



## UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

### **Guidelines for establishing a new Thematic Network**

(updated on Feb 2009)

When you plan a new Thematic Network, there are issues to be remembered:

- The leader (=the host) of the Network has to come from UArctic member institution.
- Thematic Networks consists of individual experts from at least three UArctic member institutions, which can include the leader.
- A Thematic Network should have members from all three major northern regions (North America, northern Europe, and Russia).
- A Thematic Network can also have members from non-UArctic member institutions, but representatives from UArctic member institutions shall have majority in any internal decision-making structure.

Step by step time line: What to do with a new idea for a Thematic Network?

#### **Four to six months before the next UArctic council meeting**

##### **1. Contact the Coordinator**

When a new idea for a Thematic Network is born, first thing to do is to contact Thematic Networks coordinator Kirsi Latola (contact information below). This is to make sure that the idea is novel and not already covered by existing thematic networks. She will also give guidance through out the process of endorsement.

##### **2. Secure the Host Organization's support**

It is most important that host organization is committed to the work as a leader of the Thematic Network. The commitment has to be both in financing the travel and possible some activities and allocating work hours for the leader of the Thematic Network. If the host institution fails to support the leadership of Thematic Network it is not sustainable and objectives and goals are often evaded.

Therefore the *Letter of Support* signed by host institution's rector/vice-rector/provost for a new Thematic Network has to be attached to the proposal. This is to make sure that hosting of a new Thematic Network is supported by institutions leaders.

**Please note:** After the council endorsement, the rector, vice-rector or provost has to sign a *Memorandum of Understanding* together with the Chair of the Thematic Networks who is the official representative of the University of Arctic (MOU enclosed). Before signing it the contract has to be approved by the UArctic Head of Administration Outi Snellman and the Thematic Networks Chair Kari Laine.



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**Three months before the council meeting** (check the actual date from the coordinator)

### **3. Write up a proposal and submit it** (with the Letter of Support) **to the Thematic Networks coordinator**

The proposal is written in free form and it has to include the following issues:

- The thematic focus area of the network
- What are the goals and planned activities of the network? (as an example, developing joint educational programs, conducting joint research projects, student/teacher mobility)
- How indigenous issues are included in TN's operation?
- Quality control at the network
  - How TN defines the quality on its own terms
  - How UArctic member organizations and institutions will benefit from the new TN, what is the added value in establishing such a network?
  - What kind of quality control has been already done in TN partner institutions' educational programs, courses etc (i.e. in accepting new program/course, student feedback and tutoring)
- Has network already been awarded some funding? If so, for what activities?
- List the names of members and their home organizations, name and contact information of the host organization and leader.

### **4. Wait for the comments from the proposal evaluation**

Before the proposals are sent to the UArctic Council and its required preparation process) the Thematic Network's Endorsement committee organize an evaluation of the proposals. This includes;

- check for potentials for linkages with other uarctic activities (review process with all strategic areas of UArctic)
- review and assistance for improvements by relevant by UArctic programs (organized by thematic Networks coordinator)
- sustainability review by the lead of thematic networks
- fast review by UArctic indigenous issues committee and uarctic academic quality committee

Based on the above the Thematic Network's Endorsement committee (see Annex 1.) decides which proposals:

1. are proposed to the next council meeting for acceptance
2. should be put together either with one of the existing Thematic Networks or with the one that will be proposed.
3. needs to be improved
4. can not be accepted as a Thematic Network. Very good reasons for this must be given.

The results from the evaluation will be sent to the hosts of the proposed Thematic Networks within three weeks after the proposal submission deadline. This gives time for possible revisions of the proposals. The revised proposals will be accepted by Thematic Networks chair and coordinator with the guidance of endorsement committee if needed.



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Negative decisions by the committee can be sent to the UArctic senior management team for a second assessment if the proposer so wish.

**Six weeks before the council meeting** (check the actual date from the coordinator)

### **5. Send the final proposal**

If the endorsement committee has requested revisions to the proposal, the final version has to be sent to the coordinator before the proposals are sent to the UArctic secretariat for submission to preparation process for the council meeting. The leaders of the proposed Thematic Networks have to make sure that the correct version of proposal will be sent to the council.

### **UArctic council meeting**

#### **6. Present the proposal**

The leader of the proposed Thematic Network is obligated to participate the council meeting where he/she will chair the breakout session on his/her thematic network. Before the breakout sessions each leader has couple minutes time in front of the council for promoting and inviting members to the session. After the breakout session each lead gives council a report on the session followed by the council voting for the establishment of the new Thematic Networks.

#### **After the endorsement**

The Memorandum of Understanding between host institution and University of Arctic has to be signed within six months after the council endorsement.

**NOTE:** In 2009 the UArctic council meeting is held in August 10-15<sup>th</sup>, so the proposals enclosed with Letter of support should be sent to coordinator for evaluation **by May 8th!**

#### **Contact information:**

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