



UARctic Assembly Meeting / Bodø, Norway / June 2024

Agenda item: 9.3

Proposal – Endorsement of provisional Thematic Networks 2023

Proposal: The Executive Committee (Toyon) proposes that the Assembly make the decision to support the assessment of provisional networks by the UArctic Thematic Networks Coordination Office, and to approve the granting of full thematic network status to the:

- ***Thematic Network on Arctic Cultures and History***, hosted by University of Faroe Islands, Faroe Islands
- ***Thematic Network on Blue Economy and the Arctic***, hosted by Nord University, Norway
- ***Thematic Network on Collaborative Online International Learning and Biodiversity Education across the Arctic Circle (COIL@UARctic)***, hosted by Robert Gordon University, Scotland, UK
- ***Thematic Network on High Latitude Dust***, hosted by Agricultural University of Iceland, Iceland
- ***Thematic Network on Arctic Marine Biodiversity***, hosted by UiT Arctic University of Norway, Norway

References: [UARctic Constitution](#) / Article 3 – The Assembly of UArctic

[Guidelines for establishing new Thematic Networks \(2024\)](#)

Background:

UARctic Thematic Networks are independent and thematically focused networks of experts in specific areas of northern relevance. A Thematic Network may focus its activities on one or several of the following: research cooperation, knowledge sharing, curriculum development, or forming the basis for larger project development. Thematic Networks consist of individual experts from at least three UArctic member institutions and should have partners from different regions for including diversity of its members. In addition, a Thematic Network may have members from non-UArctic member institutions, but representatives from UArctic member institutions shall have majority in any internal decision-making structure.

The Thematic Networks guidelines state that any individual expert(s) at UArctic member institution(s) can propose to UArctic, the establishment of a new Thematic Network. The lead is responsible for submitting a proposal to the UArctic Thematic Network Coordination Office, along with a support letter signed by the head of the host institution. Proposals for new Thematic Networks must include details on the focus, goals, membership, planned activities, and structure of the network.

Approval process:

In May 2023, the Assembly of UArctic voted to accept five new Thematic Networks, with provisional status given for a period of one year. According to the *Guidelines for establishment of new Thematic Networks*, if a



provisional Thematic Network can show that activities have been planned and/or initiated, then the endorsement as a fully operational network could be formalised.

This proposal for final endorsement to grant full network status was prepared by UARctic's Thematic Networks Coordination Office, and is based on an assessment of progress made by each provisional Thematic Network (see individual activity reports below).

Subsequent to the granting of full network status by the Assembly, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between UARctic and the lead institution of each Thematic Network must be signed within six months of the granting decision.

Provisional Thematic Networks:

Of the four new Thematic Networks approved by UARctic members in May 2023, each network has shown that activities were planned and initiated during the provisional period.

Note: The title of each network is hyperlinked to the networks own UARctic webpage, and an activity report from each network is also provided below:

1. [Thematic Network on Arctic Cultures and History](#)
Hosted by: University of Faroe Islands, Faroe Islands
Lead: Bergur Djurhuus Hansen
Report: [Activity report](#)
2. [Thematic Network on Blue Economy and the Arctic](#)
Hosted by: Nord University, Norway
Lead: Andreas Raspotnik
Report: [Activity report](#)
3. [Thematic Network on Collaborative Online International Learning and Biodiversity Education across the Arctic Circle \(COIL@UARctic\)](#)
Hosted by: Robert Gordon University, Scotland, UK
Lead: Izzy Crawford
Report: [Activity report](#)
4. [Thematic Network on High Latitude Dust](#)
Hosted by: Agricultural University of Iceland, Iceland
Lead: Pavla Dagsson-Waldhauserova
Report: [Activity report](#)
5. [Thematic Network on Arctic Marine Biodiversity](#)
Hosted by: UiT Arctic University of Norway, Norway
Lead: Andreas Altenburger
Report: [Activity report](#)