north mobility exchange. At a national level, the Ministry of Education addresses issues relating to basic education, higher education, teaching, and research. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs oversees international policy, missions abroad, and foreign cooperation.

Organization of UArctic's Grant:

The Ministry of Education provides 42,000 EUR/year (480,000 SEK/ year, \$46,000 USD/year) in annual support for north2north. The Swedish funding enables a national coordinating agency to manage north2north mobility of member institutions in Sweden. The funding provides the financial support to exchange students, researchers, and staff outgoing from Swedish institutions.

Until March 2022, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs provided 40,000 EUR/year (\$44,000 USD/year) for incoming students from Russia to Sweden through north2north exchange. This funding is currently paused.

Philanthropy

UARctic is registered as a non-profit in Finland, which denotes the classification of “ry.” In the United States, UARctic has established the UARctic United States Foundation, which is a registered 501 c(3). UARctic ry has the right to make donations to member institutions of UARctic but does not make direct donations to individuals. Donations from UARctic ry must support the mission and implementation of UARctic’s goals at respective member institutions.

UARctic accepts financial gifts from individuals, corporations, and foundations. Gifts are accepted if donors and terms align with the goals, strategy, and values of UARctic. The Gift Acceptance Committee reviews non-standard gifts and requests, such as those from donors whose values do not align with UARctic’s, gifts that may expose UARctic to reputational harm, or donations that limit the control of UARctic over its programs.

a. Unrestricted Giving

Gifts under €25,000 in a year are encouraged to be unrestricted. Unrestricted gifts allow UARctic to manage the administration and allocation of the grant money toward programming; these gifts can also be granted to member organizations. Unrestricted gifts are accepted for use in the current fiscal year or the near-term future.

b. Restricted Giving

Restricted giving refers to donations and gifts specified toward targeted programming or operations of UARctic. UARctic invests a percentage of all restricted gifts to mission-critical activities. For amounts of €10,000 and above, UARctic applies 5-10% of the gift toward these activities. The precise percentage depends on how the grant was made, and, thus, the gift administration expenses.

c. Endowment Funds

Endowment funds are designated for long-term investment and represent contributions made in perpetuity. The funds are pooled with other endowment gifts and invested. The principal funds are not expendable, and all interest earnings are restricted based on the gift agreement signed during the endowing process. Endowment funds target specific activities and programs: mobility scholarships, positions, offices, or for designated use determined by UARctic. Minimum gift amounts are determined by the target of the endowment; this amount ranges from €50,000 to €5,000,000.

d. UARctic US Foundation

In 2023, UARctic launched an international philanthropy program and a US based private foundation (501(c)3) to support the programs and activities of UARctic. The UARctic Foundation (US) is located in Fairbanks, Alaska and led by Executive Director, Morgan Dulan, CFRE. Dulan also serves as the Executive Director of Development for UARctic International where she leads the development strategy and international giving team. The UARctic Foundation (US) provides a platform for US based philanthropists, private foundations, and corporations to support UARctic. The mission of the UARctic Foundation (US) is to support the activities and programs of UARctic.