



Evaluation of the Danish Agency for Science, Technology and Inno- vation's grants for UArctic 2010- 2015

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Preface

The Danish Agency for Technology and Innovation (DASTI) has asked IRIS Group to evaluate the Agency's annual grants to the network organisation University of the Arctic (UArctic).

The overall purpose of the grant is to support collaboration on education and research between member institutions from the Kingdom of Denmark and other Arctic countries.

The overall objective of the evaluation is to uncover:

- to what extent the grant supports DASTI's goal related to strengthening Arctic research, innovation and education
- to what extent the grant supports the aims in the Danish (Kingdom of Denmark) strategy for the Arctic 2011-2020 regarding international excellence and cooperation between research institutions
- whether the current administrative model for the grant is suitable.

The evaluation is based on 19 interviews with member institutions from the Kingdom of Denmark as well as representatives from UArctic. In addition, comprehensive desk research on various written material underpins the results of the evaluation.

The evaluation is structured as follows:

- *Chapter one* summarises the main findings of the evaluation
- *Chapter two* introduces the background of the evaluation
- *Chapter three* provides an overview of funded projects and discusses the effects, additionality and administration of the project grants
- *Chapter four* provides an overview of the funded mobility activities and discusses the effects, additionality and administration of the mobility grants
- *Chapter five* provides an overview of the activities funded by the operating grants and discusses the implications of the shift in the distribution of the grants.

Happy reading!

IRIS Group

Chapter 1

Summary

1.1. BACKGROUND

The Danish Agency for Science Technology and Innovation (DASTI) has since 2010 allocated grants to the cooperative network organisation University of the Arctic (UArctic) to support collaboration on research and education between member institutions from the Kingdom of Denmark and other Arctic countries.

Currently, eleven research and educational institutions from the Kingdom of Denmark are members of UArctic.

From 2010-2012, the grants were solely allocated for operating costs of UArctic. However, in 2013 DASTI decided to change the implementation model – and so, from 2013 and onwards the grants have been allocated for operating costs, projects and mobility respectively.

The table below provides an overview of the size of the grants allocated to UArctic throughout the evaluation period.

Table 1.1 Distribution of grants for UArctic 2010-2015 (million DKK)

| Year | Operating costs | Mobility | Projects | Total |
|-----------|-----------------|----------|----------|-------------|
| 2010 | 3 | | | 3 |
| 2011 | 3 | | | 3 |
| 2012 | 3 | | | 3 |
| 2013-2014 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 1.5 | 3 |
| 2015 | 0.75 | 1.005 | 1.795 | 3.55 |

This evaluation harvests the experiences from the grant period from 2010-2015.

1.1.1 The project grants

From 2013-2015, seven project grants have been given to four of the eleven member institutions from the Kingdom of Denmark. The project grants have funded six different projects. All projects have been conducted in a partnership between at least two member institutions.

The primary focus of all projects has been to develop and implement educational activities for master and PhD students – thus, no projects have had an exclusive focus on research activities.

This means that the project grants primarily have contributed to the realisation of the overall and strategic objectives (from the Strategy for the Arctic 2011-2020) concerning Arctic education and enhanced cooperation between member institutions from the Kingdom of Denmark.

The project grants have had both similar and different effects on the member institutions. For instance, to some project holders the grants were a catalyst for the development and realisation

of new ideas for educational activities, whereas to others the grants made it possible to complete the projects at a much faster speed than it would have been possible otherwise. Etc.

The additionality of the project grants varies. Around half of the project holders assess that they most likely could have completed the projects without the grant by applying for grants elsewhere. However, in that case the projects would have consisted of fewer project partners and probably would have taken longer time to complete. The other half of the project holders state that it would not at all have been possible to complete the projects without the grants.

The project holders generally have a positive view on the application procedure, which they find easy and unbureaucratic – and they emphasise that UArctic play a crucial role in raising awareness on the projects among international member institutions. However, due to the unbureaucratic application process, rejected applicants have found it difficult to decipher why exactly their application was rejected. And some interviewees find the involvement of UArctic in the administration of the project grants quite costly relative to the fact that they only make use of UArctic to a limited extent.

