



2025-2026 ANNUAL REPORT



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Welcome from the Chair

It is my pleasure as Chair of the Scottish Arctic Network (ScAN) to present our Annual Report 2025-2026.

Since taking up the role of Chair in summer 2025, I have enjoyed getting to know colleagues from across our Network, and learning more about the remarkable breadth of Scotland's Arctic expertise, connections and collaborations. The enthusiasm and engagement with ScAN initiatives throughout the past year have reinforced the valuable role that ScAN plays in bringing together Arctic researchers, educators and practitioners in Scotland, and the impact that can be delivered by a strong, committed and collaborative community of experts drawn from the rich diversity of disciplines and HE institutions in Scotland.

Our Annual Report highlights our key achievements of the past year, including the successful Scottish Arctic Conference held in St Andrews in March 2026, and the delivery of our pilot Arctic Travel and Partnerships Fund. The strong response to this pilot initiative highlighted both the depth of Arctic activity across Scotland and the importance of providing opportunities for researchers and students to engage internationally. The partnerships, experiences and impact generated through these awards illustrate the transformative effect that relatively small investments can have in supporting research excellence, collaboration and career development.

During the year, the Network undertook an important exercise to map research expertise across its membership and identify potential strategic themes for future development. This work has laid the foundations for the creation of thematic communities that will help connect researchers working on shared challenges and opportunities across the Arctic. As we move into the next phase of ScAN's development, these themes will provide a valuable framework for collaboration, networking and the pursuit of new funding opportunities.

It has been a privilege to work with such a supportive and good-humoured Steering Group comprising academics, professional staff and students from across Scotland, and we are all especially grateful for the support from our ScAN Intern, Hayley McLennan. Our achievements during 2025-26 would not have been possible without the support of our partners and funders. Particular thanks to UArctic for its continued confidence in ScAN and for the operational support that has enabled us to expand our activities and ambitions. We are also grateful to the Scottish Government, particularly the Scottish Education Exchange Programme and the Europe Division, for their support of our work during the year.

The continuation of UArctic operational support provides a strong foundation for the coming year, while the success of our recent initiatives demonstrates the value of investing in Scotland's Arctic community. At the same time, securing longer-term and sustainable funding remains a priority if we are to build on this momentum and realise the full potential of the Network.

The Arctic continues to be a region of profound global significance, with implications for climate, energy, security, health, culture and society. Scotland's universities have much to contribute to these conversations, and ScAN is well placed to support and amplify that contribution. I look forward to working with our members and partners as we continue to strengthen Scotland's Arctic connections and expand the impact of our collaboration.

Samantha Lister

Chair, Scottish Arctic Network

Director of the Global Office, University of St Andrews

September 2026

Introducing our Network

Established in 2022, the Scottish Arctic Network (ScAN) brings together Scotland-based researchers and educators with expertise and interests spanning the Arctic and Scottish-Arctic collaboration. As Scotland's Regional Centre for the University of the Arctic (UArctic), ScAN serves as a hub for Arctic research, education, connecting Scottish expertise with partners across the High North and beyond.

ScAN provides a platform through which members can build interdisciplinary collaborations, share expertise, engage with Arctic communities and stakeholders, and contribute to global discussions on the challenges and opportunities facing the Arctic region. Through its role within UArctic, the network helps ensure that Scottish institutions and researchers are well positioned to access international partnerships, mobility schemes, networks, and funding opportunities.

Our network:

- Fosters interdisciplinary networking and collaboration in Arctic research, education, and innovation across Scotland to address Arctic and global challenges;
- Supports engagement with UArctic opportunities, programmes and networks;
- Raises the profile of Scotland's Arctic expertise and promotes Scottish contributions to Arctic knowledge, policy, and practice;
- Facilitates connections between Scottish researchers and Arctic communities, organisations, and institutions around the world;
- Encourages participation in mobility, capacity-building, and knowledge exchange initiatives that strengthen Scotland's Arctic engagement.



