



UARctic

SUCCESSION PLANNING GUIDE: PRIMARY ASSEMBLY REPRESENTATIVES

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Introduction to UArctic

The University of the Arctic (UArctic) is a network of universities, colleges, research institutes, and other organizations concerned with education and research in and about the North. UArctic builds and strengthens collective resources and infrastructures that enable member institutions to better serve their constituents and their regions. Through cooperation in education, research, and outreach we enhance human capacity in the North, promote viable communities and sustainable economies, and forge global partnerships.

Created through the Arctic Council, UArctic is committed to upholding its principles of sustainable development and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. UArctic is constituted as an international association based in Finland.

Our Vision

A strong, engaged, informed, and dynamic North, creating better lives and environments for all Northerners.

Our Mission

UArctic develops knowledge to address local and global challenges of relevance to Arctic peoples and societies by providing unique educational, research, and innovation opportunities through collaboration within a powerful network of member institutions.

Our Motto

With Shared Voices

Our Values

1. Circumpolar

UArctic promotes Northern voices and a circumpolar worldview.

2. Inclusive

UArctic embraces and respects cultural diversity, language plurality, and gender equality.

3. Respectful

UArctic promotes relationships of respect, trust, and partnership, and embraces the perspectives and knowledge of Northern Indigenous peoples.

4. Collaborative

UArctic is committed to supporting participatory approaches to the production and sharing of knowledge.

5. Open

UArctic is a university network without walls, committed to reducing all barriers to cooperation across borders, cultures, and academic systems, embracing transparency and openness.

6. Influential

UArctic provides decision-makers with knowledge-based advice that supports sustainable development in the Arctic.

UArctic Benefits

UArctic Academic Endorsement: Gain prestigious recognition for academic activities, showcasing adherence to UArctic Mission and Values

Representation: Influence UArctic's direction through Assembly participation, appointing two representatives annually. As the highest decision-making body, the Assembly addresses crucial matters such as strategic direction, budget, and policies. Ultimately, Assembly representatives are the voice of their institutions, making critical decisions and shaping UArctic's governance.

Nominate UArctic Chairs: Chairs implement and drive collaborative actions among UArctic members and Thematic Networks; develop research cooperation, including undergraduate, graduate, PhD, and postdoctoral scientist training; and build partnerships with the broader Arctic community.

Visibility and exposure through UArctic media channels: Enhance visibility through UArctic's media channels, reaching a global audience.

Thematic Networks: Engage in high-quality scientific research, outreach, and educational development, establishing leadership in Arctic affairs. You can join a pre-existing Thematic Network or establish a new one by contacting thematic.networks@uarctic.org.

Support Letters: Obtain endorsement for international networking activities, strengthening funding proposals.

Funding Opportunities: Access open calls for research funding through UArctic channels.

Research Infrastructure Catalogue: An online database for searching and identifying research infrastructures and facilities located at, and operated by, the UArctic member institutions.

Mobility Grants: UArctic north2north mobility embraces all student, staff, and faculty exchanges that can benefit Northern populations and create a sense of Northern citizenship. North2north also aims to enhance mobility and exchange in the UArctic Thematic Networks and to involve students in research activities.

Study Catalogue: UArctic's education network provides unique study opportunities in the North about the Northern region and Northern issues. In the Study Catalogue, you can add relevant courses and programs that you offer, which in turn lets students find them when they are looking for places to go on an exchange.

Circumpolar Studies Curriculum: allows students to learn about the lands, peoples, and issues of the Circumpolar North and prepares them for advanced study or professional employment in fields as diverse as sustainable resource management, self-government, Arctic engineering, and Northern tourism. Special emphasis is given to matters concerning indigenous people of the Circumpolar North.

Participation in the Rector's Meeting: The Rectors Meeting engages the leadership of the UArctic's higher education institution members in a roundtable discussion on the congress themes, and how the universities can contribute and collaborate to these themes.

Institution Involvement

Why is the Institution Involved in UArctic?

Collaboration and Networking Opportunities: UArctic offers a platform for institutions to collaborate with a diverse network of universities, colleges, research institutes, and other organizations across the circumpolar North. This collaboration can lead to joint research projects, academic exchanges, and partnerships that enhance the institution's global reach and influence.

Enhancing Academic Programs: Institutions can enhance their academic programs by incorporating UArctic's thematic networks and educational offerings. This includes opportunities for students to participate in international field schools, exchange programs, and online courses focused on Arctic studies.

