

April 2018

Welcome to the April 2018 edition of the Arctic Office Bulletin. As it has been a little while since our last bulletin, we have lots to share this month!

Please visit www.arctic.ac.uk and follow us on Twitter via @Arctic_Office for all the latest news and information. Your feedback and suggestions are always welcome.

NEW – NERC Arctic Office website

The new [website](#) is now up and running. The brief we gave ourselves – and that the community has echoed – is for a site that is visually stronger and clearer; where it is easier to find important and timely information; and which acts as a stronger and more meaningful source of detailed information on UK-based researchers and their research in the Arctic. Whilst the third part of that brief, the ‘projects database’, is not quite ready yet – a few more weeks of testing is needed – we think the new website already makes a big improvement in how we engage. We hope you like it. As always, your feedback is very welcome (arctic@bas.ac.uk).

We will be using the News and Blog features of the website, in combination with Twitter posts, to provide much more regular updates on how the Arctic Office is supporting the UK Arctic research community, details of upcoming opportunities and international events. This Blog will be open to researchers and we are keen to use it to highlight the huge range and depth of work that the community is engaged in. If you would like to write a Blog or have a News item that you would like to be added, please let us know by contacting us at arctic@bas.ac.uk.

As well as the website, we will continue with the e-mailed Bulletins on a more regular basis. However, in order to comply with data protection legislation, you will need to give your consent if you want to receive the Bulletin in future. You can do this via the [subscribing for updates](#) page on the new website. This is a very quick process. The data collected (which includes name and email address) will only be used in order to send you updates relevant to the UK Arctic Research Community. Please see the revised [Privacy Policy](#) for further details. From the end of May we will not be able to e-mail you the Bulletin, or any other e-mail updates, unless you have subscribed as outlined above.

NEW – Arctic Research Icebreaker Consortium (ARICE)

The EU-funded project offers fully funded transnational access to research icebreakers. The first call for ship-time proposals to access the icebreakers **CCGS Amundsen**, **RV Sikuliaq** and **PRV Polarstern** is open until the **5 July 2018**. Applications are welcome from international teams of researchers and industry partners from all career stages. Female applicants are encouraged to apply. Check full eligibility criteria and funding conditions at: <https://www.arice.eu/apply-for-ship-time>.

The access to **PRV Polarstern** is offered in the frame of the [Multidisciplinary drifting Observatory for the Study of Arctic Climate \(MOSAIC\) Expedition](#). Specific access regulations to PRV Polarstern in the frame of MOSAIC apply. Further information can be found at <https://www.arice.eu/apply-for-ship-time>. For specific questions, please contact: info@arice.eu

Updated Government Arctic policy document – ‘Beyond the Ice’

At the end of March, the Government launched [‘Beyond the Ice – UK policy towards the Arctic’](#). The document follows the publication of the first ever statement of UK policy towards the Arctic back in 2013. It sets out three key aims: projecting global influence; protecting people and the environment; and promoting prosperity. The 34-page document covers a large amount of ground, including conservation, pollution, trade, energy and fisheries, defence and shipping safety, as well as Arctic research. In his Foreword to the report, the Minister for the Polar Regions says ‘As we set our course to exit from the European Union, this Framework reaffirms our intention to remain a significant player in Arctic affairs. It recognises the essential need to protect the Arctic environment while also enabling its peoples to flourish. In other words, it sets out the UK’s commitment to remain a good neighbour to the Arctic, as a responsible steward of its interests.’



'Changing Arctic' Parliamentary inquiry

The Environmental Audit Committee have launched their [inquiry](#) into the rapid changes in the Arctic. The 2017 inquiry was cut short by the General Election and the new inquiry has slightly changed terms of reference, which include plastics; the potential implications of leaving the EU; and the possible impact on the UK of policy and funding changes in the United States. The Committee is seeking written evidence ahead of their oral hearings and this should be submitted by **16 May 2018**. The Committee are also looking to appoint a [specialist advisor](#) to assist with their inquiry, with the same deadline. This is an important and interesting opportunity. UKRI will be submitting evidence on behalf of the Research Councils, supported by the NERC Arctic Office. We hope to be able to assist the Committee with a field-visit to the Arctic as part of their work.