"In March 2026, I travelled to Sweden as part of the Scottish Arctic Network (ScAN) Arctic Travel and Partnerships Fund, with visits to University West in Trollhättan and Chalmers University of Technology in Gothenburg. The aim of the visit was to strengthen international collaborations and explore hydrogen research partnerships aligned with Arctic and Nordic priorities, with a particular focus on advanced materials and manufacturing for energy systems. Overall, the visit was highly productive, highlighting strong interest in Arctic hydrogen research, particularly in advanced materials, manufacturing, and engineering solutions for challenging environments. It has laid the foundation for ongoing collaboration, joint funding applications, and future research initiatives. I am now planning to visit Finland as part of my next phase of engagement to further strengthen UK–Nordic collaboration in this field."

Professor Nadimul Faisal, Robert Gordon University

Membership

ScAN's membership reflects the breadth and diversity of Arctic expertise across Scotland's higher education sector. Through UArctic membership, institutions gain access to an extensive international network committed to advancing education, research, and collaboration in and about the North.

11 Scottish higher education institutions are members of UArctic and are therefore eligible to participate in the ScAN Steering Group:

- University of Aberdeen
- University of Dundee
- University of Edinburgh
- University of Glasgow
- Glasgow School of Art
- Heriot Watt University
- Robert Gordon University
- University of St Andrews
- University of Stirling (joined ScAN in 2025-2026)
- University of Strathclyde
- University of the Highlands and Islands

We were delighted to welcome the University of Stirling to the network during 2025-26, further strengthening Scottish engagement with UArctic and expanding the range of expertise represented within ScAN.

Following Glasgow Caledonian University's withdrawal from UArctic membership, the institution stepped down from the ScAN Steering Group in summer 2025. We would like to thank colleagues at Glasgow Caledonian University for their contributions to the network in its foundation years and we look forward to opportunities for future collaboration.

Collectively, ScAN's member institutions represent a significant concentration of Arctic expertise within the UK, creating opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration and enabling Scotland to play an active and influential role within the wider UArctic community.

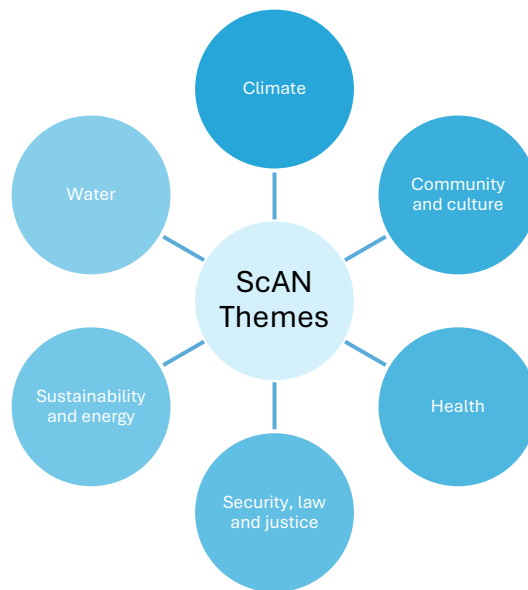
"I'm studying organic carbon in Arctic fjords and the vulnerability of these fjords to anthropogenic disturbance. In March, I received funding from the Scottish Arctic Network (ScAN) Arctic Travel and Partnerships Fund to travel to Aarhus, Denmark, and attend the Arctic Science Summit Week 2026 (ASSW 26). Hosted at the beautiful Aarhus University campus, the conference brought together Arctic researchers from around the world to share their research on topics from data sovereignty, climatology, Arctic observations, and more. I was able to attend and present a poster during the designated "Arctic Observations Science Day", which focused on the work of early career Arctic researchers. I presented my work on sediment organic matter reactivity, organic carbon content, and sources from surface sediments collected in Disko Bay, Greenland. During the poster session, I had the opportunity to discuss my research with many other early career researchers and more established researchers, many of whom asked very insightful questions which helped me reframe some of my research questions and interpretations."

