Global Health OFFICE

February 26, 2023

Re: Letter of Intent in support of UArctic Network Membership application
Global Health, McMaster University, Hamilton, Canada
Arctic Member, Higher Education Institution category

Dear UArctic International Secretariat & UArctic Assembly Members:

With great pleasure, and with the full support of our Global Health leadership (Andrea Baumann, Associate Vice-President, Global Health), we are applying to become an Arctic Member—within the Higher Education Institution type—of UArctic. Over the last 3 years we have been building and expanding our Arctic and Circumpolar Health initiatives within our Global Health Programs and Office, which has brought us to the appropriate timing to be applying to UArctic.

We already have established this growth through the initiation of various educational programs, students completing MSc and PhD theses in Arctic Health topics, and other collaborative initiatives. Specifically, in the winter and spring of 2021 we hosted an Arctic Webinar series with International guest speakers, through the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. Since 2022, we have also launched a graduate course at the Masters level (GLOBHTH 717), entitled *Circumpolar Health: A Global Health Perspective*. This course has been very well received within our programs and has even gained international interest, following a conference presentation given at the Nunamed conference in Nuuk, Greenland in October 2022. This course is largely made possible through guest speakers from around the Arctic, most of whom are part of existing UArctic-member institutions.

Our next objectives include expanding the number of students completing research projects, theses, and practicums in Arctic Health related topics and fields. To this end, future involvement in the UArctic north2north mobility program is one area we're exploring. We are also planning to create an Arctic Hub within Global Health, which will act as a go-to place for access to all projects, educational offerings and research related to Arctic and Circumpolar Health.

GLOBAL HEALTH OFFICE
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McMaster University

Global Health OFFICE

In terms of the specific value UArctic will provide, we are especially excited about the collaborative opportunities that will be afforded through Membership. These will be better facilitated and formalized as an active member, in various aspects of the UArctic organizational structure and educational offerings and activities. We are very much interested in exploring joint offerings, collaborations and exchanges with other UArctic members, in areas of both education and research. Our Arctic Coordinator, Alex Drossos, has already been informally involved with the UArctic Thematic Network on "Health and Well-being in the Arctic", as well as the Circumpolar Maternal and Child Health Working Group. As the current Past President of the Canadian Society for Circumpolar Health, Alex Drossos will also have a leadership role in the planning and execution of the next International Congress on Circumpolar Health, which will be held in Yellowknife, Canada in June 2024.

An Indigenous perspective and lens is also very important to our Arctic Health offerings, and for this we have established close relationships with Northern Indigenous partners, and we have also consulted with the Indigenous Health Learning Lodge, which has been recently established within the Faculty of Health Sciences at McMaster University.

It is also fitting that this year's Assembly will be held in Quebec City, Canada, where we look forward to presenting further details about our institutional application, including our future plans and initiatives. In the meantime, if you have any questions or concerns regarding our application, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely Yours,

Dr. Andrea Baumann
Associate Vice-President, Global Health

Dr. Alex Drossos
Arctic Coordinator, Global Health

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2023 UARCTIC MEMBERSHIP APPLICANT - PROFILE

Applicant: Global Health, McMaster University

Country: Canada

Membership Category: Arctic

Membership Type: Other Institution

Profile Description:

Global Health at McMaster University, in Hamilton, Canada consists of the Global Health Office and Global Health Programs. The programs include a specialization option in the undergraduate Bachelor of Health Sciences (BHSc) degree program, as well as graduate programs, inclusive of the course-based MSc, thesis program MSc and PhD. McMaster University is an institution that is global in impact. The role of the Global Health Office (GHO) is to support internationalization and enhance the visibility of the Faculty of Health Sciences worldwide.

Global health promotes equity in health and addresses current and future global health issues in innovative and multidisciplinary ways. Studying Global health means going beyond the study of individual diseases or health conditions to explore the complex underlying determinants that give rise to these challenges. Tackling global health issues, therefore, needs a strategy that is collaborative, and an academic experience that is interdisciplinary. Our award-winning international and transdisciplinary programs are designed to prepare graduates for careers in a globalized world.

More than a decade ago, McMaster recognized the need for an international curriculum that provides meaningful exchanges and real-world simulations to prepare future global health leaders. The result is the Global Health programs, created initially in partnership with Maastricht University in the Netherlands and that now involves seven universities from around the world.

Together with our growing network of global partners, we offer high quality education that supports the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Our internationalization strategy seeks to extend reach, dissolve borders, and create experiences that are unique, collaborative, and global. The program meets all of these criteria, preparing graduates for careers in a globalized world.

Strategic/Thematic Focus Areas:

Innovative multinational multilinguistic higher education offerings:
- Global health international policies
- Sexual and reproductive health
- Environmental health
- Partnerships with OneHealth in terms of transmission of disease
- Arctic & Circumpolar Health issues