

**Mandate for the Svalbard Science Forum (SSF)
laid down by The Ministry of Education and Research 03.06.2019**

The overall objective of Svalbard Science Forum (SSF) is to contribute to increased scientific quality in research in Svalbard.

The Forum shall contribute to good coordination of research activities in Svalbard. SSF shall offer integrated and accessible information about all research in Svalbard. The Forum shall further develop and strengthen collaboration between both individual researchers and research institutions in Svalbard. SSF's work shall make it easier for researchers and institutions to obtain necessary support and guidance about infrastructure and research services available in Svalbard. SSF shall also contribute to place Svalbard research in a larger pan-Arctic and global perspective.

The Forum shall serve as a coordinating and advisory body for all key players in research activities in Svalbard. The Following institutions are represented:

Members:

- The Research Council of Norway (Chair)
- The University Centre in Svalbard (UNIS)
- The Norwegian Polar Institute (NPI)
- Ny-Ålesund Science Managers Committee (NySMAC)
- Kings Bay AS
- Svalbard Integrated Arctic Earth Observing System (SIOS)
- Polish Academy of Sciences (PAS), Hornsund
- Arctic and Antarctic Research Institute of Roshydromet (AARI), Barentsburg
- The Norwegian Meteorological Institute (MET Norway)

Observer:

- The Governor of Svalbard

NySMAC should be represented by one of the foreign institutes in Ny-Ålesund. If required SSF can invite other key players as members or observers to ensure coordination of the research activities in Svalbard.

Svalbard Science Forum has the following tasks:

Strategic tasks:

- develop strategies and plans for scientific coordination of Svalbard research
- contribute to increased coordination, cooperation, sharing of data and planning of the international research in Svalbard in line with The Government's Svalbard policy and research policy priorities

- contribute to make Svalbard attractive to Norwegian and international researchers
- contribute to the recruitment of the next generation polar researchers
- contribute to SIOS becoming an effective tool for the utilization of infrastructure in and around Svalbard
- contribute to increased coordination and cooperation regarding observations and time series in collaboration with relevant actors

Work concerning funding schemes

- disseminate information about the funding schemes. On behalf of The Research Council of Norway, receive applications for funding under special schemes such as "Arctic Field Grant" and "Svalbard Strategic Grant"
- review applications and recommend allocation of funds to The Research Council of Norway that will distribute and allocate the funds
- upon request give scientific advice to the secretariat of the Svalbard Environmental Protection Fund in their assessment of research related proposals

Tasks associated with information and daily operation:

- contribute to the continuation and further development of "Research in Svalbard" (RiS Portal) as the central tool to give an overview of the research activity in Svalbard
- contribute to that the researchers use the RiS Portal, including that RiS is compatible and complementary to other relevant portals and databases
- ensure good cooperation with the partners in RiS
- make information about infrastructure and research related services in Svalbard readily accessible to Norwegian and foreign researchers
- participate in relevant forums to visualize and promote the research and the Forum's work in Svalbard
- be a discussion arena and a proponent for research interests in cases that concern scientific activity on the archipelago
- arrange workshops, conferences etc. that contribute to increased research coordination and cooperation
- contribute to arrange the Svalbard Science Conference as the central international meeting place for dialogue on research in Svalbard

Support to the Governor of Svalbard:

- provide information and advice to the public authorities

- serve as an information channel from the public authorities towards the research communities
- be a representative for research interests in key administrative issues in Svalbard

The Research Council of Norway manages Svalbard Science Forum and is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the secretariat. The secretariat prepares and follows up tasks handled by SSF. The employees of the secretariat are employed by The Research Council and are stationed in Longyearbyen. The Research Council is responsible to draw up specific guidelines for the secretariat's work in line with the provisions of the Public Administration Act and other relevant regulations. Furthermore The Research Council is responsible for RiS along with the funding schemes (Arctic Field Grant and Svalbard Strategic Grant) which are the key tools in SSF's work.

The Research Council reports on the activity of Svalbard Science Forum to the Ministry of Education and Research as part of the standard annual reporting.