Lauren South, PhD student, University of St Andrews

Strategic Research Themes

In August 2025, the Steering Group held a workshop to consider the introduction of potential strategic themes which would help us to strengthen the identity of the Network and provide a clearer framework for collaboration. The six proposed interdisciplinary themes are intended to help us showcase the breadth and depth of Scottish Arctic research and policy engagement more effectively; foster interdisciplinary community and collaboration across the Network; support targeted funding applications aligned with national and international priorities, and create new mechanisms for networking and collaboration generally.

To inform this work, we undertook a research mapping exercise across all members, analysing areas of expertise, activity and shared thematic interests. This process led to agreement on six interdisciplinary themes for further development:



At our Annual Conference in March 2026, we engaged the wider Network on these emerging themes and how they might be embedded in future ScAN activities. Feedback highlighted the value that thematic communities offer in terms of bringing together researchers, policymakers and external stakeholders to address complex Arctic challenges from multiple perspectives.

Work on this is ongoing, and the development of thematic communities will be a key objective for ScAN during 2026-2027, providing a platform for collaboration and knowledge exchange.

Events and Programmes

Scottish Arctic Travel and Partnerships Fund

The Scottish Arctic Travel and Partnerships Fund was a pilot project supported through the Scottish Education Exchange Programme and launched in late 2025. The Fund was designed to build on previous experience of managing a travel fund to support staff and students build their networks, collaborations and partnerships, while enhancing Scotland's visibility and influence within the international Arctic community.

During 2025-26, the Fund received 29 applications from eight Scottish institutions, reflecting strong demand from the country's Arctic research community. Following a competitive assessment process, 12 awards were made, supporting a diverse range of activities at a total cost of £7,000.

The funded projects demonstrate both the breadth of Arctic expertise across Scotland and the significant value that relatively modest investments can deliver in enabling international collaboration. Awards supported attendance at major Arctic conferences and scientific meetings, specialist training opportunities, fieldwork, and visits to international partners, helping researchers to establish new collaborations, strengthen existing partnerships, develop future funding proposals, and share Scottish research on an international stage.

The Fund benefited researchers and postgraduate students from six Scottish institutions, supporting work across disciplines including climate science, glaciology, marine science, geology, renewable energy, environmental history, community studies, and Arctic health and wellbeing. Destinations included Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Svalbard, and the Faroe Islands, reflecting the strong international networks that underpin Scotland's Arctic engagement.

At an individual level, the Fund supported 12 researchers and postgraduate students to participate in high-profile Arctic activities and engage with partners across the Nordic and Arctic regions. This support has contributed to the development of international research networks, enhanced career development opportunities for Early Career Researchers (ECRs), and increased the visibility of Scottish expertise within key Arctic research and policy communities.

An important outcome of the fund is the generation of impact stories and case studies that showcase the value of Arctic collaboration. Recipients were invited to share blogs reflecting on their experiences, creating a rich collection of examples demonstrating how international mobility and networking opportunities contribute to research excellence, career development, knowledge exchange, and long-term partnership building.

As a pilot programme, the Fund also provided valuable insights into the demand for outward mobility support within Scotland's Arctic community. The high level of interest confirmed a clear appetite for mechanisms that enable researchers and students to develop international partnerships and engage with Arctic stakeholders. The programme also highlighted practical considerations for future funding rounds, particularly the challenges associated with the limited travel period from January to March, which did not always align with conference schedules, fieldwork seasons or partner engagement opportunities.

The initiative has provided a strong foundation for the Network to consider approaches to travel support and mobility programmes in the future. While the longer-term funding context remains uncertain, the Steering Group is committed to supporting this type of international engagement, if possible, particularly for ECR colleagues.

Scottish Arctic Conference and ScAN AGM 2026



The Scottish Arctic Conference and ScAN Annual General Meeting 2026 were held at the University of St Andrews on 5-6 March 2026, bringing together approximately 60 participants from across Scotland's Arctic research and education community. The conference was supported through funding from both the Scottish Education Exchange Programme and the Scottish Government's Europe Division.

As the largest and most ambitious conference organised by ScAN to date, the event provided an important platform for researchers, educators, policymakers and international partners to share knowledge, strengthen relationships, identify new opportunities for collaboration, and help shape the future direction of the Network. The programme reflected the breadth and interdisciplinary nature of Scotland's Arctic expertise, with contributions spanning the natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, policy, education, arts and community engagement.

