



## The Norwegian Scientific Academy for Polar Research (NVP) Annual Report 2020

The Norwegian Scientific Academy for Polar Research (NVP) was founded in Oslo on March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2008. NVP is a non-profit foundation with the following missions:

- Promote research and education in polar areas.
- Stimulate national and international cooperation and interdisciplinary polar research.
- Contribute to communicating the knowledge of polar regions and the people that live there to national and international governing bodies, industry and the public.
- Contribute to the understanding of environmental and climate changes and human activities that affect and are affected by these.
- Promote sustainable development on Svalbard and in northern regions.
- Contribute to the development of expertise at the University Centre in Svalbard (UNIS) and the polar scientific community in general.

NVP is an international Academy under Norwegian leadership for some of the world's leading polar scientists. The Academy functions as a contact organization for research and higher education, between international scientific institutions and organisations in the Arctic and in Antarctica. The Academy's emphasis on interdisciplinary research and teaching complements the activities of other universities and research institutions that traditionally have a disciplinary profile.

Norway's H.M. King Harald is the Academy's patron.

### Board of Directors and employees

After the election in November 2020, the Academy's board is as followed:

- Grete K. Hovelsrud (President, 2021-2022)
- Bjørn Kaltenborn (Vice President, 2021-2022)
- Gudmund Hernes (Board member, 2021-2022)
- Gunnar Sand (Board member, 2021-2022)
- Cecilie Mauritzen (Board member, 2020-2021)
- Jøran I. Moen (*ex officio* Board member on behalf of The University Centre in Svalbard (UNIS), 2021-2022)

The Board of Directors held five board meetings during 2020, four ordinary board meetings and one extraordinary board meeting. A total of 40 items were officially discussed.

Management and operation of the Academy is carried out by an Office Manager with office at UNIS in Longyearbyen, Svalbard and by a Secretary General in Oslo. The Secretary General works in a 20% position and the Office Manager in a 40% position. The supervision of the property Isdammen 1 located



in Longyearbyen, currently leased to the company Better Moments AS, is under the responsibility of the Office Manager.

The administration, remuneration and other social costs related to the Office Manager and the Secretary General are invoiced and paid by UNIS. The costs related to office, administration, accounting and purchases are covered by UNIS. Because UNIS is a company owned by Norway's Ministry of Education and Research, the Government's regulations and control for corruption and procurement applies for the operations of UNIS and therefore also for NVP. NVP's accounts are audited by PricewaterhouseCoopers AS (PWC) and the reports are sent to The Brønnøysund Register Centre, a government body under the Norwegian Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries, that consists of several different national computerized registers.

## Academy members

Nominations for new individual members are evaluated by the Academy's Nomination Committee that prepares and presents recommendations to the Board. The following individual member nominations were approved by the Board and presented to the Annual Meeting in 2020:

1. Geir Ottersen (Institute of Marine Research, Norway)
2. Bodil A. Bluhm (The Arctic University of Norway, Norway)
3. Marie-Anne Blanchet (Norwegian Polar Institute, Norway)
4. Hyoung Chul Shin (Korea Polar Research Institute, Korea)
5. Maaike Knol-Kauffmann (The Norwegian College of Fishery Science, The Arctic University of Norway, Norway)
6. Ping Su (Tongji University, China)

As of 2020, the Academy has 166 individual members and one honorary member. Several members are foreign nationals. The Norwegian membership base covers all of Norway, including Svalbard.

The Academy has six institutional members, who contributes to the Academy's profile and that work priorities are relevant and user oriented. As of 2020, the institutional members are: The University Centre in Svalbard (UNIS), UiT The Arctic University of Norway (UiT), Nord University, The University of Bergen (UiB), The Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) and NORSAR.

Contact with the members are maintained with the use of the Academy's website (<http://www.polar-academy.com/>) with regular updates. The site is integrated with social media channels such as Facebook and LinkedIn, and newsletters are sent to all members on a regular basis with news linked to the website.

## Academic activities

The Academy's Statutes and the Strategy 2015-2020 emphasize, among others, sustainable development in Svalbard and in the Arctic, to contribute to competence building at UNIS and other universities and extensive cooperation with Norwegian and foreign institutions. The strategy 2015-2020 has the following mission:



*«The Norwegian Scientific Academy for Polar Research (NVP), founded in March 2008, is the world's only scientific academy devoted to polar research, education and development. NVP has a bipolar perspective (Arctic and Antarctic), is interdisciplinary in approach, international in effort, collaborative in solution, knowledge based in contribution, and independent in work (...).»*

The strategy is currently under revision.

With an international membership that encompasses virtually all disciplines and with considerable expertise and experience, our Academy has a unique opportunity to stimulate interdisciplinary research and education and to contribute with assessments and with cooperation across different areas of interest and national borders. The Academy's multi- and interdisciplinary approaches represent an alternative to activities at universities and other research institutions in Norway and abroad that traditionally has a disciplinary character. The increasing international interest for the Arctic and Antarctica sets NVP and the academic community up against demanding challenges but also represent many opportunities. The consequences of climate change are particularly evident in the Arctic. In recent years, we have witnessed significant changes and reductions in Arctic sea ice distribution and volume. Seized as an opportunity, plans are being made for expansion of economic activities such as shipping, fisheries, petroleum extraction and deep-sea mining. Changes in ice cover and distribution will also have consequences for national and international management regimes. This is embedded in *"The Global Arctic": A Strategic Vision for the Norwegian Academy for Polar Research*, which has been the base for the plans for the International Summer Schools as a flagship activity of the Academy for the years to come. See <http://polar-academy.com/2019/06/the-global-arctic-a-strategic-vision/>.

