



HARVARD Kennedy School  
**BELFER CENTER**  
for Science and International Affairs



# Arctic Initiative

2024–2025 Year in Review

**The Belfer Center for Science  
and International Affairs**

# Arctic Initiative

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The Arctic Initiative would like to thank the partners and advisors who make our work possible. We are grateful to the Arctic Athabaskan Council, the Arctic Mayors' Forum, the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme, the Fridtjof Nansen Institute, the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, the High North Center at Nord University, the International Centre for Reindeer Husbandry, the Ocean Foundation, the Salata Institute for Climate and Sustainability, the Serendipity Foundation, the TED Audacious Project, the Trust for Mutual Understanding, and the University of the Arctic for their support of our work during 2024-2025.



Top: Members of the Arctic Initiative at Arctic Circle Assembly 2025 in Iceland. From left to right: Elizabeth Hanlon, Alexandra Middleton, Bhuvan Ravindran, Katharina Heinrich, David Balton, Jennifer Spence, John Holdren, Henry Lee, Margaret Williams, Ríkey Hauksdóttir, and Justin Barnes. Present but not pictured: Halla Hrund Logadóttir and Sappho Gilbert.

Dear colleagues,

The Arctic captured the world's attention this year. Headlines have been dramatic. Geopolitics have shifted. Climate impacts continue to accelerate. Through it all, we have remained focused on bringing evidence, thoughtful analysis, and steady engagement to complex conversations.

This has been another full and productive period for the Arctic Initiative. From clarifying debates about Greenland's strategic significance and China's presence in the region, to advancing discussions on the governance of Arctic climate interventions and supporting community-led conversations on permafrost thaw and public health, our team has worked to inject nuance and substance into issues that risk drifting into simplified rhetoric. We strengthened dialogue on Arctic Ocean governance, examined civil-society ties across the Bering Strait despite geopolitical strain, and continued to expand our presence at key international fora.

What stands out most, however, is the strength and maturity of the Initiative itself. As we approach a decade of work, our growing network of fellows, affiliates, advisors, students, and partners continues to deepen the quality of our analysis and the reach of our collaborations. And none of what we do would be possible without our amazing staff, who go above and beyond every day.

None of this happens in isolation. The relationships that we have forged remain the foundation of our efforts. In a period marked by instability and uncertainty, this community has remained dedicated, engaged, and focused on impact. The Initiative continues to grow not only in scope, but in depth and presence. Reflecting that evolution, this report spans September 2024 through December 2025 as we adjust to a calendar-year format.

As the Arctic continues to evolve, so too will our efforts to contribute careful scholarship and practical insights.

With appreciation,

John P. Holdren  
Co-Chair

Henry Lee  
Co-Chair

Jennifer Spence  
Director

# Our Mission

The Arctic has become a crucible in which the fast-warming climate is generating cascading impacts both within and beyond the region. It is compounding economic and social challenges facing the region's economies and Indigenous and local cultures. And it is complicating governance within and among Arctic nations, as well as relations among Arctic-interested countries more widely.

Launched in 2017, the Belfer Center's Arctic Initiative seeks to contribute to the interdisciplinary, multidimensional, collaborative analysis and responsive actions that this complex of problems and opportunities requires. Our team of faculty, fellows, and staff works closely with officials and experts across the circumpolar region to advance understanding and action in five focus areas: enhancing community resilience in a changing Arctic, developing responses to the local and global impacts of permafrost thaw, addressing issues in Arctic Ocean management, charting a course for effective regional governance and science diplomacy, and training the next generation of Arctic leaders.

## OUR TOOLBOX

Our work on these themes has multiple, interlocking facets. We:

- **Convene diverse experts, knowledge-holders, and decisionmakers** to deepen our understanding of the opportunities and challenges facing the Arctic and the actions needed to respond
- **Identify and help close gaps** in scientific, technical, and socioeconomic knowledge relevant to developing and implementing effective policies
- **Make accessible and elevate the best available insights** from cutting-edge scientific research, Indigenous knowledge, and policy analysis about the opportunities and challenges shaping the Arctic and potential solutions for addressing them
- **Communicate those insights to inform decisionmakers** in a position to act on them through workshops, convenings, and publications
- **Contribute to training an expanding community** of interdisciplinary, solutions-oriented Arctic leaders
- **Build meaningful collaborations** among Arctic Indigenous communities, researchers, and policymakers



Eric Paglia (left), of KTH Royal Institute of Technology, interviewed Jennifer Spence (center) and Rolf Rødven, of the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme, about the future trajectory of the Arctic Council at Arctic Frontiers 2025.

