



Nineteen Scholars Announced for Third Fulbright Arctic Initiative

Experts will collaborate on research and policy questions related to fostering a secure and sustainable Arctic.

Nineteen outstanding scholars from Arctic Council nations will engage in collaborative, multi-disciplinary research over the next 18 months through the U.S. Department of State’s [Fulbright Arctic Initiative](#) to advance Arctic nations’ shared interest in building a secure and sustainable Arctic. Researchers will explore topics in the thematic areas of Arctic Security and Cooperation, Arctic Infrastructure in a Changing Environment, and Community Dimensions of Health.

Sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, this initiative supports interdisciplinary research for scholars from the eight [Arctic Council](#) member countries. The Arctic Council is an intergovernmental forum that includes Canada, the Kingdom of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the United States. The governments of Canada, Iceland, and the Kingdom of Denmark have provided additional funding for the third cohort of Fulbright Arctic Scholars.

Dr. Greg Poelzer, a Professor in the School of Environment and Sustainability (SENS) at the University of Saskatchewan, and Dr. Elizabeth Rink, Professor of Community Health in the Department of Health and Human Development at Montana State University, will serve as the Co-Lead Scholars of the Initiative. Both Dr. Poelzer and Dr. Rink are alumni of the program. The diverse group of nineteen scholar participants – including five from indigenous backgrounds and 13 women – will explore public policy research questions and offer innovative solutions to a variety of disciplines. See scholars’ full biographies [here](#).

2020-2021 Fulbright Arctic Scholars

Name	Home Institution
Dr. Bonita Beatty	University of Saskatchewan, Canada
Dr. Lill Bjørst	Aalborg University, Denmark
Mr. Christopher Clarke	Government of the Northwest Territories, Canada
Dr. Susan Crate	George Mason University, United States
Ms. Jaime DeSimone	Portland Museum of Art, United States
Dr. Jessica Graybill	Colgate University, United States
Dr. Elena Grigorieva	Institute for Complex Analysis of Regional Programs Russian Academy of Sciences, Far Eastern Branch
Dr. Ketil Lenert Hansen	UiT The Arctic University of Norway
Dr. Andrea Kraj	University of Saskatchewan, Canada
Dr. Sigríður Kristjánsdóttir	Agricultural University of Iceland
Dr. Anna Cecilia Krook Riekkola	Luleå University of Technology, Sweden
Dr. Rauna Kuokkanen	University of Lapland, Finland
Mr. Peter Wilhelm Linde	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark
Dr. Rainer Lohmann	University of Rhode Island, United States
Dr. Andreas Østhagen	Fridtjof Nansen Institute, Norway
Dr. Silja Omarsdóttir	University of Iceland
Ms. Lena Popova	North-Eastern Federal University, Russia
Dr. Anu-Sisko Soikkeli	University of Oulu, Finland
Dr. Kristopher Thornburg	United States Coast Guard

“We are delighted to announce the new cohort of scholars for the Fulbright Arctic Initiative and look forward to their collaboration over the next 18 months,” said Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs Matthew Lussenhop. “This unique program is a key component of the United States’ efforts to support a more sustainable Arctic region, assembling a group of scientists, artists, and public health researchers from each of the Arctic Council nations to work with Arctic communities on shared concerns in the region and establish policy recommendations on public health, economic stability, and protection of the changing environment.”

Fulbright Arctic Scholars engage with governments, NGOs, businesses, and Arctic communities through individual research exchange visits, online collaborations, and a series of group seminars. Dr. Rink and Dr. Poelzer offered the following reflections on the newly selected Fulbright Arctic Initiative cohort, “This group of scholars brings not only an enormous range of disciplinary expertise—from life science and engineering to health care and international relations, but also a diverse set of professional experiences beyond the academy, including practitioners in fields such as museum curation, active-duty Coast Guard service, professional architecture, and foreign diplomatic service. This robust mix of practitioners and researchers will enable this cohort to provide rich and powerful insights into some of the most pressing issues confronting Arctic communities.”

The new group of scholars will build on the successful outcomes of the first and second Fulbright Arctic Initiatives in 2015-2017 and 2018-2019, respectively. The scholar participants in the first two cohorts collaborated to produce a number of publications, reports, and policy recommendations delivered at the end of their program.

The Fulbright Arctic Initiative advances the State Department’s goals of stimulating international scientific collaboration on issues facing the Arctic and supports the mission of the Fulbright Program to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries.

“The United States is proud to support a program that emphasizes scientific cooperation among all eight Arctic states,” said James DeHart, United States Coordinator for the Arctic Region. “I look forward to learning more about the scholars, their research, the discoveries they make, and what their great work means for the future of the Arctic.”

The [Fulbright Program](#) is the U.S. government’s flagship international educational exchange program and is supported by the people of the United States and partner countries around the world. The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs is pleased to announce that 2021 marks the 75th Anniversary of the Fulbright Program. Celebrations throughout the year will highlight the impressive accomplishments and legacy of the program and its alumni over its first 75 years, both in the United States and around the world. A dedicated 75th anniversary website - www.fulbright75.org - will be updated throughout 2021 to showcase anniversary events and to facilitate ongoing engagement.

Since 1946, the Fulbright Program has provided more than 400,000 participants from over 160 countries the opportunity to study, teach and conduct research, exchange ideas, and contribute to finding solutions to shared international concerns. The primary source of funding for the Fulbright Program is an annual appropriation by the U.S. Congress to the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Participating governments and host institutions, corporations, and foundations in foreign countries and in the United States also provide direct and indirect support.

For press inquiries, please contact the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, ECA-Press@state.gov, (202) 632-6452, or the Institute of International Education (IIE) at outreach@iie.org.