The Academy is pursuing its national and international cooperation in many ways. A Collaboration Agreement between our Academy and the Russian Geographical Society (RGS) signed in 2016 ensured active Russian participation at the Academy's summer school in Longyearbyen in 2017 and is an important contribution to operationalize the Norwegian Government's Arctic Strategy. The Academy's summer schools, and joint research and events, will be increasingly important with regard to international collaboration in the future.

The Academy has since 2018 cooperated with the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences (KVA) and have established a joint planning committee which currently is planning for two symposiums with five main topics, held in Sweden (in 2021) and in Norway (in 2022):

1. Conditions for livelihoods, health, and ecosystems.
2. Forecasting the changing ice, ocean and weather conditions.
3. Impacts of climate change - effects and actions.
4. Access to infrastructure and data for Arctic research.
5. Defense and geopolitics.



The Academy is associated with the “Joint North Atlantic-Arctic Ocean Science Programme Initiative (B2B)”. B2B is evolving within the scientific community to innovatively transform international scientific research and related education programs in an era with new challenges for science in the 21st century.

The Academy actively participates in a North Center Partnership, which with 19 institutional members prepares for and facilitates programs for «Arendalsuka.»

A programme committee established by the Board has been planning the Academy’s international summer schools in Svalbard for the years 2020, 2021 and 2022. The over-arching theme for the summer schools is “*The Global Arctic – Reaching out to the Third Pole: The role of climate change, geopolitics and resource availability for global sustainability.*” Main objectives are to address the need to understand the principal linkages and similarities between the three poles (Arctic, Antarctica and the Himalayas) in terms of resource reservoirs, laboratories for learning to cope with change, and how to design effective multi-disciplinary research targeting critical factors for sustainable development. See <https://polar-academy.com/summer-schools/summer-schools-2020-2022/>. The scheduled 2020 International Summer School was postponed to 2021 due to global outbreak of Covid-19, and the three years’ program is shifted accordingly and will take place in 2021, 2022 and 2023.

The Academy plays an active role at Arctic Frontiers (AF) in Tromsø, Norway. Together with the Arctic University of Norway (UiT), GRID-Arendal and the International Center for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), the Academy had a side event at AF 2020 on the same topic planned for the 2020 International Summer School, entitled «*The Global Arctic - Reaching out to the Third Pole*» with focus upon the Arctic, Antarctica and the Himalaya region.

The Academy is member of the University of the Arctic (UArctic), which gives the Academy access to a big network with opportunities to develop contribute to educational programs and and research projects in cooperation with “like minded” institutions. UArctic has encouraged a collaboration between our summer schools in Svalbard and similar summer schools in Greenland and Alaska.

In cooperation with our members, with research institutions and business, the Academy is in a position to make important contributions to Norwegian national and international strategic ambitions to develop of knowledge and management opportunities in and for the Arctic. Together with our institutional members and with local institutions in Longyearbyen, the Academy continues with its pursuance of cooperation with the private sector.

### **The economic situation and property**

In 2020, the Academy had an income of NOK 700,000 compared to NOK 828,346 in 2019. The income of NOK 700,000 was paid by the institutional members with contributions of NOK 150,000 from UiT The Arctic University of Norway (UiT), Nord University, The University of Bergen (UiB), The Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), and contributions of NOK 100,000 from NORSAR.



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Financial income items amounted to NOK 209.

Rental income from the property Isdammen 1 amounted to NOK 0 in 2020 compared to NOK 128,346 in 2019. This is because the Board granted Better Moments AS a rent free 2020 as a measure to alleviate the financial burdens caused by the global Covid-19 pandemic.

Operational costs decreased in 2020 to NOK 513,560 compared with NOK 563,018 in 2019. The largest expense items in 2020 were NOK 422,488 for salaries and social costs. Other operating expenses amounted to NOK 91,072 compared with NOK 151,393 in 2019.

The accounts for 2020 show an operating surplus of NOK 186,440 despite the Academy's decrease in total income for 2020. The background for the surplus is mainly related to a reduction in other operating expenses as an implication of the global outbreak of Covid-19. The Academy was not able to arrange the planned 2020 International Summer School in Longyearbyen nor the Annual Seminar in Oslo, and the Academy's attendance at events such as "Arendalsuka" was cancelled.

After financial adjustments, the annual result in 2020 show a surplus of NOK 186,649.

The Board sees a further strengthening of the capital base a priority task in the coming years. The accounts have been prepared on the basis of continued operations.

## **Environment**

The Foundation's activities do not have any negative impacts upon the external environment.



Longyearbyen, 11.03.2021

Grete K. Hovelsrud  
President

Bjørn Kaltenborn  
Vice President

Gunnar Sand  
Board member

Gudmund Hernes  
Board member

Cecilie Mauritzen  
Board member

Jøran I. Moen  
Board member