# 2024-2025 Highlights

**33**

media features showcasing  
our experts in broadcast, print,  
& digital outlets

**42**

publications, including  
academic articles, policy briefs,  
white papers, & commentaries

**24,000+**

pageviews across three  
most-viewed publications

David Balton  
named Senior  
Fellow

**1,800**  
new LinkedIn  
followers

**90+**

events,  
including  
seminars,  
workshops,  
& conference  
panels

Sherri  
Goodman  
named  
Senior  
Associate



Fran Ulmer moderated an April 2025 talk with H.E. Jesper Møller Sørensen, Ambassador of Denmark to the United States, on the Kingdom of Denmark's perspective on global defense and security.

# Going Beyond Simple Narratives About Arctic Geopolitics and Governance

The Arctic has not escaped the pull of global security transitions, including shifting alliances and new forms of confrontation. The long-held notion of “Arctic exceptionalism,” which imagined the region as insulated from broader geopolitical tensions, has come under increasing strain.

Popular coverage of Arctic geopolitics often simplifies complex dynamics, favoring sensationalist narratives of competition and confrontation. This year, our team strove to inject nuance and regional and technical expertise into conversations about the Arctic's future, through new research, high-level workshops, and extensive engagement with the media.

Our team took part in the Arctic Security Conference hosted by the Fridtjof Nansen Institute (FNI) in September 2025, and co-hosted, with FNI, a subsequent workshop at Harvard Kennedy School in October 2025. Both workshops brought together security and foreign policy experts with Arctic specialists to explore how global dynamics are shaping Arctic security futures. A report summarizing the October workshop is forthcoming.

## TURNING DOWN THE TEMPERATURE ON GREENLAND

Throughout 2025, President Donald Trump repeatedly reiterated his interest in acquiring Greenland, straining relations with the Kingdom of Denmark and other NATO allies.

Members of our team, including Jennifer Spence, Hans Peder Kirkegaard, Sherri Goodman, and Andreas Østhagen, spoke extensively with the press to contextualize the Trump administration's claims, emphasizing that U.S. annexation of Greenland is counterproductive to safeguarding U.S. national security and countering the influence of China and Russia in the Arctic. An article



Jennifer Spence presents at the Arctic Security Conference in Oslo in September 2025.

explaining Greenland’s strategic importance and Greenlanders’ right to self-determination, written by Jennifer Spence and Elizabeth Hanlon, was the most-read publication on the Belfer Center’s website in 2025.

In April 2025, we hosted H.E. Jesper Møller Sørensen, Ambassador of Denmark to the United States, on the Kingdom of Denmark’s perspective on global defense and security. The ambassador emphasized to an audience of Kennedy School students the long history of friendship between Denmark and the United States, as well as the role diplomacy has played and continues to play in fostering cooperation among Arctic nations.

## DEMYSTIFYING CHINA’S ARCTIC ENGAGEMENT

With concern swirling around China’s stated Arctic ambitions and growing presence in the region, our team produced multiple studies designed to facilitate informed debate and decision-making among Arctic policymakers when they are deciding how to engage with China.

In June 2025, Visiting Researcher Anders Christoffer Edstrøm, Predoctoral Research Fellow Guðbjörg Ríkey Th. Hauksdóttir, and Trent University’s Whitney Lackenbauer published “Cutting Through Narratives on Chinese Arctic Investments,” which catalogued China’s investment

## Welcoming Sherri Goodman

Sherri Goodman, former U.S. Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Environmental Security, joined our team as a Senior Associate in September 2025. Goodman is the Secretary General of the International Military Council on Climate and Security, a board director at the Atlantic Council, and a distinguished fellow with the Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security. She will support the Initiative’s work on assessing changing geopolitical dynamics in the Arctic and strengthening regional stability and resilience.



Initiative Co-Chair Henry Lee discussed China’s Arctic relations at Arctic Circle Assembly 2025.

interests in the Arctic region from 2007-2025. Their report found only a small proportion of proposed Chinese investments have fully materialized, contradicting the Trump administration’s claim that Denmark has failed to protect Greenland from Chinese encroachment. The report was cited in the 2025 Annual Report to Congress by the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission and mentioned in *Foreign Affairs*, *Arctic Today*, *South China Morning Post*, among other media.

