



UArctic Assembly Meeting / Inari, Finland / June 2025

Agenda item: 11.2

Proposal – Approval of new Thematic Networks 2025

Proposal: The Executive Committee (Toyon) proposes that the Assembly make the following decision:

Assembly supports the evaluation by the UArctic Thematic Networks Leadership Team and approve the provisional establishment of the following networks:

- **UArctic Thematic Network in the Environmental Humanities**, hosted by UiT, The Arctic University of Norway
- **UArctic Network for Terrestrial Biodiversity Monitoring**, hosted by University of Oulu, Finland
- **UArctic Thematic Youth Network**, hosted by Memorial University of Newfoundland, Canada

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

[Guidelines for establishing new Thematic Networks](#)

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.

Application, Evaluation and Approval process:

By the application deadline of February 28, 2025, the Thematic Networks Coordination Office received three thematic network applications. Members of the Thematic Networks Leadership Team evaluated the applications, and afterwards all thematic networks were given the opportunity to edit their proposals based on the feedback given.



The evaluation of proposals included the review and assistance for improvements by the Thematic Network leadership team.

For the 2025 Meeting of the Assembly of UArctic, and the benefit of members of the Assembly who are to vote on the approval of new Thematic Networks, each proposed Thematic Network leader presents the proposal on-site (this can be done by proxy) or has produced an online presentation of their respective proposed thematic network. These are also provided below.

Once approved, a thematic network is given provisional status for a period of one year. In the second year, if the new thematic network has shown that activities have been planned and/or initiated, then their endorsement will become final. The endorsement proposal at that point is done by the Thematic Networks Coordination Office. In the second year, following final endorsement by the Assembly, a Memorandum of Understanding between the lead institution(s) and UArctic must be signed within six months after Assembly endorsement.

Proposed New Thematic Networks for 2025:

Applications for the following proposed three Thematic Networks were submitted to the Thematic Networks Coordination Office, and subsequently reviewed and supported by members of the Thematic Networks Leadership Team.

Note: On the following list, the title of each proposed network is hyperlinked to the application proposal and signed letter of support.

1. [Thematic Network in the Environmental Humanities](#)

Hosted by: [UiT The Arctic University of Norway](#), Norway

Lead: Kate Maxwell

2. [Thematic Network on Terrestrial Biodiversity Monitoring](#)

Hosted by: [University of Oulu](#), Finland

Lead: Stefan Prost

3. [Thematic Youth Network](#)

Hosted by: [Memorial University of Newfoundland](#), Canada

Lead: Laura Bass