Finally, the interviewees generally agree that the one-year period and maximum limit of DKK 500.000 of the project grants in many cases is too small to finance research activities.

Based on the results of the evaluation, it is recommended to:

- consider the possibilities to increase the additionality of the grants, e.g. by enhancing the competition for the project funds
- explicate the evaluation criteria and reasons for refusals of applications
- increase the flexibility of the grant size and funding period of project grants
- strengthen the involvement of UArctic in the administration of project grants.

1.1.2 The mobility grants

From 2013-2015, the mobility grants have been implemented through a pilot project and the mobility programme of UArctic called 'North2North'. Throughout this period, a total of 80 scholarships have been granted to students and researchers travelling from, to or within the Kingdom of Denmark.

The mobility grants have primarily been used by researchers and students travelling from or to member institutions located in the Arctic region. Thus, University of Greenland and University of the Faroe Islands account for 59 percent of the total mobility at all member institutions from the Kingdom of Denmark.

However, around half of the member institutions have not – or only to a very limited extent – made use of the mobility grants. And in 2015, scholarships were in excess.

Different framework conditions around the North2North mobility programme have contributed to the limited demand for the mobility scholarships.

For instance, some member institutions have abstained from enrolling in North2North because they lack resources to appoint an international coordinator who can administer applications

from students and researchers at the institution. And some researchers consider the scholarships (at maximum EUR 3000) to be too small to be of 'real' interest.

Based on the results of the evaluation, it is recommended to:

- enrol new members in the North2North mobility programme
- increase the marketing of North2North targeted at member institutions, researchers and students
- increase the flexibility in the size of the scholarships.

1.1.3 The distribution of the grants to UArctic

From 2010-2015, the operating grants have been allocated for a wide range of UArctic related activities. These include, among others, administrative tasks at the International Secretariat as well as information services such as maintenance of UArctic's website, publication of annual reports and the magazine 'Shared Voices'.

However, the current format of the annual reports does not require documentation of how DASTI's operating grants are spent.

The shift in how DASTI's grants for UArctic are distributed has had a positive effect on the member institutions from the Kingdom of Denmark who have become more engaged than before – not least due to the possibility to apply for project grants. However, interviews with the member institutions suggest that there are still room for improvements in this respect.

Based on the results of the evaluation, it is recommended to:

- increase focus on how to engage the member institutions in UArctic related activities even more
- require documentation of how the operating grants are spent.

Chapter 2

Introduction

2.1. ABOUT UARCTIC

University of the Arctic (UArctic) is a cooperative network of universities, colleges, research institutions and other organisations concerned with education and research and in and about the North.

The network was established by the Arctic Council in 2001 with the mission to *“Empower the people of the Circumpolar North by providing unique educational and research opportunities through collaboration within a powerful network of members.”*¹

UArctic has around 180 member institutions from both Arctic and non-arctic countries, including 11 members from the Kingdom of Denmark. These members are Aalborg University, Aarhus University, Technical University of Denmark, University of Greenland, Greenland Institute of Natural Resources, University of the Faroe Islands, University of Southern Denmark, Roskilde University, Nordic Agency for Development and Ecology (NORDECO), Copenhagen Business School and University of Copenhagen.

UArctic carries out a wide range of activities to enhance educational and research opportunities in the North. Some of the primary means are described in textbox 3.1 below.

Box 3.1. Primary means of UArctic

- **Thematic Networks** serve as the underlying framework for wide range of activities carried out by UArctic members within a certain research area. The networks are established by researchers from the member institutions and the activities are e.g. joint research projects, conferences, workshops, scientific articles, graduate programs, courses (at both bachelor, master and PhD level), field- and summer schools, etc. As for now, UArctic has a total of 32 thematic networks focusing on research areas such as Arctic Engineering, Northern Governance and Arctic Law.
- **North2North** is a student exchange program giving students at the member institutions the opportunity to study at another member institution abroad.
- **An online study catalogue** where students can search for relevant courses and programmes offered by institutions throughout the eight Arctic countries.
- **An online Research Infrastructure Catalogue** where researchers can search for and identify research infrastructures and facilities located at and operated by the UArctic member institutions.
- **Online member profiles** containing a short description, facts and figures of each member institution.
- **An annual print Magazine “Shared Voices”** highlighting current trends, activities, and issues of higher education and research in the Circumpolar North.

