

Ny-Ålesund Science Managers Committee - NySMAC

Terms of Reference (May 2023)

Ny-Ålesund Science Managers Committee (NySMAC) was established in 1994. This term of reference document builds on the NySMAC founding articles and details the organization and workings of NySMAC. The NySMAC founding articles is the binding document for NySMAC.

NySMAC promotes cooperation and coordination between actors engaged in research and environmental monitoring in Ny-Ålesund. NySMAC provides advice and comments on research projects, research planning and coordination, infrastructure development, and environmental protection, and promotes collaboration, mutual understanding and friendship. NySMAC convenes twice every year.

The NySMAC webpage can be found here: <https://nyalesundresearch.no/nysmac/>

Objectives

- Contribute to the development of Ny-Ålesund as an internationally recognized site for Arctic research.
- Encourage co-operation between scientists and institutions present.
- Promote Ny-Ålesund and the use of data in the international scientific community, including convening of regular seminars.
- Assess scientific projects and other activities
- Avoid negative impacts on research programmes from other activities (including other scientific activities).
- Avoid unnecessary overlap of research programmes and negative competition between scientific institutions.
- Minimize and mitigate environmental impacts of scientific activity.
- Promote a responsible and environmentally friendly behaviour by individuals and groups.
- Stimulate sharing of data and infrastructure
- Ensure safe operations both in the field and in the laboratories
- Give advice to the Norwegian Polar Institute, Kings Bay AS, Norwegian authorities and scientific institutions engaged in projects in Ny-Ålesund
- Develop and implement a strategy document for NySMAC

Structure

NySMAC consists of members and observers. NySMAC has a chair, a vice-chair and a secretariat, as detailed below.

Membership and observers

All scientific institutions running long-term programmes from Ny-Ålesund and having a (semi-) permanent presence, are eligible for membership in the committee. New members must be approved by NySMAC. Current members are presented on the NySMAC webpage.

Each member appoints one representative to NySMAC for a time period decided by the member institution (i.e. no fixed term). Members may be represented by an alternate delegate if the regular representative is unable to attend.

While member institutions can bring additional persons to the NySMAC meetings if deemed relevant, the formal NySMAC representative speaks and votes on behalf of his/her institution.

Kings Bay AS, The Research Council of Norway (RCN), Svalbard Science Forum (SSF) and Svalbard Integrated Arctic Earth Observing System (SIOS) are invited to NySMAC meetings as Observers. New observers must be approved by NySMAC.

The chairs of the four Ny-Ålesund flagships are invited to the NySMAC meeting.

Information tools

NySMAC shares information through its webpage, through regular newsletters and through the internal PID (project information and discussion) forum.

Chair and vice-chair

The chair and vice-chair of NySMAC are elected among the representatives for a two-year period, with election terms staggered by one year. Both the chair and vice-chair can be re-elected once. The chair and the vice-chair must be from different institutions. Information about the current and previous chairs and vice-chairs is provided on the NySMAC webpage.

The responsibilities of the chair include:

- Chairing the meetings
- Preparing the agenda in cooperation with the secretariat, and reviewing the minutes before they are sent to NySMAC
- Represent NySMAC in the Svalbard Science Forum (SSF) meetings (twice annually). If the chair is unable to attend, he/she is responsible for finding a replacement among the NySMAC representatives.

Funds for attending meetings and other NySMAC activities must be provided by the institution that chair and co-chairs are affiliated with.

The vice-chair supports the chair and acts as chair when the chair is not available. If the chair is from a Norwegian institution, the vice-chair represents NySMAC in SSF meetings.

Secretariat

The Norwegian Polar Institute hosts the permanent NySMAC secretariat. The secretariat is responsible for

- Organising the meetings, including participation in the International Coordinating Group of the Arctic Science Summit Week (ASSW)
- Preparing the agenda and meeting minutes
- Facilitating discussions in task-force groups and other sub groups within NySMAC between NySMAC meetings
- Operating the PID forum

Member representatives

NySMAC member representatives are expected to

- Ensure an adequate information flow between the institution represented and NySMAC at all times
- Participate in two annual NySMAC meetings, funded by their own institution.
- Provide information about their institutions' recent and planned activities in Ny-Ålesund.
- Inform NySMAC about issues of interest to NySMAC between the meetings through the internal PID forum
- Promote contribution to flagship activities for researchers from their own institutions
- Promote contribution to the Svalbard Science Conference for researchers from their own institutions
- Contribute to the exchange of relevant information between their own institution and NySMAC
- Adhere to the NySMAC strategy

Meetings

NySMAC meetings are held twice every year. The spring meeting normally takes place as part of the ASSW (exceptions can be made when ASSW takes place in a country where there are no NySMAC members, or if distance is prohibitive), while the fall meeting is normally hosted by one of the members institutions.

The draft agenda for each meeting is normally distributed at least 2 weeks prior to the meeting. Members shall present additional items for the agenda in advance, as instructed by the Secretariat. Members are responsible for their own travels and related expenses incurred while attending NySMAC meetings.

Decisions through consensus

Each institution appoints one representative who is eligible to vote in NySMAC meetings. Decisions are arrived at either through a hearing process or at the meetings. NySMAC reaches decisions by consensus. Member institutions that have not submitted written responses to hearing documents or are not attending meetings are assumed to be neutral to the issue at hand and are therefore expected to support the consensus decision.

Finances

NySMAC members pay an annual membership fee. The fee was fixed at 1500 Euro until 2022. From 2023 onwards the fee will be adjusted based on the annual price regulation from Statistics Norway. The membership fee supports Secretariat staff, travel for the Secretariat, meeting costs and other running cost. No funds are provided for individual travel for any participants.