A long term future for the UK's Arctic Station

It was confirmed earlier this year that the NERC funding for Harland Huset in Ny-Ålesund, the UK's only Arctic station, has been secured for the next ten years. This follows a review under the Large Research Infrastructure process conducted by NERC which began in autumn 2017. Thank you to everyone who contributed their thoughts and suggestions as part of the consultation process. The result is excellent news and provides a solid platform to further develop the use and potential of the station, which is operated by the British Antarctic Survey, especially in relation to new and emerging technology. We will be showcasing recent innovative work at the Station through the new website.

The Station is available for use by UK-based researchers across a wide range of disciplines with work funded through UKRI bodies and many others, including funding organisations such as Leverhulme, as well as research investment provided through the private sector. The station's abilities to support work can go beyond the traditional natural sciences. The Station is also available to support work by international researchers through the EU's INTERACT transnational programme. Further detail on the Station and how to apply is [here](#).

#ArcticLive 2018

We're very pleased that Digital Explorer will be delivering the XL Catlin Arctic Live, the northernmost live education event from the [UK](#)

[Arctic Research Station](#) in Ny-Ålesund, Svalbard. Running between 4 -10 May this is a unique and FREE opportunity for students across all Key Stages to get first hand access to an extreme environment and engage with a British science expedition team from Plymouth Marine Laboratory and the University of Exeter working on ocean acidification and ocean microplastics.

By signing up teachers can connect their classes to 30 age differentiated YouTube Live broadcasts including:

- **Live investigations** guided by one of the expedition team members. These can be replicated in the classroom simultaneously.
- **Interviews with a science team member or the Station Leader at the UK Arctic Research Station:** students can ask about their work and lives.
- **Open Q&A** with polar educator Jamie Buchanan-Dunlop, to speak about life and science in the Arctic.

You can sign up for any of the FREE session(s) by registering [here](#).

Young Geographer of the Year Competition

This year's competition, run by the Royal Geographical Society, asks 'What makes the Arctic unique?' There are categories for Key Stage 2, 3, 4 & 5. All the details on the competition can be found [here](#). The winners will be announced later in the year at an awards ceremony in central London. We will be promoting the competition in a variety of ways – including through short video messages - over the next few months. The launch of the updated version of the Discovering the Arctic education web resource, which is expected shortly, will be a valuable resource for those entering the competition. Entries close on **10 October**.

#UKinArctic & GREAT digital campaign

We have been working closely with the Government's Science and Innovation Network (SIN) team to publicise the #UKinArctic brand in order to promote the breadth, depth and potential of UK research engagement in the Arctic. We have also developed a new GREAT banner highlighting UK Arctic science which we will be promoting. Through infographics, short videos and news stories the campaign focuses on providing straightforward but high-impact information. Please do use #UKinArctic when tweeting or promoting your research, wherever you can. If you have stories or



other items that you think should be part of the SIN team's forward plan for their digital campaign please get in touch with Tatiana Iakovleva: tatiana.iakovleva@fco.gov.uk

NERC Impact Awards

Applications are open for the NERC 2018 Impact Awards. The awards celebrate and reward NERC-funded researchers, as individuals or teams, whose work has had substantial impact on the economy and society either in the UK or abroad. The awards will be presented at a ceremony in London, late 2018. The event will highlight the researchers, their work and the impact of the science that NERC funds. Categories include Economic Impact; Societal Impact and Early Career Impact, together with an Overall Impact Award. The winner of each category will receive £10,000 and the runner-up £5,000, to further the impacts of their research. The Overall Impact Award winner will receive an additional £30,000.

The Award was last run in 2015 and given the high profile on Arctic research in recent years it would be fantastic to see a strong range of entries focused on this region. If you think you might have something that fits, please have a look at further details [here](#). The closing date for applications is **12pm on 21 May**.