Promoting Sustainable Development: By joining UArctic, institutions can contribute to and benefit from initiatives to promote sustainable development in the Arctic. This aligns with global priorities on climate change, Indigenous rights, and environmental protection, enhancing the institution's role in addressing critical global challenges.

Visibility and Reputation: Membership in UArctic can enhance an institution's reputation by associating it with a respected international organization dedicated to Arctic research and education. This can attract students, faculty, and researchers interested in Arctic issues, boosting the institution's profile and appeal.

Support for Indigenous and Northern Communities: UArctic places a strong emphasis on the inclusion and support of Indigenous and Northern communities. Institutions that join can engage in meaningful collaborations that support these communities, aligning with social responsibility goals and contributing to the well-being of the Arctic region.

Professional Development: Faculty and staff at member institutions can benefit from professional development opportunities through UArctic, including workshops, conferences, and collaborative research initiatives that foster growth and innovation in Arctic-related fields.

Primary Assembly Representative

Roles and Responsibilities of the Primary Assembly Representative

Participation

Appointed individuals from member institutions and organizations form the Assembly of UArctic. The Assembly functions as the member forum for consultation, cooperation, and for the implementation of UArctic programs through the member institutions.

All members may participate in and lead the development and delivery of UArctic program activities.

Representation on the Assembly of UArctic

All members can appoint two persons to represent their institution in the Assembly of UArctic.

All members have equal rights of representation in the Assembly, with each member having one primary and one alternate representative. Each member is entitled to develop its procedures for selecting its representatives in the Assembly. *We recommend that all UArctic members appoint two representatives to ensure smooth communications.* All members have equal nomination and voting rights.

Role of Assembly Representatives

The main role of an Assembly representative is to promote UArctic and its activities within their respective home institutions. Member representatives also have a responsibility to:

- Identify the needs and potential for greater UArctic involvement;
- Facilitate the expansion of UArctic contacts and networking;
- Ensure that key UArctic messages and requests (e.g. nomination calls, notices for membership fee payment) are followed up at the institution;
- Communicate decisions and announcements to the home institution;
- Make decisions on behalf of the home institution at annual meetings of the Assembly; and
- Participate in UArctic's governance through elected positions (Officers, Committee Chairs, and members, etc.)

Primary Assembly Representatives

Role in the Local Communities

A UArctic Alternative Assembly Representative has several important responsibilities to the communities they serve, which include their home institution, local and Indigenous communities, and the broader UArctic network. Here are the key responsibilities:

Advocacy and Representation:

- **Voice for the Community:** Serve as an advocate for the needs and interests of the local and Indigenous communities within the UArctic framework.
- **Representation:** Accurately represent the views and concerns of the home institution and its stakeholders in UArctic discussions and decision-making processes.

Communication and Engagement:

- **Regular Updates:** Keep the home institution and relevant community stakeholders informed about UArctic activities, initiatives, and decisions.
- **Feedback Loop:** Facilitate a two-way communication channel, ensuring that feedback from the community is brought to UArctic and that information from UArctic is disseminated back to the community.

Collaboration and Networking:

- **Building Partnerships:** Foster relationships and partnerships with other UArctic member institutions, local organizations, and stakeholders to promote collaborative initiatives.
- **Networking:** Actively participate in UArctic meetings, conferences, and working groups to build a strong network and share best practices, resources, and opportunities.

Promotion of UArctic Initiatives:

- **Local Implementation:** Promote and facilitate the implementation of UArctic programs, projects, and initiatives within the home institution and the local community.
- **Raising Awareness:** Increase awareness of UArctic's mission, activities, and opportunities among students, faculty, and community members.

Support for Educational and Research Activities:

- **Educational Programs:** Support the development and enhancement of Arctic-related educational programs and curricula at the home institution.
- **Research Collaboration:** Encourage and support collaborative research projects that address Arctic issues and involve local and Indigenous knowledge.

Cultural Sensitivity and Inclusion:

- **Respect and Inclusion:** Ensure that the interests and perspectives of Indigenous and local communities are respected and included in UArctic activities.
- **Cultural Promotion:** Promote the cultural heritage and knowledge of Indigenous and local communities within UArctic initiatives.