¹ UArctic Strategic Plan 2020.

2.2. THE DANISH GRANTS FOR UARCTIC

Since 2010 the Danish Agency for Science, Technology and Innovation (DASTI) has allocated grants to UArctic to support the realisation of the Kingdom of Denmark's joint strategy for the Arctic.

The grants have amounted to DKK 3m *per year* from 2010-2012 and DKK 3m *in total* from 2013-2014. In 2015, the grant amounted to DKK 3.55m. Throughout the first three years, the grants were solely allocated for operating costs within UArctic. However, in 2013 DASTI decided to change the implementation model, which meant that from 2013 and onwards the grants have been allocated for both operating costs, projects and mobility². Figure 2.1 gives an overview of the distribution of the grants throughout the evaluation period from 2010-2015.

Table 2.1 Distribution of grants for UArctic 2010-2015 (million DKK)

| Year | Operating costs | Mobility | Projects | Total |
|-----------|-----------------|----------|----------|-------------|
| 2010 | 3 | | | 3 |
| 2011 | 3 | | | 3 |
| 2012 | 3 | | | 3 |
| 2013-2014 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 1.5 | 3 |
| 2015 | 0.75 | 1.005 | 1.795 | 3.55 |

2.3. PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

With this evaluation, the experiences from the past six years of grants to UArctic are harvested. The overall purpose of this evaluation is threefold.

Firstly, the aim of the evaluation is to investigate whether the grants for UArctic support DASTI's overall aim to strengthen Arctic research, innovation and education.

Secondly, the aim is to investigate whether the grants contribute to the fulfilment of the objectives in the Danish (Kingdom of Denmark) Strategy for the Arctic 2011-2020 concerning:

- to pertain an internationally leading position within a number of Arctic research areas and promote national and international research
- to consolidate and develop the collaboration between the research institutions in the Kingdom of Denmark and to make sure that researchers are aware of the opportunities to apply for funding of Arctic research

And thirdly, the aim is to investigate whether the administration model of the grants is suitable. This includes an assessment of:

² The grants for mobility were given to a mobility pilot project from 2013-2014. At the end of the project, DASTI and the Danish member institutions decided to join UArctic's mobility programme 'North2North' instead – and now the mobility grants are allocated here.

- how the project grants promote Arctic research, innovation and education and whether grants have an additional effect
- whether the application procedure, grant period and grant size of the funded projects are suitable
- how the mobility grants promote Arctic research, innovation and education at the Danish member institutions and whether the grants have additional effects.

These evaluation questions are answered through a combination of desk research on existing written materials and a total of 19 interviews with representatives from the Danish member institutions and representatives from UArctic. The appendix describes the methodology in more detail and provides an overview of conducted interviews and written material underpinning the evaluation.

Chapter 3

The project grants

3.1. OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT GRANTS

From 2013 to 2015 seven project grants have been given, while two project applications have been rejected (from University of Greenland and Roskilde University).

Grants have been given to four out of the 11 UArctic member institutions from the Kingdom of Denmark. Two of the member institutions have received grants for two different projects (DTU ARTEK and Aalborg University), one institution has received grants for the same project twice (University of the Faroe Islands) and one member institution has received a grant for one project (Aarhus University). Thus, a total of six projects have received project grants (as one project has received grants twice).

All six projects included in the evaluation are completed and four new projects have been initiated with the project grants. These projects are not included in the evaluation.

Table 3.1 provides an overview of all the funded projects that take part in the evaluation.