Highlights included:

- An Early Career Researcher Panel, providing insights into the experiences and perspectives of the next generation of Arctic researchers.
- A presentation from the Scottish Government on its assessment of the Arctic Connections Policy Framework.
- A panel discussion exploring opportunities for engagement with UArctic Thematic Networks.
- A research showcase featuring presentations from academics and students across ScAN member institutions.
- A keynote presentation by Outi Snellman, Secretary General of UArctic, on UArctic regional engagement and collaboration.
- A strategic planning workshop to inform the future development and priorities of ScAN.
- The annual business meeting of the network.

The conference attracted participants from universities, government and the wider community. Alongside representatives from ScAN member institutions, attendees included colleagues from the Scottish Government, the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), Police Scotland, UArctic, and the French and Norwegian Consulates. The event also welcomed representatives from Edinburgh Napier University, whose engagement with the Network subsequently led to a commitment to pursue UArctic membership in 2027.

The conference generated a number of important outcomes and impacts. It provided a catalyst for greater Scottish engagement with UArctic Thematic Networks, with several researchers subsequently joining, or applying to join, networks after learning about opportunities through the conference programme. One notable example was the successful application by the University of St Andrews to join the Arctic Sustainable Art and Design Thematic Network, supported by engagement from a St Andrews PhD student who had learned about the network through conference discussions. The event also helped raise awareness of leadership opportunities within UArctic, contributing to a successful application by a University of Edinburgh PhD student to serve as a student representative on the UArctic Board.

The conference also provided an important opportunity for policymakers and international stakeholders to engage directly with Scotland's Arctic research community. The Scottish Government was able to share learning and reflections arising from the Arctic Connections Policy Framework, while representatives from the FCDO gained greater visibility of the breadth of Arctic-related research, education and engagement activities taking place across Scotland. Participation by the French and Norwegian Consulates has since led to further discussions around opportunities for collaboration with ScAN and its members.

Beyond these tangible outcomes, the conference created space for new partnerships and project ideas to emerge, including discussions around collaborative education initiatives and future research activities. Feedback from delegates was overwhelmingly positive, with participants particularly highlighting the research showcase as a valuable opportunity to celebrate the diversity and quality of Arctic-related work being undertaken across Scotland. Presentations ranged from postgraduate researchers and Early Career Researchers to senior academic leaders, demonstrating the depth of expertise and the strength of Scotland's Arctic community.

A particularly significant outcome of the conference came on the second day, when UArctic announced that ScAN would continue to receive operational support as a UArctic Regional Centre for 2026-27. UArctic also signalled its intention to explore additional ways of enhancing the visibility and impact of Regional Centres. This endorsement reflected the strength, ambition and collaborative nature of the Network, as demonstrated through the conference, and recognised ScAN's growing role in connecting Scottish institutions with the wider Arctic research and policy community.

Overall, the conference represented an important milestone in ScAN's development. It showcased the excellence and diversity of Scottish Arctic expertise, strengthened national and international partnerships, stimulated new opportunities for collaboration, and reinforced the Network's value both within Scotland and across the wider UArctic community.

Full conference summaries are available on the ScAN website:

Day 1 – <https://arctic.scot/scan-conference-mar26-day1-recap/>

Day 2 – <https://arctic.scot/scottish-arctic-conference-march-2026-day-2-recap/>

UArctic Engagement



A few ScAN attendees from RGU, St Andrews and UHI at the UArctic Congress 2026.

ScAN members continued to play an active and influential role across the UArctic network throughout 2025-26, contributing to flagship events, leadership activities, thematic networks, and governance structures. We are proud that our Network is recognised as one of four Regional Centres of the UArctic, demonstrating the strength of our expertise, presence, and engagement.

A significant highlight of the past year was participation in the UArctic Congress 2026 in the Faroe Islands, where researchers and professional staff from Scottish institutions contributed extensively to the programme through presentations, workshops, panel discussions, and networking activities. The strong Scottish presence demonstrated both the depth of Arctic expertise within ScAN and the value of engagement with the wider UArctic community.