Primary Assembly Representatives

Role in the Local Communities - Cont'd

Sustainability and Ethical Practices:

- Sustainable Practices: Advocate for and implement sustainable practices in UArctic activities and projects.
- Ethical Standards: Uphold high ethical standards in all dealings, ensuring transparency, accountability, and respect for all stakeholders.

Capacity Building:

- Skill Development: Support capacity-building initiatives that enhance the skills and knowledge of individuals within the home institution and local communities.
- Resource Mobilization: Assist in mobilizing resources, including funding and technical expertise, to support UArctic-related activities and projects.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

- Assess Impact: Monitor and evaluate the impact of UArctic initiatives on the home institution and local communities to ensure they are meeting their goals and objectives.
- Report Back: Provide regular reports and updates to UArctic and the home institution on progress, challenges, and successes.

Tips/Checklist

1. Create a contact list of those working on Arctic research, those involved in Thematic Networks, or those who have participated in UArctic events or north2north exchanges. Contact them regularly with touchpoints such as funding opportunities, events, and other news. Introduce yourself to any Thematic Network leads, Chairs, or north2north coordinators (if you don't already have contact).
2. Have regular meetings with those involved in UArctic. (international office, Vice Presidents, Head of the institution, etc)
3. Make sure you have both a primary and alternative assembly representative and try not to have their turnover occur simultaneously.
4. Organize a UArctic display and/or stand as part of an existing international event at your institution or in your region. Request promotional materials such as brochures, one-pagers, and more from us via secretariat@uarctic.org.
5. Engagement Session: Connect with the communications and engagement team at UArctic to help learn more about the organization, your role, and how you can better promote UArctic.
6. Meet UArctic Events and other related Webinars: Meet Uarctic are monthly webinars hosted for members. Join us at these events to learn more about the specific benefits.
7. Identify Potential Successors: have a list of potential successors who can take over the primary or alternative assembly representative position at the time of turnover.
8. Make a knowledge transfer document; key contacts, processes, accounts, information, etc.
9. Follow the UArctic Bulletin and Newsletter

Best Practices: Succession Planning

Identify Key Roles and Competencies: Clearly define the roles and responsibilities of Primary Assembly Representatives. Identify the key competencies and skills required, such as leadership, diplomacy, knowledge of Arctic issues, and collaboration abilities.

Assess Potential Successors: Evaluate current members and staff within the institution who have the potential to step into the role of Primary Assembly Representative. Look for individuals with a demonstrated commitment to Arctic issues and active participation in UArctic activities.

Develop Leadership Skills: Provide opportunities for potential successors to develop leadership skills. This can include participation in UArctic activities, leadership training programs, and involvement in relevant committees or working groups.

Create a Mentorship Program: Establish a mentorship program where current Primary Assembly Representatives mentor potential successors. This can help transfer knowledge, build relationships, and provide guidance on the responsibilities and expectations of the role.

Facilitate Knowledge Transfer: Ensure that there are mechanisms in place for knowledge transfer. This can include documenting important processes, maintaining comprehensive records of past activities and decisions, and creating transition guides for new representatives.

Encourage Broad Participation: Foster a culture of involvement and encourage broad participation in UArctic initiatives. This can help identify a wider pool of potential successors and ensure diverse perspectives in leadership.

Develop a Formal Succession Plan: Create a formal succession plan that outlines the process for identifying and preparing successors. This plan should include timelines, development activities, and criteria for selection.

Engage Stakeholders: Involve key stakeholders, including current representatives, senior management of the member institution, and UArctic leadership, in the succession planning process. Their input can help ensure the selection of capable and committed successors.

Regularly Review and Update the Plan: Continuously review and update the succession plan to reflect changes in the organization, the member institution, and the broader Arctic context. Regular updates ensure that the plan remains relevant and effective.

Tip Sheet: Managing Capacity Issues with Representatives

By integrating UArctic tasks into institutional priorities, delegating effectively, and advocating for recognition and support, Primary and Alternative Representatives and north2north Coordinators can manage capacity challenges while maintaining a healthy work-life balance. Find the one-pager online [here](#).

1. Integrate UArctic Responsibilities into Existing Roles

- Align UArctic tasks with institutional priorities and communication strategies.
- Advocate for formal recognition of UArctic duties in job descriptions.
- Leverage UArctic benefits and staff to support responsibilities.