Hauksdóttir published two additional articles in *Polar Geography* and *The Polar Journal* interrogating Sino-Russian cooperation in the Arctic. Her research contributes to a growing body of research on “friction points” in the Sino-Russian relationship.



Goodman, second from left, on the set of the television show *Compass Points*, from PBS.



Allison Agsten, Edward Alexander (Woodwell Climate Research Center), John Holdren, and Sue Natali (Woodwell) spoke at “Beyond the Ice” at the Explorers Club during New York Climate Week 2024.

## Integrating Arctic Change into Mainstream Climate Conversations

Over the last year and a half, our team continued to inform international and national publics and policymakers about the relevance of permafrost emissions to the pace of global climate change and the societal emissions consistent with internationally agreed temperature targets. Our team engaged stakeholders and policymakers through a wide variety of events, workshops, and publications. We also continued to advise local and regional stakeholders on local permafrost impacts and adaptation and response planning (for more on this work, see pp. 8-9).

As part of work with Permafrost Pathways, a joint initiative with Woodwell Climate Research Center funded by the TED Audacious Project, we continued to elevate the latest permafrost science and its implications for global mitigation policy at international climate- and Arctic-focused events. At the 2024 Arctic Circle Assembly, Initiative Co-Chair John Holdren joined experts from the Wilson Center, Sandia National Laboratories, Woodwell Climate Research Center, and the Norwegian Chairship of the Arctic Council to share recommendations from a white paper on the

implications of Arctic methane emissions for global mitigation targets. At the 2025 Assembly, Holdren and Director Jennifer Spence joined members of the Permafrost Pathways team for a session on what permafrost emissions trends meant for the negotiations at COP30.

Members of the Arctic Initiative took part in conversations at Climate Week NYC 2024 and 2025, with the aim of integrating Arctic issues, including permafrost thaw, wildfires, and the loss of sea and land ice, into the broader climate conversations



Sue Natali (Woodwell Climate Research Center), Edward Alexander (Woodwell), Rolf Rødven (Arctic Mapping and Assessment Programme), John Holdren, and Jennifer Spence at Arctic Circle Assembly 2025.

taking place during those weeks. In 2024, the Arctic Initiative, in collaboration with the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation and Woodwell Climate Research Center, co-hosted “Beyond the Ice: The Worldwide Impacts of Arctic Extremes.” Together with the same partners, we organized a 2025 session on strengthening Arctic communities and ecosystems against rapid environmental transformations, which was followed by breakout sessions to explore practical solutions.

## FOSTERING RESPONSIBLE, INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE OF ARCTIC CLIMATE INTERVENTIONS

As the Arctic warms 3-4 times faster than the global average, there is growing interest in climate intervention technologies that could help slow or reverse the dramatic changes underway in the region. The remarkable track record of international collaboration in the Arctic suggests that the region could pioneer a governance framework for climate interventions, but current geopolitical tensions could hamper efforts to do so. In addition, Arctic Indigenous Peoples are not yet meaningfully included in shaping climate intervention discourses or governance.

In April 2025, the Arctic Initiative convened Indigenous leaders, technical experts, academics, policymakers, and legal scholars to address the governance of Arctic climate interventions. The workshop’s aim was to support efforts to move beyond polarizing positions on climate intervention technologies and create space for open, constructive dialogue.

A workshop report, published in August 2025, summarizes the discussions and lays out priority areas for further exploration and cooperation. Our climate intervention research has been highlighted at the Resources for the Future-Harvard Solar Radiation Management Social Science Research Workshop in Washington, D.C. This line of research is part of our broader goal to strategically target emerging technological developments that could shift regional security dynamics.



ELIZABETH HANLON



Participants pose for a group photo during a two-day workshop on the governance of Arctic climate interventions hosted by the Arctic Initiative at the Harvard Kennedy School in late April 2025.

ELIZABETH HANLON



A February 2025 webinar moderated by Senior Fellow Margaret Williams on the implications of Greenland’s melting ice sheet, co-organized with the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and Rethink Energy Florida, drew nearly 400 attendees.



Leaders from fourteen communities in the Northwest Territories took part in the Arctic Initiative's "Community Voices on Permafrost Thaw" workshop in Yellowknife, CA, in December 2025.

## Supporting Resilient Arctic Communities

Arctic communities have been responding to climatic, environmental, economic, political, social, and technological changes for decades. In 2025, we continued our efforts to identify adaptation strategies and develop toolkits guided by Arctic residents' priorities and needs. We also expanded our research on the health impacts of Arctic climate change.