Examples highlighted on the ScAN website include reports from Robert Gordon University on its [activities and partnerships developed during the Congress](#), as well as a session on [Educating Doctors for the North](#), co-chaired by Dr Andrew O'Malley of the University of St Andrews. The session brought together international perspectives on healthcare education and workforce development in northern and remote regions.

ScAN's leadership role within the international academic community was further demonstrated through a presentation by the ScAN Chair, Samantha Lister, at the Congress on the role of Arctic networks in fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange. The collaborative session, entitled *Meeting Societal Needs in the Arctic through Collaboration: Knowledge-Policy-Action-Networks*, was delivered alongside colleagues from Canada, Iceland, and Ireland, showcasing Scotland's contribution to international Arctic cooperation.

Last year also saw continued success for the [COIL@UArctic Thematic Network](#), founded by Dr Izzy Crawford of Robert Gordon University. The network published its annual *Year in Review*, documenting significant growth in membership, expanded international engagement, and a range of collaborative educational activities delivered throughout 2025.

ScAN members also continued to contribute to UArctic governance and leadership. Congratulations to Alex Payne, University of Edinburgh, on his election to the UArctic Board as a student representative. He joins Professor Brad MacKay, Deputy Principal and Vice Principal (International Strategy and External Relations) at the University of St Andrews, who continues to serve on the Board, ensuring strong Scottish representation within UArctic's highest decision-making body.

Together, these achievements demonstrate the growing influence of Scottish institutions within UArctic and the continued commitment of ScAN members to international Arctic collaboration.

Other ScAN Engagement

Beyond our core activities, ScAN members were highly visible across a range of international conferences, research events and public engagement initiatives throughout the year, including:

- A number of ScAN members attended *Arctic Frontiers 2026: Turn of the Tide*, held in Tromsø from 2-5 February 2026. As one of the Arctic's leading annual conferences, Arctic Frontiers provided an important forum for discussion on science, policy, industry, and society. Read about the conference [here](#).
- ScAN members were also well represented at the *Ocean Sciences Meeting 2026*, hosted in Glasgow. Researchers from across the network organised and chaired sessions, delivered presentations, and showcased their work through posters and exhibitions. The conference provided an excellent opportunity to highlight Scotland's strengths in polar and marine research to an international audience. Read more [here](#).
- ScAN was delighted to be represented at Robert Gordon University's Curious Minds Research Festival, an innovative 'non-conference' celebrating research and engaging diverse audiences. Participation in the festival provided an opportunity to raise awareness of Arctic research and showcase the breadth of activity taking place across the Scottish Arctic community.

Through these engagements, we continue to strengthen Scotland's reputation and impact in the international Arctic research landscape.



(130km/h) winds, rain, and snow on numerous occasions! The fieldwork funded by ScAN has given my PhD project renewed focus, while also providing greater depth to my theoretical approach"

Will Wakely, PhD student, University of Edinburgh

Visit our [website](#) to read blog posts from many of the other staff and students who received financial support from ScAN in 2025-2026 through our Arctic Travel and Partnerships Fund.

Communications

During 2025-26, ScAN strengthened its communications activity to improve engagement across the network and increase awareness of opportunities available through both ScAN and UArctic.

A key development was the introduction of a new monthly newsletter format, providing members with regular updates on ScAN activities, funding opportunities, events, and deadlines. The newsletter includes a recurring *Meet the Steering Group* feature, designed to increase awareness of key contacts and expertise across member institutions, helping to foster greater connectivity within the network. It also highlights news and achievements from across the Scottish Arctic community, alongside opportunities available through UArctic, supporting our aim of maximising the value of institutional membership and encouraging greater participation in UArctic programmes and initiatives.

The profile of the newsletter has also grown internationally. ScAN newsletters are now featured on the UArctic website, while selected ScAN news and events are regularly shared through UArctic's own communications channels. This has significantly expanded the visibility of Scottish Arctic activity across UArctic's global membership network.