2. Delegate & Build Internal Support Networks

- Identify faculty, staff, or students who can assist with specific tasks (e.g., communications, event planning, reporting).
- Establish a UArctic working group within your institution to share the workload. This can be done through creating an internal list of Arctic researchers and academics and hosting monthly meetings to keep up-to-date on initiatives and benefit usage.
- Engage research assistants or administrative support for funding applications and reporting.

3. Prioritize & Streamline Workflows

- Use time-blocking techniques to schedule UArctic-related work without overwhelming core responsibilities.
- Focus on high-impact activities (e.g., funding applications, student exchanges) rather than trying to do everything.
- Develop templates for reports, emails, and use [one-pagers and promotional materials](#) developed by UArctic to reduce repetitive work.

4. Leverage UArctic Resources & Networks

- Attend UArctic Congress and Assemblies, [events](#), and [meetings](#) to stay informed without constantly researching updates.
- Sign up for the UArctic [newsletter](#) and [Bulletin](#) to stay up-to-date on events and news.
- Use UArctic's existing promotional materials, tip sheets, and Succession Planning Guides to avoid duplicating efforts and losing UArctic engagement and knowledge because of turnovers.
- Reach out to other Assembly Representatives and [north2north Coordinators](#) for best practices and shared strategies.

5. Advocate for Institutional Support & Resources

- Request dedicated hours for UArctic-related duties.
- Highlight how UArctic involvement benefits the institution (e.g., [funding](#), [international visibility](#), research impact).
- Seek leadership support for succession planning to ensure continuity and prevent over-reliance on individuals.

6. Set Boundaries & Self-Care Practices

- Recognize what can and cannot be done within your capacity—prioritize and say no when necessary.
- Encourage a realistic workload division among colleagues.
- Take regular breaks and ensure UArctic duties do not overshadow core responsibilities.

Tip Sheet: Getting Institutional Backing and Support from Leadership

See below list of value that comes from the UArctic membership. This has been added to the Succession Planning Guide for Assembly Representatives and the new Succession Planning Guide for north2north Coordinators found online [here](#).

1. Enhancing Institutional Arctic Presence & Global Influence

- Positions the institution as a key player in Arctic research and education through research collaborations, Thematic Network involvement, and Letters of Endorsement. A full listing of the Thematic Network your institution is involved in, as well as researchers and educators involved, can be found on your institutions Member Profile on the right hand navigation panel.
- Strengthens international partnerships with Arctic-focused institutions and organizations.
- Increases visibility through UArctic news site, bulletin mentions, Shared Voices publications, and meeting/event/webinar participation.

2. Funding Opportunities

- Access to UArctic Funding is available to support faculty and institutional projects and travel opportunities.
- Funding supports the bottom line for the institution, but it also supports research projects that enhance capacity in Northern communities and demonstrates Arctic-focused institutional engagement.

3. Increased Research Collaboration & Institutional Partnerships

- Provides faculty and researchers with access to UArctic Thematic Networks for joint international projects and UArctic funding.
- Strengthens relationships with Indigenous and Northern communities, aligning with national Arctic policy goals and enhancing capacity in rural, Northern, and Indigenous communities through funded research projects and collaborations.
- Creates pathways for faculty to co-author papers and secure international research grants.

4. Boosting Student Recruitment & Mobility

- Offers students and staff north2north exchange opportunities, enhancing experiential learning and Arctic-focused studies, collaboration, and potential for new partners and paid positions.
- Attracts students interested in Arctic research and education. Getting youth involved in Arctic research and education when they are young is pivotal for advancing solutions in Northern and Indigenous communities.
 - There are three prongs to successful engagement. The first is at the president's level: Presidents don't do the promotional work, and are not involved in research, but it is important to have their backing for continued UArctic membership.
 - The next is the faculty level. They can utilize all benefits and showcase how the membership benefits align with their research/project activities. Researchers are the ones doing the work/collaborating.
 - Lastly, it is the students level: Students get engaged with academics and research, working with the academics. They can also participate in north2north exchanges.
- Expands opportunities for students to publish and engage in international Arctic forums, webinars, and Arctic research.

Tip Sheet: Getting Institutional Backing and Support CONT'D

5. Institutional Brand Recognition & Reputation

- Showcases the institution's commitment to Arctic research, policy, and education in UArctic reports, bulletins, news items, and Shared Voices publications.
- Member's representation in UArctic events and assemblies enhances institutional credibility.
- Demonstrates alignment with Canada's Arctic and Northern Policy Framework, attracting government and industry interest.