### EXPANDING ARCTIC COMMUNITIES' TOOLKITS

As part of our work with Permafrost Pathways, a joint initiative with Woodwell Climate Research Center, we hosted a December 2025 workshop that brought together leaders from fourteen communities across the Northwest Territories, Canada, along with government representatives, permafrost scientists, and other industry experts to discuss the challenges these communities face as a result of rapid warming in the region. Participants shared observations on how the land has changed over time, along with lessons from how their communities have responded and adapted to emergencies such as wildfires, floods,

and permafrost thaw, all of which can affect water security, infrastructure stability, and cultural continuity.

Together with our workshop co-organizers at Woodwell Climate Research Center, the Arctic Athabaskan Council, and the Arctic Mayors' Forum, we are working to distill the insights from the discussions into a community-driven action plan to address the ramifications of these climate impacts.

A session at Arctic Circle Assembly in October 2025 highlighted progress on "What It Means to Be Resilient: Lessons from the Arctic," a joint book project with Nord University, the World Reindeer Herders Association, and the UArctic Thematic Network on Local-Scale Planning, Climate Change and Resilience. The session explored how Arctic communities, governments, and organizations are implementing measures designed to anticipate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from adverse situations and events. Research Fellow Justin Barnes debuted the project's first StoryMaps, which are designed to highlight resilient-related initiatives documented in the book for a non-academic audience.



KARIN VANDER SCHAAP

Jennifer Spence, Tessa Varvares, Stuart Harris, Aruni Ranaweera, Ed Alexander, and John Holdren discussed the environmental health challenges associated with permafrost thaw during an April 2025 seminar.

## SPOTLIGHTING AN OVERLOOKED PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS IN ALASKA

Permafrost thaw in Alaska is more than an environmental or infrastructure crisis: it is a rapidly escalating public health disaster affecting more than two hundred thousand Alaskans. Rapid thawing of permafrost is disrupting access to clean water, sanitation resources, and basic health infrastructure.

In April 2025, Research Assistant Aruni Ranaweera and Senior Program Coordinator Tessa Varvares published a new Permafrost Pathways policy brief on the health impacts of permafrost thaw in Alaska. The brief identifies strategic investments that the U.S. federal government, Alaska state agencies, Tribal governments, and other community-based entities can make to enable those affected by

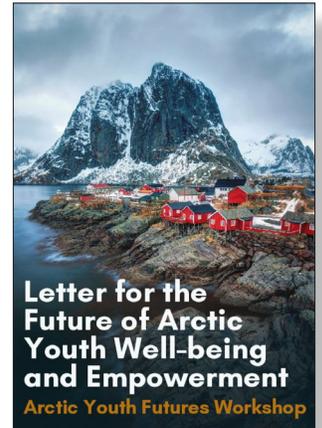


A screenshot of a StoryMap from “What It Means to Be Resilient.”

permafrost thaw to adapt and build resilience to public health disruptions. Their research was highlighted at the Harvard Climate Connect Symposium and Arctic Circle Assembly.

## EMPOWERING ARCTIC YOUTH

As part of our commitment to training the next generation of solutions-oriented Arctic leaders, Director Jennifer Spence and Research Fellow Sappho Gilbert helped facilitate an Arctic Youth Futures Workshop in October 2025. The participatory exercise brought together fourteen Arctic youth to imagine what Arctic youth wellbeing and empowerment will look like in 2050 and generate practical strategies for achieving change. Held in Reykjavík, Iceland, the workshop was co-organized with the Arctic Mayors’ Forum, the Fulbright Arctic Initiative, and the HeART Lab at Canada’s Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. At the end of the two-day workshop, participants prepared a “Letter from the Future” imagining life in the Arctic in 2050. The letter was presented to senior Arctic policymakers at Arctic Circle Assembly.



LUKE APISA

Runners from the North Pole Marathon Group were supported by Dr. Luke Apisa and the Mass General Brigham’s Division of Space, Ecological, Arctic and Resource-Limited Medicine team in July 2025. Jennifer Spence also took part in the voyage as an onboard educator.



The Arctic Initiative convened a group of 30 experts for a workshop on Arctic Ocean governance in November 2025.