Table 3.1. Overview of the funded projects

| Project title | Project owner | Partners | Funding period | Project focus | Grant size |
|--|---------------------------------|---|------------------|--|----------------|
| Nordic Mining School | DTU ARTEK | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> University of Aarhus Luleå University of Technology University of Oulu University of Iceland University of Tromsø Norwegian University of Science and Technology | 2013-2014 | Development of e-learning tools for a master course | DKK 500.000 |
| Arctic Engineering Semester | DTU ARTEK | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aalto University in Finland Norwegian University of Science and Technology Luleå Technical University | 2015 | Development of a semester for engineering students at master level | DKK 500.000 |
| Managing Societal development in the High North & West Nordic Studies | University of the Faroe Islands | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> University of Greenland University of Akureyri University of Iceland and Nord University | 2013-2014 & 2015 | Implementation of a new master programme | DKK 2x 500.000 |
| Comprehensive Sustainable Development in the Arctic | Aalborg University | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> University of Greenland and DTU ARTEK | 2013-2014 | Summer school for master and PhD students | DKK 500.000 |
| The Negotiation of Change and | Aalborg University | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aarhus University | 2015 | Summer school for | DKK 300.000 |

| Continuation in the Arctic | | | | master and PhD students | |
|---|-------------------|--|------|--|-------------|
| Educate the next generation of Arctic researchers | Aarhus University | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> University of Greenland Greenland Institute of Natural Resources University of Manitoba Technical University of Denmark | 2015 | Development of a semester for students at master level | DKK 495.000 |

As the table shows, the primary focus of all the projects funded is to develop and implement educational activities for master and PhD students. None of the projects focus exclusively on promoting research activities.

However, the specific content and format of the educational activities vary.

Two projects focused on development and implementation of a 5 ECTS summer school that both examine relevant issues within the Arctic region. The two summer schools were targeted at students from a broad range of international universities, who were writing their master or PhD thesis at the time of the summer school. Aalborg University was the project owner of both projects. Box 3.1 describes in more detail the content and format of the summer school ‘Comprehensive Sustainable Development in the Arctic’.

Box 3.1. Comprehensive Sustainable Development in the Arctic

Comprehensive Sustainable Development in the Arctic was a summer school held in May 2014. The summer school focused on political, cultural and social sustainability in the Arctic. The objective was to engage young and aspiring researchers in research on Arctic challenges and opportunities.

The summer school had a duration of three days – each day having its own keynote speaker, who decided a theme of the day and facilitated the activities. Furthermore, all students made a presentation of their master or PhD thesis, which they were asked to prepare ahead of the summer school.

Out of 66 applicants, 15 students were selected to participate in the summer school. The summer school was entirely financed with the grant from DASTI and UArctic. Most of the grant was spent on covering the travelling costs of students and keynote speakers.

Another two projects focused on the development and implementation of a 30 ECTS semester for master students, which shed light on Arctic affairs. One semester was specifically made for engineering students, whereas the other also applied to students with natural science background from several Danish universities. Both semesters took place in Greenland and the project owners were Aarhus University and DTU ARTEK. The project ‘Educate the next generation of Arctic researchers’ is described in more detail in box 3.2 below.

Box 3.2. Educate the next generation of Arctic researchers

Educate the next generation of Arctic researchers was a semester aiming to provide master students with specific and in-depth knowledge of Arctic affairs as a part of their master programme.

The semester consisted of five courses focusing on Arctic relevant issues such as Arctic marine ecosystems, Arctic mineral resources and governance of climate change. Seven students were enrolled.

The semester was offered in the spring 2015 with support from DASTI and UArctic. Most of the grant was spent on covering travel costs of the students. Today, the semester is funded by the Government of Greenland and the enrolled students can apply for mobility funds through North2North.

Finally, the last two projects focused on developing an e-learning tool for the master course 'Arctic Mineral Resources: Environmental impacts and prevention' and establishing a new joint Nordic master programme called 'West Nordic Studies – Governance and sustainable management'.

DTU ARTEK was responsible for the development of the e-learning tool. Originally, the course was supposed to be a part of the joint venture 'Nordic Mining School' that included various Nordic universities. However, the collaboration ended and instead the course was integrated into the master program 'Master in Mineral Management', which was developed in collaboration between DTU ARTEK and Luleå University of Technology.