Responding directly to feedback gathered at the 2025 Annual Conference, ScAN also established a dedicated Jiscmail mailing list to facilitate member-to-member communication, creating a more effective platform for sharing opportunities, expertise, and collaboration requests across the network.

ScAN maintains an active presence on LinkedIn and Bluesky, where audience growth and engagement have continued to increase over the past year. These platforms play an important role in promoting member achievements, disseminating opportunities, and raising the profile of Scottish Arctic research, education, and policy engagement.

Our website has also been developed to showcase opportunities for engagement and participation more effectively. We have launched new dedicated webpages for both UArctic Thematic Networks and the North2North mobility programme. Scottish institutions have a strong record of leadership and participation within UArctic's Thematic Networks, and the new resource highlights these contributions while encouraging researchers, professional staff, and students to become involved in existing networks or explore opportunities to establish new collaborations.

The new North2North webpage reflects the growing participation of Scottish universities in UArctic's mobility programme, providing practical information, key contacts, and guidance for students and staff interested in international exchange opportunities. Together, these enhanced digital resources improve accessibility to information and support greater engagement across the full spectrum of UArctic activities.

Alongside these developments, the ScAN website hosts a growing collection of blog posts that demonstrate the impact of network-supported activities. Featuring contributions from academics, students, and professional staff, these case studies showcase how Arctic collaborations are translating into research outputs, capacity building, international partnerships, knowledge exchange, and career development opportunities. By sharing these experiences, we aim not only to celebrate achievements across the network but also to inspire wider engagement with Arctic-focused activities and collaborations.

Webpages:

- UArctic Thematic Networks: <https://arctic.scot/scotland-in-uarctic-thematic-networks/>
- North2North Programme: <https://arctic.scot/uarctic-north2north/>
- News and testimonials: [News & Events – Scottish Arctic Network](#)

Finances

In the context of its Regional Centre status and increasing engagement with UArctic, ScAN received €10,000 of operational support from UArctic for the first time in 2025-26. This represented an important milestone in the Network's development and provided much-needed capacity to support our growing programme of activities. The funding enabled the creation of a PhD internship position, providing dedicated support to the Chair and Steering Group in the administration, coordination and delivery of Network activities, while also offering valuable professional development experience for a postgraduate researcher.

ScAN applied to the Scottish Government's Scottish Educational Exchange Programme (SEEP) in summer 2025, and successfully obtained £10,000 of funding towards two project priorities: the Arctic Travel and Partnerships Fund and the Scottish Arctic Conference. Total expenditure on the award was £8,528, including £7000 on the Travel Fund and £1,783 on the Conference. The final spend on the Travel Fund was slightly lower than originally budgeted due to a few withdrawals at a late stage.

The Scottish Government's Europe Division in the Directorate for Culture and External Affairs also provided a further £2,000 in support of the Scottish Arctic Conference. This, together with the UArctic operational support, the SEEP funding, and in-kind support from the University of St Andrews as conference host, enabled us to organise and deliver our largest conference to date. The funding helped ensure broad participation from across Scotland, including the provision of travel support for speakers and postgraduate researchers, contributing to an inclusive and nationally representative event.

Overall, operational support from UArctic has been particularly transformative, and the confirmation at the March 2026 Conference that this funding will continue in 2026-27 provides an important foundation for the Network's future development.

Moreover, the success of projects funded last year demonstrate the substantial value that modest funding can unlock for a collaborative network such as ScAN. Small, targeted funding pots have generated tangible benefits for researchers, institutions and partners, while strengthening Scotland's presence within the wider Arctic community.

However, securing longer-term and more sustainable funding remains a significant challenge and will continue to be a strategic priority for ScAN over the coming year. Building on the successes of 2025-26, the Network will seek to develop a more sustainable funding model that enables continued growth, supports new initiatives, and maximises opportunities for collaboration, knowledge exchange and impact across Scotland's Arctic community.