## Advancing Science Diplomacy and Research Collaboration in the Arctic Ocean and Bering Strait

The Arctic Ocean and surrounding seas face multiple, compounding stressors: rising temperatures, resource development, pollution, biodiversity loss, and gaps in governance. These areas are changing rapidly and remain poorly understood, presenting both risks and opportunities. At the same time, the cooperation mechanisms that maintained stability in the region after the Cold War can no longer be relied upon.

As environmental and geopolitical pressures mount in the Arctic, our team is drawing on our expertise in science, governance, and diplomacy to develop and foster new governance tools to meet this moment.

### EXPLORING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ARCTIC MARINE CONSERVATION

A triple crisis—climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss—is taking a toll on both nature and people in the Arctic. Governments are recognizing the need for action, as reflected in the acceptance of the Global Biodiversity Framework, the entry into force of the Central Arctic Ocean Fisheries Agreement, and the ratification of the Agreement on

Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ). This year, we explored strategies for advancing marine conservation and climate objectives in the Arctic and developed recommendations for policymakers and practitioners.

In January 2025, the Arctic Initiative, World Wildlife Fund (WWF)'s Global Arctic Program, and the Norwegian Center for Law of the Sea of the UiT the Arctic University of Norway co-hosted a side event on the BBNJ Agreement at the Arctic Frontiers 2025 conference in Tromsø, Norway. The session aimed to raise awareness among Arctic experts of the treaty's importance to the Arctic Ocean, as well as how the Arctic states, the private sector, and civil society could support the treaty's ratification and implementation.

In November 2025, we built on these efforts by convening a high-level workshop on Arctic Ocean governance, organized in partnership with the Aleut International Association, Ocean Conservancy, Oceans North, Pacific Environment, and WWF's Global Arctic Program, with the aim of identifying strategies to strengthen coordination of conservation actions within an increasingly complex legal and geopolitical landscape. Led



Margaret Williams (second from right) organized a panel at Arctic Frontiers 2025 to raise awareness of the BBNJ Agreement's relevance for the Arctic.

by Senior Fellows Margaret Williams and David Balton, the workshop brought together over 30 experts, whose insights are featured in forthcoming recommendations for policymakers and a blueprint for practitioners on Arctic Ocean governance published by the Arctic Initiative. Both reports will be presented in May 2026 at the Oceans Connectivity Conference organized by the Kingdom of Denmark's Chairship of the Arctic Council in partnership with UArctic.

## PRESERVING CIVIL SOCIETY TIES

With the U.S. and Russian governments still unable to communicate in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, this year we continued our work to

preserve valuable relationships between scientists, conservation organizations, and Indigenous peoples' groups on both sides of the Bering Strait—ties that have facilitated the protection of shared species and ecosystems and the documentation of climate change in the high latitudes.

In December 2024, we convened a group of experts with experience working in the Bering Strait region to analyze the potential for track 2 cooperation in the Strait in light of shifting geopolitics and the (then-incoming) Trump administration. The workshop report, co-authored by Margaret Williams and Research Assistant Anand Patel, presents key insights from the workshop and identifies opportunities for non-governmental stakeholders to advance cooperation on climate research, conservation, and maritime safety despite high geopolitical tensions.

Williams published several additional papers on the consequences of geopolitical tensions on Arctic scientific collaboration and biodiversity conservation, including a briefing note in Arctic Yearbook, as well as an inventory of key achievements of U.S.-Russian cooperation on science and conservation in the Bering Strait region based on interviews with Russian and American scientists, conservation practitioners, resource managers, and representatives of Indigenous communities.

## Welcoming David Balton

Ambassador David Balton, former Executive Director of the U.S. Arctic Executive Steering Committee, joined the Arctic Initiative team in May 2025 as a Senior Fellow. He previously served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Oceans and Fisheries in the U.S. Department of State, attaining the rank of Ambassador. Balton will support the Initiative's work on assessing changing geopolitical dynamics in the Arctic and strengthening regional governance mechanisms, with a focus on the Arctic Council and sustainable ocean management.



ARCTIC ENCOUNTER

# Training the Next Generation of Arctic Leaders

We are committed to building capacity among younger generations, uplifting youth voices, and fostering discussions with them on developing solutions to rapid environmental and social change in the Arctic. Students are deeply involved in the operation and success of our research efforts, and students served as authors on multiple Initiative publications.

Over the last three semesters, we engaged with students at Harvard Kennedy School and universities across the Arctic through seminars, a five-week study group, a virtual policy workshop, the Arctic course, and the perennially successful annual Innovation Lab at the Arctic Circle Assembly.

