

Briefing Note

Future Arctic Societies: Scenarios, Innovations, Best Practices & Actors

2019 Calotte Academy

Gerald Zojer

The Idea of the Calotte Academy

The Calotte Academy (CA) is, on the one hand, an annual travelling symposium in Europe's Arctic, North Calotte region and, on the other, an international, independent, academic forum in the Arctic. It is designed first, to promote interdisciplinary discourse and second, to foster academic and policy-oriented dialogue among members of the research community, as well as a wide range of other northern stakeholders, such as policy-makers, civil servants, community leaders and planners, business representatives, and members of academia. On the other hand, it is an international summer school (and in 2019 a winter school) for early-career scientists, particularly PhD candidates and post-docs with an aim to implement the interplay between senior and young researchers, and post-graduate students.

The CA is an independent, though not established, academic forum with dozens of scientific presentations, lively discussions, and written reports. We also do interdisciplinary border studies by having several crossings of national borders (this year only the Finnish-Norwegian, while usually also Norwegian-Russian, Russian-Finnish, and sometimes Finnish-Swedish and Norwegian-Swedish), as well as crossing borders between Finland and the Sámi Area, Sápmi in Finland and Norway.

The Academy has been arranged annually since 1991 with an aim to bring together academics and other experts, policy-shapers and other stakeholders from different Arctic and European states, as well as students and scholars with different academic backgrounds and in different stages of their academic careers. The Academy has a participatory approach with sessions in several destinations with local audiences and expertise. Furthermore, it aims to contribute to discussions and debates over regional development through inviting local and regional stakeholders to participate in the sessions with the intention of sharing research results and insights, creating networks and fostering dialogue between the local and national actors and the international scientific community.

At the Calotte Academy we are used to combining a few things, such as research/theory and practice/action; different studies/inter-disciplinarity and different knowledges (trans-disciplinarity); research, supervision and studying/teaching; presentation, participation, interactivity; brainstorming, planning, sharing ideas, having division of work; different scales from local to global; and final, synergy between international networks (e.g. Northern Research Forum, TN on Geopolitics and Security, Arctic Yearbook).

Following from this, in each session of the Academy the annual overarching theme is discussed holistically from many angles and disciplinary approaches, and from the perspectives of past(s), present(s) and future(s), as well as from global, Arctic and local context in the European Arctic. This principle has been implemented at recent Calotte Academies and will be implemented in future events. In addition, the overarching themes of five of the previous Calotte Academies were much related to resources:

- May 28 – June 4, 2012 in Kiruna and Abisko, Sweden, Tromsø, Norway and Inari, Finland under the theme “Water – globally and in North Calotte;”
- May 16-23, 2013 in Rovaniemi and Inari, Finland, Tromsø, Norway and Kiruna, Sweden under the theme “Resource Geopolitics – Energy Security;”
- June 1-8, 2014 in Rovaniemi and Inari, Finland, Kirkenes, Norway, and Murmansk and Apatity, Russia under the theme “Resource Geopolitics – Sovereignty;”
- May 31-June 7, 2015 in Rovaniemi, Salla and Inari, Finland, in Kirkenes, Norway, and in Murmansk and Apatity, Russia under the theme “Resources and Security in the Globalized Arctic;”
- May 30 - June 5, 2016 in Rovaniemi and Inari, Finland, in Kirkenes, Norway, and in Murmansk, Russia under the theme “Resilience related to Sustainable Development in Globalization.”

Then the most recent Academies started to bring in a new thematic phase emphasizing discourses, premises, paradigms and methods:

- June 1–12, 2017 in Inari, Finland, Kirkenes, Norway, Apatity, Russia, and Umea, Sweden under the theme “Perceptions of the Arctic: Rich or Scarce, Mass-scale or Traditional, Conflict or Cooperation?”
- and June 3–10, 2018 in Rovaniemi and Inari, Finland, Neiden and Kirkenes, Norway, and in Apatity and Kirovsk, Russia under the theme “Discourses on the Arctic – (inter)disciplinary theories and methods of Arctic research.”

This path was continued with the 2019 Academy under the theme “Future Arctic Societies: Scenarios, Innovations, Best Practices & Actors” (for the final reports of previous Calotte Academies visit: <https://calotte-academy.com/final-reports>).