University of the Faroe Islands is the project owner of the master programme 'West Nordic Studies – Governance and sustainable management'. It aims to learn social science graduates how to deal with distinct challenges of the West Nordic countries in the Arctic. The master programme still exists with funding from DASTI and UArctic and is described in more detail in box 3.3 below.

Box 3.3. West Nordic Studies - Governance and sustainable management

West Nordic Studies is a Nordic master programme developed in collaboration between five west Nordic universities. The programme focuses on themes such as Arctic climate changes, marine resources and shipping, remote societies, brain drain, etc.

The master programme was launched at University of the Faroe Islands in the autumn of 2015 where a total of five students were enrolled. In 2016 that number increased to 10 students.

The master programme has received grants from DASTI and UArctic three times. The first two grants were used to finance the employment of an academic employee responsible for 1) establishing the master programme at the university and 2) developing a new research area at the university, which provides a basis for the academic content of the programme. The third grant (not part of this evaluation) was used to finance the employment of a research assistant who helps develop the programme further.

Aside from DASTI and UArctic, the programme has received grants from The Nordic Council of Ministers, NORA and different Nordic funds.

3.2. EFFECTS AND ADDITIONALITY OF THE PROJECT GRANTS

Firstly, the following section presents the direct effects of the project grants and application processes for the project holders and rejected applicants respectively. *Secondly*, the additionality of the project grants is analysed, thus examining what the projects holders would have done without the project grants. And *thirdly*, the effects of the project grants are discussed and evaluated in light of the overall and strategic objectives.

3.2.1. Direct effects of the project grants

The project grants have had both similar and different effects for the projects funded. The direct effects of the grants can be summed up as follows.

- **Development and realisation of new ideas for collaborative projects**

For two projects (Comprehensive Sustainable Development and The Negotiation of Change and Continuation in the Arctic) the grants enabled new ideas for activities to come up that corresponded with the needs of the Aalborg University at the time. In these two cases, it had not been decided to initiate educational activities of the sort that was funded with the grants. And so, the grants worked as a catalyst for the realisation of new ideas and the establishment of partnerships between institutions that had previously talked about working together – but up until this point had not applied for funding to realise cooperation.

- **Implementation of developed concept**

For one project (West Nordic Studies) the grants enabled the University of the Faroe Islands to launch a new master programme with a distinct disciplinary specialisation within sustainability. Prior to the project, the university was involved in the concept development of the programme with the other project partners. However, the project grants paved the way for the implementation of the programme, as it enabled the university to hire a scientific employee to both oversee the management of the programme and develop a new research area underpinning the programme.

- **Broader range of project partners**

For one project (Nordic Mining School) the grant enabled an extension of the project partner group. Thus, a large proportion of the project grant was used to finance the participation of Aarhus University in the project who was not a part of the project to begin with.

- **Accelerated development and implementation**

For two projects (Arctic engineering semester and Nordic Mining School) the grants enabled the project holders to implement the projects at a much faster speed than they could have without the grants. DTU ARTEK had already made a strategic decision to develop an e-learning tool and a semester focusing on Arctic relevant issues for engineering students. However, the grants boosted the process of maturing and developing the ideas, thus making it possible to realise the projects at an earlier point than it would have been possible otherwise.

- **Broader and more qualified course offerings**

For one project (Arctic Engineering Semester) the grant enabled the project holder to expand the content, activities and target group of the project. Aarhus University had already launched the first Arctic Engineering Semester when they applied for the project grant. However, the grant made it possible to extend the course catalogue and offer a full semester instead of only a few classes the following year. In turn, this meant that the university could offer a semester of relevance for a larger group of students than it would have been possible otherwise.

- **Larger pool of qualified applicants**

For two projects (Comprehensive Sustainable Development and The Negotiation of Change and Continuation in the Arctic) the grants paved the way for attracting a large proportion of applicants, who wished to participate in the summer school – thereby strengthening the possibilities to put together a diverse group of qualified participants. This was possible as the grants enabled the project holders to cover the travel expenses for the participants, which was of particular importance for the project held in Greenland, as travelling in the Arctic is very expensive. It is assumed that few students (especially at a master level) could have covered the expenses themselves.