**14**

research assistants

**16**

student events

**17**

Arctic course graduates

“The fellows and staff of the Arctic Initiative have been wonderful mentors who’ve encouraged my interest in understanding the connections between people, nature, and climate resilience. This Center has both been my home during my time at HKS and the start of a career in resilience policy.”

- Aruni Ranaweera MPP 2024

ELIZABETH HANLON



During Halla Logadóttir's "Policy and Social Innovation for the Changing Arctic" course, students were mentored by Arctic experts while they researched a policy area of concern and developed their own solutions.

BENN CRAIG



Students explored the impacts of the rapidly changing Arctic Ocean during a five-week study group organized by Margaret Williams and supported by Research Assistants Jonny Yau MPP 2025 and Bhuvan Ravindran MPP 2026.

ICR

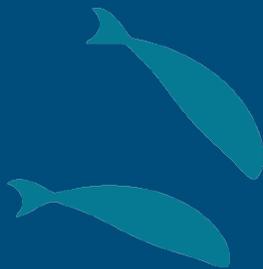


Jennifer Spence and Tessa Varvares facilitated a workshop for Dukha reindeer herding youth in Mongolia in September 2025, in support of the International Centre for Reindeer Husbandry's Reindeer and Resilience Project.

SALATA INSTITUTE



During Harvard Climate Action Week 2025, members of the Harvard community gathered to share why they care about the Arctic. Pictured: Talia Veldstra, a Harvard College freshman from northern Alaska.



ARCTIC CIRCLE



Right: Students from across the Arctic, including three Harvard Kennedy School students, stress-tested their creative solutions to pressing Arctic challenges during the annual Arctic Innovation Lab at Arctic Circle Assembly. Pictured: Bhuvan Ravindran MPP 2026.

# Our Team

Our interdisciplinary team pulls together expertise in political science, environmental science, medicine and public health, economics, and more. For full profiles, visit our website.

## Leadership



**John P. Holdren**  
Co-Chair, Arctic Initiative;  
Co-Director, Belfer Center's  
Science, Technology, and  
Public Policy Program



**Henry Lee**  
Co-Chair, Arctic Initiative;  
Director, Belfer Center's  
Environment and Natural  
Resources Program



**Jennifer Spence**  
Director, Arctic Initiative;  
Co-Chair, Arctic Research  
Cooperation and Diplomacy  
Research Priority Team,  
ICARP IV

## Staff



**Galit Goldstein**  
Research, Development, and  
Finance Manager



**Elizabeth Hanlon**  
Communications and  
Outreach Specialist



**Karin Vander Schaaf**  
Administrative Coordinator



**Tessa Varvares**  
Senior Program Coordinator

## International Advisory Board



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Former President, Finland



**Riikka Karppinen**  
Chair, Municipal Council of  
Sodankylä, Finland



**Sara Olsvig**  
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**Taa'ajj Ch'igiiontà'**  
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Alaska Native Health Research, University  
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**Gunn-Britt Retter**  
Head of Arctic and Environmental  
Unit, Saami Council



**Alice Rogoff**  
Publisher and Owner,  
Arctic Today

**Fellows,  
Associates,  
and Affiliates**



**Allison Agsten**  
Affiliate



**Luke Apisa, MD**  
Affiliate



**David Balton**  
Senior Fellow



**Justin Barnes**  
Predoctoral Research Fellow



**Douglas Causey**  
Affiliate



**Anders Christoffer Edstrøm**  
Predoctoral Research Fellow



**Sappho Gilbert**  
Postdoctoral Research Fellow



**Sherri Goodman**  
Senior Associate



**Gregory Harris**  
Affiliate



**N. Stuart Harris, MD**  
Faculty Affiliate



**Guðbjörg Ríkey Th. Hauksdóttir**  
Predoctoral Research Fellow



**Katharina Heinrich**  
Predoctoral Research Fellow



**Juho Kähkönen**  
Fulbright Fellow



**Hans Peder Kirkegaard**  
Fulbright Fellow



**L. Suzanne Leslie, MD**  
Affiliate



**Halla Hrund Logadóttir**  
Affiliate, Initiative Co-Founder



**Alexandra Middleton**  
Fulbright Fellow



**Andreas Østhagen**  
Affiliate



**Liubov Sulyandziga**  
Affiliate



**Margaret Williams**  
Senior Fellow



**Fran Ulmer**  
Associate

## Publications

Alexandra Middleton. “Geopolitics of Continuity.” *UArctic*. 12/2025.

