

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE ARCTIC YOUTH CONFERENCE

24 - 26 JANUARY 2025

TROMSØ, NORWAY



NORWAY'S CHAIRSHIP
ARCTIC COUNCIL
2023-2025

INTRODUCTION

This document presents key recommendations developed by the Norwegian Chairship Youth Committee (CYC), based on input from Arctic youth who participated in the Arctic Youth Conference 2025.

These recommendations are drawn from extensive discussions, workshops, and roundtable sessions, where young people from across the Arctic shared their experiences, challenges, and ideas for strengthening youth engagement. The insights gathered reflect a diverse range of perspectives and highlight critical areas such as long-term funding, accessibility, leadership development, and sustainable collaboration.

We urge the Arctic Council to consider these recommendations as a pathway toward a more inclusive and resilient Arctic, where young voices are not only heard, but also actively contribute to shaping policies and decisions that impact their future. Meaningful youth engagement is an ongoing process, and not a one-time effort. It demands sustained reflection and open dialogue between youth and the Arctic Council, along with consistent follow-up actions and structural support to ensure lasting impact.

This document has been prepared by the **Norwegian CYC** including, **Beatrice Bucht** (Nordic Association, Norrbotten, Sweden), **Kassandra Eleni Bredrup Petsa** (Nordland Country Youth Council, Norway), **Geneviève Degré-Timmons** (Association of Early Career Scientist, Canada), **Julius Mihkkal Eriksen Lindi** (Saami Council and Permanent Participant Youth Network, Norway), **Lauryn Maiyu Jones** (Arctic Youth Network, Alaska, USA), **Sara Elvira Kuhmunen** (World Reindeer Herder, Sweden), **Parahini Parabaran** (Troms County Youth Council, Norway), **Clara Johanne Storgaard Madsen** (Government of Greenland, Kalaallit Nunaat (Greenland), Kingdom of Denmark), and **Viljo Aapeli Vuorimäki** (University of the Arctic, Finland). The authors are listed alphabetically. The final version includes ideas and comments from the **Permanent Participant Youth Network**.



STRENGTHENING YOUTH ENGAGEMENT AND REPRESENTATION IN ARCTIC GOVERNANCE

Formalizing youth engagement in Arctic Governance: Commit to undertake strategic and concerted efforts to strengthen Arctic youth participation and cooperation into the Arctic Council structure. This includes:

- Dedicating seats for youth in Arctic States, Indigenous Permanent Participant organizations, and Working Groups to ensure direct engagement in decision-making, and create opportunities for youth to initiate projects as well as shape research priorities and methodologies.
- Establishing a CYC for each rotating two-year Chairship, and expanding the committee's mandate beyond the Arctic Youth Conference. Throughout their mandate, CYC members could play a significant role in shaping long-term youth priorities (e.g., facilitating connections with Arctic youth networks, defining the objectives and goals of a youth-focused Working Group) while strengthening youth participation within the Arctic Council.
- Strengthening collaboration with youth-serving and/or young professional organizations by recognizing and valuing their expertise, enabling them to apply for Observer status within the Arctic Council, and/or formalizing their relationship through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), statements of cooperation, or resolutions.

Engaging youth in policy-making process: Commit to active involvement of youth in decision-making process. Youth engagement must go beyond tokenism. Arctic Council commitments to youth participation should be actionable, open, and inclusive to all Arctic youth and with clear accountability mechanisms to ensure that youth voices are translated into tangible policy changes (i.e., dialogue to actions; not just words tossed out into the air, landing nowhere).

Increasing and diversifying youth representation: Strengthen efforts to include Indigenous and Arctic national minority youth, as well as other underrepresented groups (e.g., disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, sexual orientation, economic status, educational background) within Arctic Council governance.



■ NORWAY'S CHAIRSHIP
ARCTIC COUNCIL
2023-2025

FUNDING THE FUTURE: INVESTING IN ARCTIC YOUTH

Unifying funding and setting youth-driven funding priorities: Establish cohesive funding mechanisms that involve youth in setting funding priorities. Funding opportunities should support both individuals and youth-serving organizations by providing mobility grants, knowledge mobilization funds, and initial investment to launch youth initiatives (i.e., seed funding/capital), both locally and in facilitation of greater cross border cooperation in the Arctic region. To improve accessibility and communication, funding opportunities dedicated to Arctic youth should be documented on a single platform, ensuring greater awareness and transparency.

Recognizing and valuing youth contributions: Youth and young professionals bring valuable skills and experience. Their contributions and time should be properly recognized and supported (e.g., financially and logistically) to ensure equitable participation. Unpaid labor disproportionately affects those with limited resources and can hinder youth involvement. Age should not be a factor in determining adequate compensation for time and expertise towards Arctic projects (i.e., provide honorarium).

Identifying Arctic youth networks & investing in outreach programs: Concerted efforts by Arctic States, Indigenous Permanent Participant organizations, and Working Groups are needed to identify and connect with local, regional, and international Arctic youth networks. To raise awareness of Arctic Council activities among youth, outreach efforts must be deliberately tailored to a younger and diverse audience in a way that resonates with them (e.g., video). Consider exploring new creative and innovative approaches to engage and to communicate with Arctic youth at all levels. The Arctic Council platform should be also used to elevate Arctic youth voices and promote youth-led initiatives.



■ NORWAY'S CHAIRSHIP
ARCTIC COUNCIL
2023-2025

BUILDING CAPACITY AND SKILLS THROUGH KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Creating opportunities for intergenerational knowledge exchange and preservation of Indigenous culture:

Foster intergenerational knowledge exchange and preservation of Indigenous cultures and livelihoods by supporting capacity-building initiatives that facilitate meaningful knowledge sharing between youth and community elders. Cultural practices strengthen Indigenous youth's identity and resilience in the face of growing uncertainties and challenges. Land-based learning, cultural traditions, and intergenerational knowledge-sharing are essential in connecting youth to their heritage.

Empowering youth through immersive experience:

Develop immersive experiences (e.g., Kristin Harila x AMAP Arctic Youth Expedition 2025) that allow youth to be exposed to different Arctic environments and contexts, develop advocacy skills, gain new insights, and build networks across the Arctic. These experiences can foster long-lasting relationships and connections with other Arctic youth and the Arctic Council, while creating opportunities for peer-to-peer learning, collaboration and knowledge exchange.

Prioritizing mental health and wellbeing:

Concerted efforts by the Arctic Council should prioritize culturally relevant approaches to mental health and wellbeing by strengthening networks, promoting cultural engagement, and ensuring access to safe and dedicated gathering spaces for youth. Embedding mental health awareness within knowledge exchange and professional development initiatives will empower youth to navigate challenges while enhancing their resilience and leadership.

Establishing fellowship programs:

Develop fellowship programs that enable young professionals to actively engage in Working Group activities (e.g., CAFF Arctic Indigenous Canadian Youth Fellowship), contributing to Indigenous and scientific knowledge. These fellowships would aim to foster meaningful participation, strengthen professional development, and create networking opportunities.



**NORWAY'S CHAIRSHIP
ARCTIC COUNCIL
2023-2025**