

Canada's contribution will include:

- increased support to the overall work of the Arctic Council;
- financial and institutional support to Permanent Participants of the Arctic Council;
- leveraged/partnered funding for specific Working Group activities, flowing from the 1998 Iqaluit Declaration endorsed at the Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting, including further development of the Children and Youth initiative; and
- support for a capacity-building focus in the Arctic Council.

Establishing a University of the Arctic and a Canadian and Circumpolar Policy Research Network

Canada has been a consistent proponent of the development of a circumpolar University of the Arctic, which would help to build on northern (including Indigenous) knowledge and develop northern capacity to manage the challenges of the Arctic region in the decades to come. Such a concept would also integrate advances in distance education, where Canadian experience is substantial.

A complementary focus, both through the University of the Arctic and through existing institutional capacity, is the strengthening of an Arctic policy research network that links Canadian experts more effectively with each other, and with experts across the circumpolar world, again taking advantage of new communication and information technologies. This connected expertise should not only benefit basic research and knowledge, but should also be encouraged to contribute directly to the work of the Arctic Council through policy-relevant analysis.

Existing expertise resides in many Canadian locations: academic institutions such as the Universities of Calgary, Alberta, Manitoba and Northern British Columbia, and Yukon and Arctic Colleges; agencies and NGOs such as the Canadian Polar Commission, the Canadian Arctic Resources Committee and the Inuit Circumpolar Conference (Canada). There are many scientists and policy experts at the federal, provincial and territorial levels. Private-sector firms that have operations in the North employ experts across a range of fields. Many of these experts have their own linkages with like-minded experts within Canada and across the circumpolar world. However, many of them face chronic under-funding and/or poor connectedness to policy-making bodies. These issues must be addressed if Canada is to play a serious role in circumpolar affairs.