NERC Global Seedcorn Partnership Fund

The aim of the [Global Partnerships Seedcorn Fund](#) is to support UK environmental science researchers to forge new partnerships and networks with the best international researchers wherever they are located and seed collaborations that will be sustained beyond the lifetime of the grant. Supported activities may include focused programmes of exchange visits, scoping studies and workshops. Applicants may request funding of a maximum of £100,000 at 100% full economic cost (FEC) for up to two years' duration. Standard NERC Principal Investigator eligibility rules apply. Importantly, new Investigators, who may not already have international research partners, are encouraged to apply. One or more international project partners are mandatory. Closing date **30 April**.

UK-Russia Arctic research connections

We have been working hard, alongside the UK's Science and Innovation Network team in Russia, to strengthen UK-Russia Arctic research connections, and to provide access and new opportunities for UK-based researchers and set up new partnerships.

Most recently, this took the form of two workshops, delivered with the UK Polar Network (UKPN) and APECS Russia, for early career researchers. The first involved taking a group of 15 UK-based researchers to Russia for a two-day workshop at Moscow Lomonosov University to meet with a similar number of their counterparts and researchers from the University. The second saw the Russian researchers come to Cambridge for a joint workshop to develop a practical action plan for future cooperation. Once the key elements of this action plan are in place, we will provide links and a more detailed update on the events and next steps.

All those at the workshop recognised that whilst nothing that has happened in the wider political context has made UK-Russia research cooperation easier, it has made it even more important. We are committed to following through on this work and on building new and positive connections wherever appropriate.

POLAR2018 in Davos

From mid-June Davos will play host to the combined IASC and SCAR science meetings, together with a host of business meetings, including IASC Council and Working Groups, as well as the Arctic Observing Summit. The NERC Arctic Office will be present for the whole event with a remit to ensure that the UK's voice is heard effectively and clearly; that we support efforts to bring the Agreement on Enhancing International Arctic Scientific Cooperation into practical action; and that the UK plays its part in moves to create sustaining Arctic observing systems. Through the Arctic Office, NERC is supporting the attendance of the UK's IASC Working Group representatives at the meeting to maximise the UK's engagement. We will provide further information on attendees and the detailed agenda in the May edition of the Arctic Office Bulletin. It is still possible to register to attend POLAR2018, further details [here](#).

UK-Canada Bursaries

With funding from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) confirmed for the 2018 Arctic season we have been able to offer a range of Bursaries to a dozen applicants. As in 2017, the Bursaries reflect a diverse spectrum of projects, including marine, terrestrial, cryosphere and atmosphere, as well as, for the first time, a social science project. We are grateful to all the Canadian PIs and partners for their continuing support for this important initiative. By the end of this season over the two years of the Bursary



scheme, we will have been able to support 30 projects and teams in carrying out research across the Canadian Arctic and High North. As we did last year, we will be working closely with the British High Commission in Ottawa to promote and publicise the work of the Bursary recipients, including through attendance and sessions at the next ArcticNet meeting in Ottawa in December.

MOSAiC

Plans for the Multidisciplinary drifting Observatory for the Study of Arctic Climate being led by AWI in Germany, in close cooperation with the United States and Russia, are proceeding well. The Polarstern is still on course to be frozen into the advancing winter sea ice in October 2019. The panel assessing the UK bids to benefit from the dedicated NERC funding call and the BEIS-funded berth costs is expected to announce its results soon. Wherever possible successful applicants should attend the upcoming "**Advancing MOSAiC Science**" workshop from **May 28th - June 1st** at the **Alfred Wegener Institute in Potsdam**, Germany. The aim of the workshop is to continue strengthening the links between MOSAiC science objectives and the specific plans for observing, modelling, and synthesis activities. Although registration has now officially closed you are advised to contact the organisers to secure attendance, if possible: anja.sommerfeld@awi.de

Arctic Circle Assembly 2018

This year's Assembly will take place from **19-21 October**. The importance of the Assembly continues to build and we hope that the NERC Arctic Office will again be able to represent and promote the UK Arctic research community. The deadline for the submission of proposals for break-out sessions is **15 May**, with further details available from the [Arctic Circle Assembly website](#).

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