Finally, for both *rejected* applicants, the application process has had positive effects.

For one applicant (University of Greenland), the possibility to apply for a project grant has stimulated the efforts to develop a new series of master courses in Nature and Health Sciences. Thus, the courses were financed with a grant from DASTI and UArctic the following year. The establishment of the courses would not have happened at this speed without the grant.

For the other applicant (Roskilde University), the application process led to an extended researcher network. Thus, the applicant became acquainted with a Greenlandic researcher in conjunction with the application process. They have subsequently managed to raise funds for another Arctic relevant project at the Danish Council for Independent Research.

3.2.2. **Additionality of the project grants**

It varies how the project holders assess the additionality of the project grants. Thus, approximately half of the project holders assess that even though the project grants have contributed with positive effects, they most likely could have gone through with the projects without the grants. This applies for the project holders at DTU ARTEK and Aarhus University.

Common to both of their projects, is that they were initiated before the project holders had the opportunity to apply for funding. And so, the project holders assess that they probably could have raised funds from other sources, e.g. internally at the university. For DTU ARTEK, though, the grants from UArctic made it possible to involve other universities in the project.

The remaining project holders (Aalborg University and University of the Faroe Islands) assess that activities funded through the project grants would not have been carried out without the grants. At both universities, the primary reason is lack of resources to apply for the funds necessary for these kinds of activities.

Thus, one project holder at Aalborg University explains that the university did not have internal means to implement these kinds of educational activities at the time. Instead, they usually find means for such activities through larger project grants from schemes such as NordForsk or Horizon 2020, in which a part of the total grant is allocated for educational activities. However, schemes like these are quite bureaucratic and thus require resources that Aalborg University did not have at the time.

The same issue goes for the University of the Faroe Islands. According to the project holder, it is often a challenge for small universities to find the resources necessary to write a qualified application for comprehensive schemes such as Horizon 2020. This is partly because the university does not have employees, who specialise in writing applications, opposite some of the larger universities. It is challenge, which is further complicated by the fact that it is not always allowed to allocate grants for the coverage of labour costs:

"In order to participate in new research and education collaborations, we need to find additional means for salaries. For this we can apply for Danish, Nordic and European grants. But to write such an application is a lot of work – especially if you apply for Horizon 2020 grants. As a small university, we don't have the capacity to write qualified applications for those kinds of grants. Because we don't have a unit with employees who specialise in writing research applications, setting up research budgets, etc. It is up to the single researcher to do all this work, and nobody has the time. So, when we apply for funds we go through for instance NORA and other Nordic funds whose application procedure is quite easy and manageable. But their grants are typically small and cannot always go to labour costs. That is why the grants from UArctic have been a match made in heaven for us."

Lau Blaxekjær, University of the Faroe Islands

Thus, grants appear to have most additionality at smaller member institutions with scarce resources that hinder the making of qualified project applications.

One project holder (from the project 'Comprehensive Sustainable Development') states that it would have been possible to implement the project with *reduced* funding. But he also points to the fact that reduced funding naturally would have had some consequences for the quality of the project. With reduced funding, the summer school probably would have taken place in Denmark (as did the summer school the following year) instead of being located in Greenland in order to bring down travel costs. In prolongation, this would most likely have resulted in a lower number of applicants, because many Arctic interested students regard Greenland as "the place to go" – and perhaps find Denmark less interesting:

"The summer school could have existed with a smaller funding, but then it would have been at another location. If you want to have a summer school in Sisimiut (Greenland), then it is necessary with a grant of this size. The following year we held another summer school for half the grant size. And therefore, we decided to conduct the summer school in Aalborg instead because that was what we could afford. But it was clear that it affected the clientele. There were fewer applicants that year – probably because some saw it as a less "exotic" location. So, a lower funding would have limited what we were able to do, but it wouldn't have made it impossible. But without funding at all, it would have been impossible."

