**2017 UArctic Rectors’ Forum, University of Aberdeen, 23-25 August 2017**

**UArctic Young Scholars Resolution**

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We are very glad to be part of the University of the Arctic, and of its future. We are eager to participate in the University of the Arctic’s efforts to promote ethical, innovative, accessible research and teaching – which challenges stereotypes, while enabling all voices and perspectives to be heard, both indigenous and non-indigenous. Northern and Arctic research reveals again and again the interconnectedness of our world, and its power to surprise us, and recreate itself anew. We appreciate the challenges that academic research in the north currently faces, from a number of quarters. Our capacities to foster indigenous participation, opportunities for people with demonstrated need, and to integrate the humanities and natural sciences are considerably hindered by the curtailing of our financial resources, for example by the apparent reluctance of the current US federal government to provide leadership in Arctic science. Geopolitical relationships are changing fast, as we are all well aware. We believe that these challenges are in fact opportunities, and especially for the University of the Arctic. In the power vacuum left by a lack of clear leadership from key political players, the University of the Arctic, itself an innovative and unconventional institution, can foster new ways of generating top-quality, ethical and accessible research and teaching, even outside the Academy. A huge part of this is making the best use of the capacity the northern academic community already has, in the form of its young scholars – whether they are students, or fully trained postdoctoral researchers.

We arrived at the following nine suggestions during the forum. They are grouped into suggestions that address, firstly, the University of the Arctic’s leadership; and, secondly, researchers of the north, and the communities within which they work. The final suggestion addresses the University of the Arctic as a whole.

**1) ‘Top down’ suggestions for the University of the Arctic leadership**

**1.1)** We would like to suggest that the term ‘UArctic Student’, currently referring to the participants of this student forum, be changed to ‘UArctic Young Scholar’. This would be a more accurate description of our group, consisting as it does of undergraduate students, post-graduate students, and post-doctoral researchers. In addition, this term encourages and affirms those who are entering Arctic scholarship.

**1.2)** Following on from the previous point, we suggest that representatives of our community should attend and vote in the UArctic’s business meeting. This would ensure that the interests of young scholars are accurately and consistently communicated within the running of the University.

**1.3)** We hope to develop a "shared voice". A shared voice, yet academically strong and valid, reasonable, loud enough to be heard and tolerant in time. Hopefully, that would result in a regular contribution from young scholars of the UArctic. To express it as an organized structure in a democratic spirit, we suggest the constitution of a young scholars' committee, potentially named as "Youth Arctic" of the UArctic. This committee would secure a constructive communication among young scholars and between young scholars and rectors. Also, it would secure continuity and cohesion within the institution of the UArctic. If the UArctic aspires to invest in sustainable development, then the suggestion of initiating a young scholars' committee, should be seriously taken into consideration.

**1.4)** Better communication between UArctic young scholars and the university as a whole could be achieved by developing an online infrastructure, such as a blog and/or a listserv. A team of young scholars could be recruited to manage this communication – and this initiative could be converted into a means of promoting early career scholarship, though incentivising this work. For example, team members could receive free registration to UArctic conferences and meetings. Ideally, the team would contain members of demonstrated need, perhaps two out of a group of five. In this way, setting up consistent online communication would also be a way of building capacity for under-represented people.

**1.5)** We suggest a redistributed (bottom up and top down) approach to recruiting young scholars for forum.Considering the fact that in the year 2017 only six students attended the Student’s forum, we encourage all stake-holders to inform potential participants about the next forums and take all necessary measures for their participation in these events. We hope that our colleagues will inform their fellow early career researchers about the University of the Arctic, its work and also about possible opportunities for future participation in the upcoming forums. We recommend the university leaders to take more active part in this process as well.

**2)** **‘Bottom up’ suggestions**

**2.1)** In view of the lack of funding for individual researchers, Rectors need to band together to fund research networks as much as possible. They need to continue to build capacity within institutions across the University of the Arctic. This would prevent the current haemorrhaging of young scholars – and the waste of resources that are used to increase capacity by training young scholars, who are then forced leave the profession.

**2.2)** We suggest that all new thematic proposals have to be multi-disciplinary. As part of this, the UArctic’s thematic networks should be reconsidered to promote convergence and indigenous input.

**2.3)** We would promote initiatives that incorporate place-based education. This would ensure that Nordic traditions continue – as well as encouraging all stakeholders to imagine research and teaching projects that could exist both within and without the conventional Academy. One example of this is the Community Action Learning and Research initiative, by Durham University.

**3)** **Finally, we propose this reminder to the UArctic as a whole:**

As anyone who lives or studies the Arctic knows, the Arctic is not an island. Arctic issues – from natural phenomena to business – are interconnected with the rest of the world. UArctic as an organisation should emphasize North-South relations in its actions and make research organisations aware of the interconnectedness. Refocusing some of the dialogue would also challenge assumptions about the north and the Arctic, as well as open up more connections for research collaboration and funding.