



ARENA 2022

Arctic Remote Energy Networks Academy

ARENA UPDATE AND DELIVERY OF ON-SITE SESSIONS IN 2022

October 25, 2021

The Arctic Remote Energy Networks Academy (ARENA) was approved for a second cohort by the Sustainable Development Working Group in September 2019. The project is co-led by Canada, Gwich'in Council International, Iceland, Russia, and the United States, and aims to bring participants from the circumpolar Arctic together for learning, knowledge sharing, mentorship, and community site visits to build energy projects in their own communities and regions.

COVID-19 disrupted plans in ways we would never have imagined when we opened recruitment for ARENA 2020 two years ago. It continues to have an impact around the world, on lives, communities, economies, and programming, and our hearts and thoughts are with those lost and changed through the pandemic. Responding to COVID-19 exposed gaps, needs, challenges, and also strengths, and highlighted that there must be expertise seeded in communities to advance change, adaptation, and innovation. We postponed ARENA from initial delivery in 2020, but believe the program is needed now more than ever to provide training, opportunities, and networks to transition remote Arctic communities off diesel and to reliable, sustainable alternatives.

The health and well-being of people and communities in the Arctic is paramount, and with increasing uptake in vaccinations, we are planning to host on-site sessions in 2022: Nunavut in May; Fairbanks and Kodiak Alaska in July; and Iceland in October. We are working diligently to identify the right safety measures and protocols, and will monitor and plan in the coming months how to move forward safely, mitigating COVID-19 risks for cohort members and the communities we hope to visit.

All of the 2020 Cohort members have been offered spots for the 2022 delivery, but we recognize that circumstances have changed. We are re-opening the recruitment and application process to **November 26, 2021** and seeking candidates who are living in the circumpolar Arctic, passionate about energy, and wanting to advance their community or region's project, to apply now. The current cohort includes individuals from the United States, Canada, Russia, and Greenland, and half of the cohort identifies as Indigenous. We encourage diverse applicants.

All project co-leads remain committed to the program and delivering the in-person networking, mentoring, and community site visits which are integral to its success. We will monitor the situation and remain in communication with the incredible cohort of ARENA participants and project partners.

We thank everyone for your patience and support. Please reach out if you have questions, concerns, or want to apply: www.arena.alaska.edu or via email at uaf-arena@alaska.edu.

Mahsi', thank you.

Project leads:

