

WOMEN OF THE ARCTIC:

BRIDGING POLICY, RESEARCH & LIVED EXPERIENCE

On September 6th and 7th, the University of Helsinki will house a non-academic side event, “Women of the Arctic: Bridging Policy, Research, and Lived Experience”, as a part of the UArctic Congress 2018.

Building on ongoing efforts to better understand gender in the Arctic, “Women of the Arctic” seeks to carve out a non-academic space for women and girls who work on or live in the Arctic to explore the roles and contributions of women to northern policy-making, research, exploration, art, activism, and daily life. As the Arctic conference landscape continues to grow steadily, initiatives focusing on Arctic women specifically – the successes they achieve and the challenges they face – remain few and far between. “Women of the Arctic” seeks to fill this critical gap and reach beyond the academic sphere to illuminate the stories and perspectives of a broad range of women. Ultimately, the objective is to create an awareness of, and promote a continued focus on, issues relating to northern women and non-Arctic women who engage with Polar realities.

PROGRAM

SEPTEMBER 6TH: Supported by funding from [NordForsk](#), “Women of the Arctic” organizers are collaborating with [The Arctic Cycle](#) playwright and Artistic Director, Chantal Bilodeau, to present a short play, *Whale Song*, inspired by the women of Alaska. *Whale Song* is a 15-minute live performance about the migration of several females – both human and animal – within, as well as in an out of Alaska, against a backdrop of climate change. It will take place at The Think Corner, during the evening reception of the UArctic Congress.

SEPTEMBER 7TH: There will be three 90-minute panels focusing on women’s issues and perspectives in decision-making, business, science and education as well as ‘uncomfortable’ conversations related to Arctic women and gender that often remain sidelined in the mainstream discourse. Among the invited panelists are women from all of the Arctic states, representing both public and private sectors, of indigenous and non-indigenous origins. The day will end with the UArctic Congress Closing Session with former **President of Finland, Ms. Tarja Halonen**, the first woman to hold the position and an active spokesperson on gender issues and girl’s and women’s rights. See following page for panel details.



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All panels will be guided by a series of three overarching questions:

- What do women of the Arctic see as the most pressing issues to be addressed in their respective fields/communities?
- What do they see as the greatest challenges in addressing these issues?
- Which tools do women of the Arctic identify as necessary to solving these issues? Alternatively, which tools are already working?

Panel 1:

Northern Women at the Table: From Community to Business Leaders

This panel draws on the experiences of women mayors, entrepreneurs, and civil society leaders to debate their experiences at the table, ways of increasing of women's representation across all those sectors, and to encourage the stepping up of the next generation of women leaders.

Panel 2:

Women in Arctic Science & Exploration

Panelists with a background in traditional and indigenous knowledge, as well as Western science, from both Arctic and non-Arctic countries will explore how policy, education, international collaboration and mentoring can support women's scientific careers and promote greater diversity in polar science.

Panel 3:

Grappling with 'Uncomfortable' Conversations: Silenced Experiences in the Arctic

Speakers on this panel will examine some of the causes of, and solutions to, gender-based violence in northern communities and industries which disproportionately impact the lives of northern women. Special focus will be given to the role that art can play in unpacking and healing from such experiences.

REGISTRATION

Organizers will offer a limited number of registration fee waivers to event participants.

MEDIA & FOLLOW UP

"Women of the Arctic" is working with creative communications collective *What Took You So Long* to document the event. Collected materials will be hosted on a digital storytelling platform with the aim of maintaining a long-term focus on women in the Arctic.

For more details, please visit www.genderisnotplanb.com



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