

Year In Review

Thematic Network on Northern and Arctic Island Studies Research

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Advancing Collaborative Research on Arctic Island Futures

During the past twelve months, NAISR has focused on developing international collaborative research around the future of northern and Arctic island communities. During the coming year, NAISR aims to develop these collaborations into larger research proposals, publications and further opportunities for international knowledge exchange.

Key Activities: Strengthening International Connections and Comparative Research

- In February 2026, the network held the **Islands Matter OCEAN workshop in Shetland**, bringing together researchers, students, writers and community participants to explore fisheries, marine planning, renewable energy, youth engagement and the changing relationship between island communities and the sea.
- In June 2026, NAISR sponsored a session at the **Arctic Congress in the Faroe Islands** examining governance and autonomy in Indigenous and small-island jurisdictions across the circumpolar North.
- In September 2026, NAISR members also organised and contributed to the **Virtual Island Summit** research forum, "**Governance and autonomy in Northern and Arctic non-sovereign island societies**," extending these discussions to a global island audience.

Together, these activities have strengthened international connections and helped refine new comparative research questions.



OCEAN participants, Shetland, 2026.
Photo: Laurie Brinklow

Impact and Future Directions

- The **OCEAN workshop** moved NAISR's maritime research towards a more focused collaborative programme. Participants compared experience across northern island communities and examined practical questions concerning fisheries, marine planning, renewable energy, community ownership, youth participation and the future of island economies. The public webinar extended these discussions beyond the workshop and made them accessible to a wider audience.
- NAISR's participation in both the **Arctic Congress** and the **Virtual Island Summit** brought island perspectives on governance and autonomy into wider Arctic and global island discussions. The Virtual Island Summit forum compared the Faroe Islands, Shetland, the Isle of Man, Greenland and Prince Edward Island, examining how relationships with central states influence island decision-making and the economic, social and infrastructural choices involved in resilient and sustainable futures.
- The next stage will focus on turning these relationships and research questions into sustained collaborative projects, publications and funding applications, while creating further opportunities for emerging researchers and island communities to help shape the research agenda.

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