Correspondingly, the CA has a few rules and principles: First, and foremost, that there is always time for open discussion – usually this means about two times more time for open discussion than for a presentation. Second, that each participant, in addition of her/his presentation, is asked to write a report on one session for the final report of the Academy, and actively participate in discussions. Finally, each participant is asked to be flexible, as are the organizers, but keep the time frame and schedule in sessions and in travelling.

Thus, the Calotte Academy implements the social relevance of science, or science diplomacy, by having the interplay between science and politics as one of the main aims. This has been there since the first Calotte Academy, which took place in May 1991 in Inari, Finland; of note is that the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS) was signed at the first ministerial meeting between the eight Arctic states in June 1991 in Rovaniemi, Finland, and the Arctic Council was established in September 1996 in Ottawa, Canada. During its (more than) 25 first years the Academy has built partnerships between researchers and community members, and conducted community-based research as well as developed research models for communities.

As an international platform for policy-oriented dialogue and dissemination of research with an emphasis on both expertise and dialogue the Calotte Academy is a post-modern academic stage and workshop that fosters interdisciplinary, knowledge(s), and dialogue-building, and implements the interplay between science and politics. Since 2002 the Academy has served as a sub-forum for Open Assemblies of the Northern Research Forum. Since 2010 the CA has acted an annual doctoral summer school for PhD candidates and functioned as the main annual forum for the discussions and research planning of the Thematic Network (TN) on Geopolitics and Security. The TN is a joint international, academic network between the University of the Arctic and the Northern Research Forum (see, <https://arcticpolitics.com>). The Network also publishes The Arctic Yearbook - the 8th volume devoted to the “Redefining Arctic Security” was launched in November 2019 – via which a state of Arctic geopolitics and security is documented, analyzed and contributed to (see, <https://arcticyearbook.com>). Here the Arctic Yearbook is a major forum for dissemination of the main findings and highlights of the Calotte Academy, as well as further discussion on the themes.

To conclude, the Calotte Academy is an interdisciplinary brainstorming meeting to bring researchers and other experts from different fields, regions and countries together for to discover innovations and new methods, and produce international research projects as well as plans and applications. This kind of a “school of dialogue” with serious efforts and flexibility aims to create an open academic discussion, and participatory by nature with an idea to share knowledge and experiences with communities. Behind is a need for science and the scientific community to take seriously, and literally the social relevance of science, and that science is with values, and this means more than labs - science is about people(s), societies and the environment. Briefly saying to ‘take care’ - instead of having corrupted norms of double standards, or the current schizophrenic approach of neoliberalism supported by specific expertise and meritocracy - is possible to interpret as a new norm with values. In these turbulent times for Academia, as it is in many European

countries due to several pressures and cuts in funding, this kind of academic forum is a much needed democratic and equal space for a dialogue and brainstorming.

Theme of the 2019 Calotte Academy

The theme of the 2019 Academy was “Future Arctic Societies: Scenarios, Innovations, Best Practices, Drivers & Actors”. In this year the travelling symposium discussed Arctic issues and discourses in the context of the regional and globalized Arctic theoretically and holistically from many scientific and knowledge angles and multi/inter-disciplinary approaches, from academic and policy-oriented ones, including exploitation, transportation, tourism, infrastructure and technologies, industries, film-making, as well as telecommunications and digitalisation. This was done from the perspectives of past(s), present(s) and in particular future(s), and from global, international, Arctic and local contexts in the European Arctic, as well as from points of view of different stakeholders from Indigenous peoples to business. What are their ecological and socio-economic impacts, and what kind of ‘new sustainable economies’ would be needed/foreseen? Finally, who are the involved actors, and what are their interests, and how do they take into consideration ‘societal security’, and how do they help to develop pathways to plausible sustainable futures?

The focus of the 2019 Academy was inspired by the substantial, multidimensional and multi-theoretical discussions and debates on perceptions of, and discourses on, the Arctic and Arctic politics in the previous (e.g. 2017 and 2018) Academies’ sessions (see, Final Reports at <https://calotte-academy.com>). This was continued by having the main focus on ‘societal security’ and what kind of Arctic societies, as well as scenarios, innovations, best practices for them, there could/should be in the future.



Figure 1: Visit to Skolt Sámi museum. (Photo by Adam Kočí)



Figure 2: Visit to Juhls Silver gallery (Photo by Clemens Jöbstl)

Organisers, Sponsors & Partners