6. Cost-Effective Membership with High ROI

- Access to research networks, policy influence, and international recognition without large expenditures for advertising.
- By framing UArctic membership as a strategic investment in Arctic leadership, research funding, and global influence, Primary and Alternative Assembly Representatives can effectively align their pitch with leadership priorities.

Tailored Messaging

1. For the Vice President (VP) of Research and/or Academics (Key Priorities: research funding, institutional research impact on Northern and Indigenous communities, global collaborations).

- Expanded Research Funding Access – UArctic's Research and Education Engagement Fund and Relationship Development Fund support Arctic-related research initiatives. The Travel Support Fund allows faculty, students, and staff additional travel funding to participate in Arctic related events.
- Increased International Research Collaboration – Access to UArctic Thematic Networks enables faculty to secure joint funding, co-author papers, and expand global partnerships.
- Higher Research Visibility & Citations – Faculty and institutional research featured in Shared Voices, UArctic bulletins and news pages, and global Arctic conferences.
- Alignment with Arctic Research Priorities – Strengthens institutional position in Canada's Arctic and Northern Policy Framework, attracting external grants.
- Cost-Effective Research Growth – Membership opens doors to funding, partnerships, and policy engagement at a fraction of the cost of standalone Arctic initiatives.

2. For the President / Senior Leadership (Key Priorities: institutional reputation, global influence, Arctic presence).

- Institutional Brand Recognition – UArctic membership elevates the institution as a leader in Arctic research and education.
- Government & Industry Partnerships – Strengthens ties with federal Arctic research initiatives, increasing potential for government funding and policy engagement.
- Leadership Visibility in Arctic Affairs – Presence in UArctic assemblies, events/meetings, and international forums positions leadership as a key Arctic influencer.
- Recruitment & Retention of Arctic Scholars – Being part of UArctic helps attract top faculty and researchers passionate about the Arctic.
- Strategic Investment in Institutional Growth – Cost-effective membership with return in funding, reputation, and global collaboration.

Tip Sheet: Getting Institutional Backing and Support CONT'D

3. For Deans & Department Heads (Key Priorities: faculty support, student success, curriculum development).

- Research & Collaboration Opportunities for Faculty – Direct access to Thematic Networks supports faculty-led Arctic research collaboration and UArctic funding.
- Student/Staff/Faculty Exchange & Mobility Programs – north2north exchange expands student opportunities in Arctic studies, strengthening academic programs and allows staff and faculty opportunities to learn and collaborate in other Arctic institutions.
- Academic Program Enhancement – Connection to UArctic strengthens Arctic-related curricula, creating more competitive academic offerings.
- Increased Publications & Recognition – Faculty and student research showcased in UArctic publications, news, bulletins, and at conferences.
- Attracting Arctic-Focused Talent – Strengthens the faculty pipeline by drawing scholars engaged in Arctic policy, science, and innovation.

4. For the International Office (Key Priorities: global partnerships, student and faculty mobility).

- north2north Exchange – Expands international study abroad options for students in Arctic-related disciplines, collaboration opportunities for faculty, and learning opportunities from staff.
- Institutional Networking & Collaboration – Strengthens global Arctic research and education partnerships with other UArctic member institutions.
- Increased Global Visibility – Showcases the institution as an international leader in Arctic collaboration and mobility programs.
- Competitive Edge in International Recruitment – UArctic affiliation attracts students seeking Arctic-focused programs and research opportunities.

Additional Words of Advice from Leadership:

- Ensure that UArctic partnership (including benefits) are in the institution's strategic plan.
- Presidents are more interested in seeing what the UArctic organization looks like and how it can help leverage the institution internationally than specific benefits for students, researchers, and educators.
- Create an Arctic directory at the institution throughout interdisciplinary departments so Primary and Alternative Representatives know whose who when promoting UArctic benefits.
- Relating back to UArctic allows executive connections to other presidents and rectors in the Arctic and the breadths of topics there.
- Seeing expansive teaching and research activities and engagement and activities strengthening what we are delivering as an institution.
- Interesting to see the institutions engaged in UArctic and part of the network and think of a leadership approach on that.
- Show Presidents the Return on Investment or how the benefits affect the bottom line re: student recruitment, funding opportunities, and publications/news sharing.