

UArctic

Organization and Management Guidelines

Record of Amendments

1. Full document revision draft, approved by the Council of UArctic / August 8, 2009
2. Final revision and updating by Ofelas / August 11, 2009
3. Updated according to new UArctic Bylaws / June 4, 2010
4. Addition of MOU text to UArctic Offices, approved by UArctic Board / March 24, 2011
5. Addition of Vice-President Finance, approved by UArctic Board / June 4, 2012
6. Revision to fit new organization presented to Board and Council in 2015
7. Updated to reflect recent changes to operational structure / November 2016 & November 2017
8. Updated to reflect new UArctic Constitution and UArctic Bylaws / 04 June 2020
9. Updated to reflect new organizational structure, clarify content and reduce redundancies / 15 September 2022. Title changed to Organization and Management Guidelines.
10. Updated to reflect the introduction of Executive Vice President into the management structure. / Endorsed by UArctic Board 28.04.2025

UArctic Organization and Management Guidelines

Introduction

These guidelines describe the University of the Arctic (UArctic) operational structure as developed to reflect the goals set out in the [UArctic Strategic Plan 2030](#). This document describes the operational areas of UArctic that report to the President, and that are under the responsibility of the Board of UArctic. This document does not address UArctic's governance system (i.e. Board, Assembly and their committees and advisory groups) as these are defined in the [UArctic Bylaws](#).

This document is approved by the President, and endorsed by the Board.

UArctic Operational Structure

UArctic ry is registered as a non-profit association, having its domicile in Rovaniemi, Finland. The UArctic's Constitution is approved by the Finnish Patent and Registry Office, and it follows the Finnish Association's Act.

UArctic is governed by its Board and its Assembly of members, which provide strategic leadership and the voice of our members respectively. The Board of UArctic has general responsibility for UArctic's strategic development and setting main priorities, including finances and staffing. The Assembly of UArctic is represented by each member of UArctic, which oversees our program development and the direction of the organization. The Assembly also acts as a forum of consultation, networking and cooperation between all members.

As defined in the Bylaws, the President and the UArctic International Secretariat form the core of UArctic's administration. Additional administrative capacity is overseen by the President, in consultation with the Board and the Assembly.

The Bylaws set the overall principles for UArctic administration including frames for how Board decisions related to the President and daily leadership of UArctic are made. The Board and Assembly, as well as their respective committees and advisory groups have their own rules of procedure that describe their operation and meetings (those rules are not covered in this document). The roles and functions of all UArctic Vice-Presidents are further defined in this document.

UArctic operational structure consists of management bodies, which are inclusive of leadership, coordination, implementation, and administrative functions. All management bodies shall follow the principles laid out in this document and UArctic Bylaws, when implementing the UArctic Strategic Plan and Strategic Implementation Plan.

For some activities there exist supplementary operational documents that guide specific parts of UArctic implementation and operation. Management bodies may develop their own procedures and rules as long as they are consistent with other parts of UArctic governance and organizational rules and procedures. UArctic's governance structure is defined in the Constitution and Bylaws.

UArctic's bodies defined in this document:

UArctic has a number of different management bodies, with various functional purposes including leadership, coordination, implementation, and administration;

- **Senior Leadership Team (Ma-Mawi¹)** is led by the UArctic President and consists of the Secretary-General, Executive Vice-President, Vice-Presidents, and the Chief Communications Officer.
- **Senior Executive Team (Ofelaš)** is led by the President and consists of the Secretary General and the Executive Vice-President.
- **Management Teams** may be established by a Vice-President to support decision-making and/or operational implementation in their areas of responsibility. These teams consist of UArctic staff and/or other relevant individuals.

¹ From the Ojibwa language, meaning, “*We all work together to help one another*”. The Ojibwa, or Chippewa, language is the second most commonly spoken First Nations language in Canada

- **Thematic Networks** organize joint education, research, or other networking activities engaging faculty and researchers, and is the main tool for academic and research experts to cooperate in UArctic.
- **UArctic Institutes** are independent entities shared between two or more members that carry out UArctic relevant activities in a specific field.
- **UArctic International Secretariat (Secretariat)** is led by the Secretary-General as the Board-appointed Head of the UArctic International Secretariat. The Secretariat has support responsibilities defined in the Bylaws.
- **Task Forces, Planning Teams, Project Groups** are shorter term teams that implement a specific project, follow up specific cooperation action, or contribute to a strategic development goal of UArctic.

Leadership, Organization and Management Principles

UArctic's organization and management structure should be able to optimally respond to the activities and goals defined in the UArctic Strategic Plan and the Strategic Implementation Plan. The Board has approval over the Strategic Plan and the key goals and indicators of the Strategic Implementation Plan (ie, Action Plan).

- UArctic organization, management and implementation shall be organized in a manner that engages and involves the members directly in all activities.
- UArctic's operations, and management and staffing are distributed among its members. The fundamental principle of distributed operations of UArctic activities implies that all UArctic leaders shall have a strong sense of UArctic's values, ensure transparency in leadership, and proactive engagement supporting collaboration and coordination with other parts of UArctic.
- Senior leadership roles are the President, Secretary-General, Executive Vice-President, Vice-Presidents and Chief Communications Officer.
- Strategic advisory guidance is provided primarily by the Board, but also from members via the Assembly and its committees. Senior leadership may receive strategic support from high level advisory groups or committees (Mimir, Indigenous Advisory Group, President's Circle, Trustee Council).
- UArctic and the member institution(s) hosting any leadership or management functions shall have a formal agreement (Memorandum of Understanding) with the UArctic Association describing the role, and regulating its function, financial commitments, support staff, and other conditions. Any UArctic leadership or management position hosted by a member shall, beyond serving UArctic, also be an asset to the host institution.
- Senior leadership are responsible for ensuring the daily operations and overseeing any administrative staff in their areas of responsibility. Each senior leader has responsibility for the activities, goals and outcomes and their reporting, as specified in the Strategic Implementation Plan.

Language and Acronyms

Respecting and promoting language plurality is a core value for UArctic. For practical purposes UArctic has chosen English as the common working language. However, UArctic encourages education, information and communication in all northern languages.

UArctic discourages the use of acronyms. Instead, whenever possible, UArctic governance and management bodies are encouraged to find a relevant name from a (small) northern language that can serve as an acronym. This is done to show respect for the diversity of languages and cultures in the Circumpolar Region. These names are defined in [UArctic's Glossary of Terms](#). Further, the norm is that full titles and names are to be used in documents and communication instead of acronyms for clarity and transparency.

UArctic Senior Leadership

UArctic Senior Leadership team (Ma-Mawi) consist of the following leadership members: UArctic President, Secretary-General, Executive Vice-President, Chief Communications Officer, Vice-President

Mobility, Vice-President Northern Community Engagement, Vice-President Academic, Vice-President Networks, Vice-President Indigenous and Vice-President Research. The Senior Leadership Team (Ma-Mawi) will normally decide all major matters by consensus.

The President, Secretary General and the Executive Vice-President form the Senior Executive Team (Ofelaš) and form the daily operational senior management executive. The Executive Vice-President is the President's deputy in all academic affairs, while the Secretary General has primary responsibility for UArctic administration and the legal and financial affairs of UArctic, the legal entity.