Governance

Following a strategic planning workshop in summer 2025, the Steering Group undertook a comprehensive review of its Terms of Reference to ensure that the network remains well positioned to support Scotland's Arctic research, education, policy and engagement. A series of governance enhancements were agreed and implemented during 2025-2026 to strengthen transparency, broaden participation and enhance the long-term resilience of the network.

Key changes included:

1. The Terms of Reference now clarify that membership is available to all staff and students of the universities represented on the Steering Group. Individuals can register for ScAN communications via our website. Funding schemes such as Travel Grants, if and when available, are restricted to members.
2. A new Associate Membership category was established to enable participation from other individuals and organisations in Scotland and beyond that are engaged in Arctic research, policy, or education and maintain active connections with ScAN. Applications may be submitted to the Chair, and Steering Group members may nominate individuals or organisations for invitation.
3. The Terms of Reference now specify that the Chair should normally be appointed from within the Steering Group. Where this is not possible, the Chair must be drawn from one of ScAN's member institutions.
4. A dedicated Communications Lead role was created to support network engagement and visibility. Institutions are also now able to nominate up to two representatives to the Steering Group, in addition to appointed role holders, broadening institutional participation and expertise.
5. A clarification that Representatives from the Scottish Government's Europe Division in the Directorate for Culture and External Affairs are invited to join the Steering Group in an advisory capacity, and to facilitate communication and information sharing between ScAN and the SG.

Collectively, these changes were designed to enhance transparency, deepen collaboration with partner organisations, strengthen governance arrangements, and build capacity within the Steering Group. While the Associate Membership framework has been agreed, implementation is ongoing and will be a priority area of development during 2026-2027.

Leadership

Steering Group Membership, July 2026:

- Samantha Lister, Chair (University of St Andrews)
- Alisdair Innes (University of Edinburgh/Steering Group Communications Lead)
- Tessa Bell (University of Edinburgh)
- Lauren McWhinnie (Heriot-Watt University)
- William Cushley (University of Glasgow, maternity cover for Charlotte Kedslie)
- Laura Hobbs (University of the Highlands and Islands – Scottish Association for Marine Science)
- Donna Heddle (University of the Highlands and Islands)
- Heidi Vironen (University of Strathclyde)
- Gina Wall (Glasgow School of Art)
- Ross Birrell (Glasgow School of Art)
- Anna Crawford (University of Stirling)
- Holger Nehring (University of Stirling)
- Jacques Hartmann (University of Dundee)
- Simon Cook (University of Dundee)
- David Anderson (University of Aberdeen)
- Rob Wishart (University of Aberdeen)
- Elsa Cox (Robert Gordon University)
- David Gray (Robert Gordon University)
- Frances Amadhe (Robert Gordon University/Early Career Representative)

Samantha Lister, Director of the Global Office at the University of St Andrews, assumed the role of Chair in the summer of 2025. Over the past year, the Chair's focus has been on securing operational funding, strengthening the network community and our engagement with UArctic, and enhancing the visibility and reputation of ScAN.

Support from UArctic enabled ScAN to establish a new internship programme to assist the Chair and Steering Group in delivering the network's activities. The internship provides valuable operational support while also creating a professional development opportunity for postgraduate students from member institutions. ScAN's first intern, Hayley McLennan (University of St Andrews), served in the role throughout 2025-2026, making an outstanding contribution to the network while completing her doctoral studies. Hayley successfully graduated in June 2026. The Steering Group is grateful for her dedication and professionalism and hopes to continue offering this opportunity in future years, with hosting arrangements aligned to the rotating Chairship of the network.

In summer 2026, the Steering Group bid farewell to Beth Langley, University of Glasgow, who finished her term as Early Career Representative on the Steering Group, and completed her PhD. Beth played an important role in ensuring that early career researchers remained actively engaged in ScAN's activities and decision-making processes. Congratulations and many thanks to Beth for all the work she has done to support the Steering Group and to ensure ECR engagement and support has continued to be a real strength of our network.

Looking ahead, the Steering Group is pleased to welcome Frances Amadhe (Robert Gordon University) as the new Early Career Representative for 2026-2027 and looks forward to continuing to support the contributions of early career researchers across the network.

