



UNIS

The University Centre in Svalbard

Research-based education of the next generation of Arctic experts



The University Centre in Svalbard

Strategic plan 2014 – 2020



UNIS is the world's northernmost institution for research and higher education, and seeks excellence in all its fields.

UNIS 2013

The University Centre in Svalbard was established in 1993. UNIS is organized as a limited company, owned by the Ministry of Education and Research. UNIS is led by a board, appointed by the ministry.

Nearly 500 students from 30 countries attended UNIS courses, and 25 master and 28 PhD students were supervised at UNIS in 2013. The research portfolio secure research-based education, and external funding amount to about 30 % of the total income. UNIS has a staff of 60 scientists and support personnel living and working in Longyearbyen. 27 adjunct professors and 120 guest lecturers and field instructors contributed to UNIS research and education.

UNIS owns parts of its premises and rents the rest from Statsbygg in the Svalbard Science Centre. UNIS owns 50 houses and flats in Longyearbyen to accommodate staff and their families

Mission

UNIS offers education and performs research based on Svalbard's location in the High Arctic and the advantages this represents.

UNIS is the Arctic extension of the Norwegian mainland universities. UNIS courses are supplementary to the curriculums on the mainland and are offered as part of the universities' course portfolios.

UNIS plays a major role in building an international research platform in Svalbard and in representing and securing Norwegian Arctic interests.

UNIS is a resource for the communities in Svalbard. Our competence is available and we contribute to a stable family society in Longyearbyen.

All education and research at UNIS satisfies the provisions of the Svalbard Environmental Act.

Basic strategies

UNIS seeks excellence in research and education. All education at UNIS is research-based.

UNIS offers highly specialized, field based courses at Bachelor, Master and PhD levels in Arctic biology, Arctic geology, Arctic geophysics and Arctic technology.

Half of our students should come from abroad. English is the official language.

UNIS has a scientific staff on campus cooperating with a network of adjunct professors and guest researchers from all over the world.

All operations at UNIS are risk assessed. Health, safety and environment are always given first priority.



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Core values

- Curiosity
- Competence
- Commitment
- Cooperation

Our working environment facilitates curiosity, competence, and commitment for science and education among individual employees. We cooperate interdisciplinary and across all levels to achieve our common goals. Together with competent colleagues and renowned scientists elsewhere we seek opportunities and create synergies within and between research, education and administration.

UNIS vision

Research-based education of the next generation of Arctic experts.

Overall goals

- By 2020 UNIS is recognized as the leading international center for research and education in High Arctic natural sciences and engineering.
- UNIS perform high quality science addressing issues of global interest.
- UNIS offer unique field- and research-based education, which increase awareness and interest in Arctic science and educates the arctic experts of tomorrow.

UNIS in the Arctic

- UNIS shall be a significant and integrated part of the Norwegian government's High North strategies.
- UNIS shall be a strategically important collaborator on arctic natural research and education.
- UNIS shall further develop the strategic partnership with the Norwegian universities.



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- UNIS shall utilize our local arctic expertise for an improved understanding of circumpolar processes.
- UNIS shall participate in the establishment of SIOS.
- UNIS shall be an active resource for the local communities – with its students, staff, competence and research.

Education

- UNIS shall be actively promoted and attract well qualified students from both Norway and abroad, thereby meeting the expectations by the Ministry of Education and Research.
- UNIS shall offer research and field based courses of high quality where students are actively involved, and gaining experiences and competence in the HSE and logistical aspects of working in Arctic environments
- UNIS shall ensure a synergistic cooperation with national and international institutions and universities through the use of guest lecturers.
- UNIS shall ensure a high standard learning environment by providing scientific and pedagogic competence and close follow-up of students. Using varied teaching forms and assessment methods to enhance learning.
- UNIS shall participate in a Centre of Excellence in Education.
- UNIS shall provide students with high quality education and research infrastructure. Field work will be performed with a minimum of environmental impact.
- UNIS shall be an active partner in the network of UArctic.
- UNIS shall have access to future-oriented infrastructure, especially in the form of ICT and library services which are a necessity for high quality in teaching and research. The learning environment shall support the academic content within courses and encourage independent student activities.
- The UNIS departments will collaborate closely with the Student Board, Student Welfare Organization in Tromsø (SiTø) and the local community to create a good learning environment.



Research

- UNIS will strengthen our leadership of large-scale Arctic research projects.
- UNIS shall seek to participate in Centres of Excellency and Centres of Research Based Innovation within relevant scientific fields.
- UNIS will focus on research topics that secure continuity and size of research departments, including all staff.
- UNIS will concentrate on research subjects that fully utilize our location in the High Arctic as our largest advantage, but working in a circumpolar context.
- UNIS research will provide knowledge of the changing arctic atmosphere, cryosphere, geosphere, ocean and ecosystems to meet the challenges and opportunities of the Arctic society.
- UNIS shall further develop interdisciplinary research on topics relevant to the changes and challenges in the Arctic.
- UNIS shall facilitate international scientific collaboration to strengthen the research departments.
- UNIS CO₂ Lab A/S -the scientific activity in the subsidiary company shall continue to explore CO₂ storage in the identified sand stone reservoir in Adventdalen.

Organization and leadership

UNIS will continue developing an efficient and professional organization focusing on offering education and conducting science according to the ambitions outlined above, supported by professional technical, logistical and administrative services.

Professional Leadership will be strengthened in the scientific departments and support divisions.

Human resources

- UNIS shall attract, develop, reward and retain staff of the highest international caliber.



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- People are UNIS' most important commodity, and the HR framework shall reflect this.
- UNIS shall develop a transparent and professional HR-system to ensure predictability and equality of treatment.
- Employees at UNIS shall be involved in internal processes to ensure a shared responsibility for, and ownership to goals and strategies.
- UNIS personnel shall have access to state-of-the-art tools and equipment.
- UNIS shall follow ethical standards that enables us to be a respected member of the international scientific community as well as public life.
- UNIS shall be a leading HSE organization.
- UNIS staff will be offered modern, attractive and subsidised flats and their families when working in Longyearbyen. The renting of the flats will be according to an equally based principle.

Infrastructure and material resources

- UNIS` infrastructure and materiel resources shall support the UNIS strategy on education and research.
- UNIS shall further strengthen its capital base through obtaining increased government funding for core activities and infrastructure, external funding for research, and by executing strict overall cost control regime.
- UNIS shall further develop the long term plan for renewal, maintenance and funding of buildings, equipment and instruments to secure the qualities of the unique, field based UNIS concept.



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- Building step three of the Science Centre shall be realized with improved facilities for UNIS core activities, cooperating projects and institutions.
- UNIS shall invest in modern IT systems for education, research and management.
- UNIS shall certify its field operations with special regard to safety and compliance with the environmental laws.
- UNIS shall take part in development of and have access to the best research infrastructure on Svalbard and in the Arctic through cooperation with partner institutions. Access to SIOS international research infrastructure.
- UNIS shall cooperate with local government, businesses and community for efficient and mutually beneficial use of material resources.
- Services outside of UNIS' core activity shall be offered when there is capacity and on a commercial basis.
- The premises, flats and houses of UNIS will be organized and operated through a UNIS Housing subsidiary company.