UNIVERSITY OF
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THE WAY
WESTMINSTER

27 February 2024

UArctic International Secretariat
c/o University of Lapland
PO Box 122
96101 Rovaniemi
FINLAND

For the attention: UArctic Secretariat

I am pleased to attach this letter of intent in support of the University of Westminster's application to become a UArctic Member.

Our institution shares the vision and values UArctic stands for. Since its foundation in 1838 as the Royal Polytechnic, our institution has been a place where discoveries are made, barriers are broken, diversity is celebrated and where everyone is welcome. Both our values (progressive, compassionate and responsible), and priorities (Wellbeing, Inclusion and Sustainable Development) speak to UArctic's own commitments to being 'Inclusive', 'Respectful', 'Collaborative' and 'Open'.

Our university's long and proud history of global engagement, international collaboration and educating international students, in particular, suits UArctic's 'borderless' model of international collaboration. With strong links with worldwide partners, Westminster is in the top 20 in the UK and in the top 30 globally for international students. We believe the University's rich mix of international partnerships, and the emphasis it places on student mobility, would be mutually beneficial to the other members of UArctic.

A wide range of our researchers are already working on Arctic-related matters and would bring a diverse range of expertise to UArctic network particularly in fields such as Arts and Humanities, arguably still underrepresented research areas in Arctic Studies. The strength and distinctive value of our research rests on the twin pillars of interdisciplinarity and international collaboration, with a strong emphasis placed on knowledge exchange and public engagement.

In the **School of Humanities**, **Dr Monica Germanà's** current research focuses on the overlaps of cultural and environmental sustainability; Dr Germanà has also already been appointed as an expert consultant for a forthcoming UoA endorsed research fellowship sponsored by the Lloyd's Register Fund. In 2022 **Dr Matt Morrison** successfully applied to be included in The Arctic Circle Artists and Writers Residency Programme, which, every year, circumnavigates Svalbard for three weeks. In the **School of Arts**, **Uriel Orlow**'s road movie "A Picturesque Journey" (2004) and short "Midday, Midnight" (2006) both focus on Arctic journeys and spaces. **Iwona Abrahams**'s practice and recent publications have focused on the technical aspects of designing a method of printing with/and mapping ice. In

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the **School of Architecture**, **Professor Ro Spankie**'s *Travelling Companions* exhibition explored the notion of the skies and stars as travelling companions to explorers navigating their passage across the globe, including journeys to the Far North and the Arctic. **Professor Katherine Heron** has collaborated with internationally acclaimed artist Elizabeth Ogilvie on the major exhibition *Out of Ice* and related publication *Out of Ice: The Secret Language of Ice* (2017). In **Life Sciences**, **Dr Sigrun Lange** undertook a 2-year MSc/MRes research project in comparative immunology at the Institute for Experimental Pathology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Iceland, for which she obtained an EMBO research fellowship to the UiT The Arctic University, Norway (2000). In **Social Sciences**, questions relating to the Arctic and the Anthropocene have emerged in one of **Professor David Chandler**'s latest publications, *There are Only Islands After the End of the World* (co-edited with Jonathan Pugh, 2021).

In addition to being able to contribute to UArctic with the research expertise of our academic staff, the Arctic is a subject of study at all levels of our teaching and research supervision. **Sustainability**, **Climate Change** and **Environment** have been interconnected in interdisciplinary doctoral projects combining scientific approaches and arts and humanities practices, and are embedded in several of our courses, including the recently launched **BA in Culture, Environment and Social Change**, and the existing degrees in **Architecture and Environmental Design** (BSc and MSc). We believe that the diverse ways in which the Arctic is approached as a subject of academic study at Westminster would offer mobility opportunities to students and researchers at all levels.

As well as offering the institution's modern facilities (library, labs, study/performance/exhibition spaces), the university's location in **Central London** is perfectly placed for visits to other institutions, archives and organisations that would be of interest to researchers in Arctic studies. These include **Greenwich Maritime Museum**, the **Royal Geographical Society, Linnean Society**, **Polar Connection** and **British Library.**

Because of its progressive, collaborative, and global attitude towards research and teaching, we believe the University of Westminster has a distinctive set of values and benefits to offer to UArctic members, and we hope the Secretariat will look favourably upon our application.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Peter Bonfield OBE FREng FIET FICE
Vice-Chancellor and President

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2024 UARCTIC MEMBERSHIP APPLICANT - PROFILE

Applicant: University of Westminster

Country: United Kingdom

Membership Category: Non-Arctic

Membership Type: HEI

Profile Description:

Since its foundation as the Royal Polytechnic – the oldest in London – in 1838, the University of Westminster has always been a forward-thinking institution at the forefront of innovation. Whilst embracing and supporting the newest technologies – the Polytechnic was the first to show a moving image projected by the Lumiere brothers' Cinématographe to a paying audience in 1896 - it has also always sought an active engagement with the wider community. Today the university's teaching remains practical, relevant and contemporary, while the institution's ethos continues to be progressive, compassionate and responsible.

The university's spirit and priorities reflect its location at the heart of a world city which is home to diverse communities and has global reach. The institution makes its priority to help students and colleagues from different backgrounds fulfil their potential and contribute to a more sustainable, equitable and healthier society. Sustainability is at the heart of everything the University does, and there is a firm commitment to integrating the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into the institution's teaching, research and operations. Degrees such as the new BA programme in Culture, Environment and Social Change reflect such commitment to global concerns in the current world.

Westminster is in the top 20 in the UK and in the top 30 globally for international students, with 48% of Westminster students classed as international. With more than 6,800 international students from 156 countries, colleagues from across the globe and a highly international alumni community, Westminster embraces global engagement in all its forms, and constantly seeks to establish more international links. The University has a rich mix of international partnerships worldwide, and places particular emphasis on providing travel opportunities for students, in the form of mobility schemes that may facilitate a truly international education.

Strategic/Thematic Focus Areas:

- Interdisciplinary Research including Environmental Humanities
- Professional Development and Practice-Based Research
- Multilingual Approaches to Cultural Studies
- Global Equality and Social Justice
- Close links between Scientific Research and Industry