Arctic news from our Universities

The **University of Aberdeen** hosted a hybrid [Multi-Disciplinary Arctic Sea Ice Workshop](#) in February 2026. The event focused on thinking beyond and across traditional boundaries to understand sea ice loss in the Arctic.

Professor Jacques Hartmann, **University of Dundee**, published a blog in the Cambridge International Law Journal entitled '[Small State, Big Stakes: Legal Avenues for Denmark in Responding to US Pressure over Greenland](#)'

University of Edinburgh researcher's study published in April 2026 suggests that there has been an irreversible shift in the chemical make-up of the Arctic Ocean driven by climate change which is disrupting the region's food chain. Read more about the tipping point [here](#).

University of Edinburgh PhD student Lokesh Jain has won the Coimbra Three Minute Thesis Competition presenting his work on modelling how iceberg and sea ice melt around the Greenland ice sheet will impact future sea level rise. Read about his research and experience participating in the competition [here](#).

In April 2026, the first gathering of the two-year project on "Collaboration for research and education addressing marine pollution and clean-up operations in Arctic and sub-Arctic areas", funded by UArctic, was hosted by **Heriot-Watt University** in Stromness, Orkney. They had presentations and discussions as well as a beach cleaning day at Evie, Orkney. Read all about it [here](#)

A new **Robert Gordon University**-led UArctic Thematic network has been established following approval at the UArctic Congress in May 2026. Managed by Professor David Gray, The Northern and Arctic Land Transport (NALT) network brings together collaborators from Scotland, Norway, Sweden and the Faroe Islands. Combining technical, environmental and social perspectives, the network provides an interdisciplinary platform for understanding how transport shapes northern ways of life and how mobility systems can evolve sustainability and equitably.

Robert Gordon University has established a new role of UArctic Engagement Officer to join the Research, Innovation and Enterprise (RIE) team. Dr Alöna Roitershtein joined RIE in July 2026 bringing extensive research experience from the Northern and Arctic region. In her new role, Alöna will work across the University, wider networks and stakeholders to maximise opportunities for impactful research, education and enterprise.

Caroline Haas, a recently graduated Joint PhD student at the **University of St Andrews** and University of Iceland won the Mon Projet Nordique/My Northern Project science popularisation competition at the Arctic Circle Assembly in Reykjavík in October 2025. Read about Caroline's experience at the Arctic Circle Assembly and her winning presentation [here](#).

In August 2026, Emma Cameron, a PhD student in Glaciology, [travelled to Greenland with the Polar Academy](#) as part of the partnership between the **University of St Andrews** Glaciology Group and the Polar Academy – a Scottish children's charity - to develop and trial a new suite of science experiments for future teams.

The **University of Stirling** has initiated a cross-faculty Stirling Arctic Research (StAR) Network which has secured the hosting of the next UK Arctic Science Meeting from 31 August to 2 September 2027. The conference is held every two years, and will be an important community gathering in the lead-up to the IPY-5 (2032/33).

In June 2026, **University of Strathclyde** staff and PhD students visited the University of Tokyo under a Royal Society International Exchanges grant. Read the blog about their trip by Bahareh Kamranzad [here](#).

The **UHI Institute for Northern Studies** is leading on pioneering Arctic islands research initiatives including an interdisciplinary symposium in September 2025 and PhD projects on nature-based tourism in Arctic and sub-Arctic islands and the historical relationships between Scotland's northern islands and the Arctic. Read about it [here](#) and watch the symposium recording [here](#).

Save the Date

The ScAN Annual Conference 2027 will take place in Aberdeen on
March 11 – 12, 2027

Acknowledgements

Our events and programmes during 2025-2026 were made possible through the generous support of UArctic, the Scottish Government's Europe Division within the Directorate for Culture and External Affairs, and the Scottish Government's Education Exchange Programme. The ScAN Steering Group extends its sincere thanks to all of our partners and collaborators whose commitment and support have been instrumental in advancing our activities and strengthening Scotland's engagement in the Arctic.

Contact details

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Website: <https://arctic.scot>