

## **Nunavik Takes Important Step Towards Self-Determination in Research Governance**

***Following years of planning and regional consultations, Nunavik organizations approve the establishment of a new research governance entity for the region***

Kuujjuaq, July 5

With the official support of organizations involved in research in Nunavik and the Nunavik Marine Region, Nunavik officially entered the establishment phase for its new research approval and oversight organization. This entity will respond to the critical need of Nunavik communities and organizations to play a more meaningful role in research governance and management.

Over the past several decades there has been an increasing amount of research in Nunavik, led primarily from outside the region, which has strained local resources and capacity. In response to this, the new research governance entity will allow Nunavik organizations and communities to improve communications, build capacity and integrate, streamline, and centralize research management and governance. This will help ensure research of all fields truly serves the well-being, knowledge enhancement, and social, political, and economic pursuits of Nunavimmiut and better reflects Nunavik's priorities, needs, values and knowledge.

*"Over the years Nunavik has been the location of numerous research projects, without sufficient sustained and tangible benefits for our people. It became clear that it was time to establish a Made-in-Nunavik organization that would act as both an entry point and a catalyst for positive impacts of research projects in the region,"* said Makivik Vice President of Department of Environment, Wildlife and Research, Adamie Delisle Alaku.

*"I'm proud of the work that has been carried out by the steering committee as well as the numerous people who shared their experiences and impressions throughout the planning process towards making this organization a reality. Ensuring that research projects follow Nunavik Inuit's priorities, needs, values, and knowledge will benefit Nunavimmiut, our communities and the entire research community."*

Aleashia Echalook, Start-up Director of the new organization: *"Nunavimmiut have stated loud and clear the desire to become self-determining when it comes to research. This new organization will help make this a reality. This new organization will ensure that Inuit will be the decision-makers for research about us and our land, that research will be more informed by our Inuit culture and values, and that our traditional knowledge will be more recognized and used. I also hope to see more and more Inuit becoming researchers, so we are asking questions and seeking answers that will improve our society, and working in true partnership with southern-based researchers."*

This initiative is guided by a Steering Committee composed of representatives from seven regional organizations – Makivik Corporation, the Kativik Regional Government, the Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services, Kativik Ilisarniliriniq, the

Kativik Municipal Housing Bureau, the Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board, and Avataq Cultural Institute – as well as the Inuit Research Advisor for Nunavik.

The new research governance organization is expected to start its activities in 2024. The next two years will be spent on establishing it and getting ready for its operational phase. The establishment phase will be supervised by the Steering Committee and supported by the Start-up Director, Aleashia Echalook. Work to decide on a meaningful Inuktitut name for the new organization is already underway. More public communications will come as participation and support are sought and staff are recruited. Until this new organization is operational, researchers should continue to follow the various processes currently in place.

*Background:*

Nunavik is the only region in Inuit Nunangat without a centralized research review and approval process. Over the last two years, the Steering Committee oversaw the development of an Integrated Plan for the establishment and operations of a new research management organization for Nunavik. The Plan, informed by interviews with more than 70 people – primarily with key individuals in Nunavik leadership and Nunavik regional and community organizations – was approved by the Steering Committee in February 2022 and has now been approved and endorsed by twelve organizations in the region.

Pursuant to the Integrated Plan, the new research governance organization will achieve its objectives by fulfilling several responsibilities once it is established: In addition to approving and overseeing research through regional and community review committees, its Secretariat will identify, gather, and communicate research priorities; manage and communicate research information; support community research needs; and support researchers.

For questions, please contact the project team directly at [info@nunavikresearch.ca](mailto:info@nunavikresearch.ca). Further information, including the associated reports, can be found at [www.nunavikresearch.ca](http://www.nunavikresearch.ca).