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Nadezhda Filimonova. “Place Bonding and Migration.” In *Arctic Practices*. Actar Publishers. 4/2025.

Aruni Ranaweera, Tessa Varvares. “Permafrost Thaw in Alaska: An Overlooked Climate-Health Crisis.” *Belfer Center*. 4/2025.

Andreas Østhagen. “Trump Has Misunderstood the Importance of Greenland.” *The Arctic Institute*. 4/2025.

Jennifer Spence, Kamrul Hossain. “Pan-Arctic Science Research Collaboration.” *University of Helsinki*. 3/2025.

Ríkey Hauksdóttir, Baldur Thorhallsson. “‘Limitless’ Sino-Russian Cooperation in the Arctic?” *Polar Geography*. 3/2025.

Margaret Williams. “Thinking Beyond Boundaries.” *Belfer Center*. 2/2025.

Jennifer Spence, John Holdren, Fran Ulmer. “Arctic Research Cooperation in a Turbulent World.” *Science*. 2/2025.

Jennifer Spence, Elizabeth Hanlon. “Explainer: The Geopolitical Significance of Greenland.” *Belfer Center*. 1/2025.

Jennifer Spence, Rolf Rødven, Nina Ågren. “Enabling and Bridging Institutional Diversity Through Polycentric Governance Structures to Advance Sustainable Development.” In *Institutional Diversity and Sustainable Environmental Management*. Taylor and Francis. 1/2025.

Andreas Østhagen. “Trump’s Greenland Flirtation is Clumsy Geopolitics.” *Aftenposten*. 1/2025.

Douglas Causey, Nadezhda Filimonova. “Arctic Environmental Security.” In *Human Security through the New Traditional Economy in the Arctic*. Routledge. 12/2024.

Tessa Varvares, Aruni Ranaweera. “Call to Action on Permafrost.” *Belfer Center*. 12/2024.

Jennifer Spence et al. Report of the Yukon Arctic Security Advisory Council. 11/2024.

Margaret Williams, Nadezhda Filimonova, Jennifer Spence, Fran Ulmer. “Mapping a Path Forward for Arctic Cooperation with Russia.” *Fletcher Forum of World Affairs*. 11/2024.

Nadezhda Filimonova, S. Jeff Birchall. “Sustainable Municipal Solid Waste Management.” *Journal of Environmental Management*. 11/2024.

Lydia Glock. “Beyond the Ice.” *Belfer Center*. 10/2024.

Mark Ackermann, Clare Amann, John Holdren et al. “Pan-Arctic Methane.” *Wilson Center*. 10/2024.

Fran Ulmer, Mead Treadwell. “40 Years of Innovation in Arctic Research.” *Anchorage Daily News*. 8/2024.

## Events

Jennifer Spence, Henry Lee. 2 sessions. North Pacific Arctic Conference. 8/2024.

Jennifer Spence. Arctic Security Conference 2024. 9/2024.

John Holdren. “40th Anniversary of the Passage of the Arctic Research and Policy Act.” Washington, D.C. 9/2024.

Jennifer Spence, John Holdren. “Beyond the Ice.” Climate Week NYC. 9/2024.

Henry Lee, Anders Edström, Guðbjörg Ríkey Th. Hauksdóttir. “Geopolitics of China’s Arctic Investments.” Harvard Kennedy School. 10/2024.

“Coupled Terrestrial Monitoring Workshop.” With the Arctic Council’s Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP). Akureyri, IS. 10/2024.

Jennifer Spence. International Conference on Arctic Research Planning Chairs Workshop. Reykjavík, IS. 10/2024.

Jennifer Spence. Arctic Mayors’ Forum Mentoring Program. Reykjavík, IS. 10/2024.

Arctic Circle Assembly. 12 sessions. 10/2024.

Jennifer Spence. Canadian Science Policy Conference. 11/2024.

“Arctic Policy 101.” With the Permafrost Young Researchers Network. Virtual. 11/2024.

“U.S.–Russia Cooperation in Science and Conservation at a Time of Conflict.” Harvard Kennedy School. 12/2024.

Jennifer Spence, Margaret Williams. “Russia-U.S. Relations in 2025.” Harvard Kennedy School. 12/2024.

Jennifer Spence. ArcticNet’s Annual Scientific Meeting. 12/2024.

Jennifer Spence, Douglas Causey, Margaret Williams. 6 sessions. Arctic Frontiers. 1/2025.

Margaret Williams. Arctic Ocean Study Group. Harvard Kennedy School. 1/2025.

Margaret Williams. “The Real Reason Greenland Determines Our Fate.” Virtual. 2/2025.

Jennifer Spence, Ríkey Hauksdóttir. “The Race for Arctic Dominance.” Harvard Kennedy School. 3/2025.

Jennifer Spence. 5 sessions. Arctic Science Summit Week. 3/2025.

Jennifer Spence. “Navigating a Changed World.” Ottawa, CA. 3/2025.

Margaret Williams. “Nature Policy and Arctic Governance in a Shifting Climate.” Harvard Kennedy School. 3/2025.

Margaret Williams, Fran Ulmer. “The Future of Alaska’s Arctic Lands.” Harvard Kennedy School. 4/2025.

Fran Ulmer. “New Security Dynamics in US-Danish Relations: A Conversation with Ambassador Jesper Møller Sørensen.” Harvard Kennedy School. 4/2025.

Jennifer Spence. “Navigating Nordic Relations.” Harvard Kennedy School. 4/2025.

Governance of Climate Intervention Workshop. Harvard Kennedy School. 4/2025.

Jennifer Spence, John Holdren, Stuart Harris. “Permafrost Thaw: An Emerging Public Health Crisis in Alaska.” Harvard Kennedy School. 4/2025.

Jennifer Spence. “Maine Arctic Roundtable.” Portland, ME, USA. 5/2025.

UArcctic Congress. Inari, FI. 5/2025.

David Balton, Jennifer Spence. “Restoring Arctic Exceptionalism.” Washington, D.C., USA. 6/2025.

Jennifer Spence. Arctic Development Expo. Inuvik, NWT, CA. 6/2025.

Jennifer Spence, Luke Apisa. North Pole Icebreaker Trip. 7/2025.

Margaret Williams, John Holdren, David Balton. 5 sessions. Arctic Encounter Symposium. 8/2025.

Justin Barnes. One Ocean Expedition. Nuuk, Greenland to Nunavut, Canada. 8/2025.

Jennifer Spence. “2025 RFF & Harvard SRM Social Science Research Workshop.” Washington, D.C., USA. 9/2025.

Fran Ulmer. “Arctic Leadership Lecture Series.” Virtual. 9/2025.

“Why Harvard Should Care About the Arctic.” Harvard Kennedy School. 9/2025.

Jennifer Spence, Ríkey Hauksdóttir. 2 sessions. Arctic Security Conference 2025. Oslo, Norway. 9/2025.

John Holdren. “Polar Climate Week Event with Fondation Prince Albert II de Monaco & Permafrost Pathways.” Climate Week NYC. 9/2025.

Jennifer Spence, Tessa Varvares. Mongolia Innovation Lab. Ulaan Baatar, Mongolia. 9/2025.

Arctic Security: Power Shifts and Transformational Change Workshop. Harvard Kennedy School. 10/2025.

David Balton. “Arctic Leadership Lecture Series.” Virtual. 10/2025.

David Balton, Halla Hrunn Logadóttir, Hans Peder Kirkegaard. “Navigating Shifting Arctic Geopolitics.” Harvard Kennedy School. 10/2025.

Sappho Gilbert, Alexandra Middleton, Hans Peder Kirkegaard, Juho Kähkönen. “On Thin Ice: Stories of Trust (& Mistrust) in Arctic Research & Policy.” Harvard Chan School. 10/2025.

Jennifer Spence, Sappho Gilbert. Arctic Youth Future Workshop. Reykjavík, IS. 10/2025.

John Holdren, David Balton. “Governing a Fractured Arctic.” Reykjavík, IS. 10/2025.

Arctic Circle Assembly. 24 sessions. 10/2025.

Jennifer Spence. “The New Arctic Order.” Virtual. 10/2025.

Arctic Ocean Governance Workshop. Harvard Kennedy School. 11/2025.

Jennifer Spence. “From Critical Minerals to Climate Resilience.” Canadian Science Policy Conference. Ottawa, CA. 11/2025.

Jennifer Spence, Justin Barnes, Tessa Varvares. Community Voices on Permafrost Thaw Workshop. Yellowknife, CA. 11/2025.

Margaret Williams, Fran Ulmer. “A Grand Vision for Alaska.” Virtual. 12/2025.

Jennifer Spence. Panel for Sullivan Climate and Ecological Security Fellows. Virtual. 12/2025.

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