Robert Thomsen, Aalborg University

Furthermore, interviews with the project holders show that it is seemingly only a few of them, who have become more engaged with UArctic related activities because of the project grants. Several project holders do, however, participate regularly in UArctic activities such as thematic networks, conferences and assemblies. But most of them would have been engaged in these activities regardless of the project grants.

However, University of the Faroe Islands stands out in this respect. Thus, the rector of the university explains that the university had been a member of UArctic for more than a decade, but that it up until recently had been a quite passive membership. However, this has changed with

the project grants. E.g. based on a request of UArctic, the university has established a new thematic network on Arctic Coastal Communities for Sustainability in collaboration with a range of international universities from outside of the Kingdom of Denmark:

"We were members of UArctic prior to the project, but we did not use our membership. But now we are active and have attended several meetings for member institutions in Uarctic. Further, we now have established a Thematic Network, which was one of the requirements from UArctic to the first project application."

Sigurð í Jákupsstovu, University of the Faroe Islands

Finally, the project grants have to some extent been a lever for the enrolment of two new members of UArctic (Copenhagen Business School and Greenland Institute of Natural Resources).

Copenhagen Business School joined UArctic because it enables them to initiate cooperation with researchers at member institutions (both within and outside of the Kingdom of Denmark), which they up until today have had limited or no cooperation with. The possibility to have this cooperation funded through DASTI and UArctic was a decisive factor for their enrolment. Without the project grants, they probably would have applied for Horizon 2020 grants targeted at Arctic projects instead.

Greenland Institute of Natural Resources decided to join UArctic on request of University of Aarhus and University of Greenland, with whom the institute cooperates on projects funded by the project grants. However, had the universities not been project partners, the institute probably would not have enrolled in UArctic because the institute had the impression that only educational institutions were eligible to become a member (and the institute currently has no students).

Thus, the project grants have had an additional effect, as they have paved the way for the enrolment of some of the new members in UArctic. However, the remaining members have not become member because of the opportunity to apply for project grants.

3.2.3. Effects of the project grants on the overall and strategic objectives

Based on the desk research and interviews with the project holders, it is evident that the project grants up until now *primarily* have contributed to strengthen Arctic education and cooperation between research institutions within the Kingdom of Denmark.

As can be seen from the project portfolio, all projects focused on educational activities at master or PhD level. Thus, the grants have enhanced the opportunities for students to specialise in Arctic affairs. And they have given the universities valuable experiences when it comes to arranging Arctic educational activities, which may position them better in future application processes for Arctic project grants. In order to achieve grants extensive experience within relevant areas is often a prerequisite to raise funds. Thus, grants like these are an important way for the members to build up a 'solid resume', which they can benefit from in other application processes.

Furthermore, the project portfolio reveals that all projects, except for one, were conducted in partnerships between member institutions from the Kingdom of Denmark. In addition, a total of four projects also included international partners from outside of the Kingdom of Denmark.

Several interviewees also emphasise that they have expanded and strengthened their Arctic research network because of the projects. For instance, both project holders at Aalborg University emphasise that the project has led to new professional relations with researchers they were not acquainted with beforehand. Here, the project grants were crucial for the development of cooperative relations between institutions that otherwise compete for grants most of the time:

"Within the Arctic research, we are often summoned to meetings focusing on cooperation, but such meetings are naturally much more productive when there actual grants allocated for cooperation. In many ways, it makes sense to cooperate, but it can be very complicated to get there, partly because the Danish universities are asked to compete for grants. However, with the grants and the UArctic network it makes sense to cooperate – also because the grants are quite small. I think that the grants have meant a great deal to the fact that now the universities cooperate."

Lill Rastad Bjørst, Aalborg University

One project holder, though, believes that the project grants could be used more actively as a lever to promote cooperation with international members of UArctic. This would be possible by allowing the project holders to allocate a part of the grant to international partners.

The project grants have to a lesser extent contributed to strengthen Arctic research and innovation. Thus, none of the funded projects focus exclusively on activities to enhance research and innovation. Only one project (West Nordic Studies) aimed at hiring a scientific employee to conduct research as one of his main tasks.

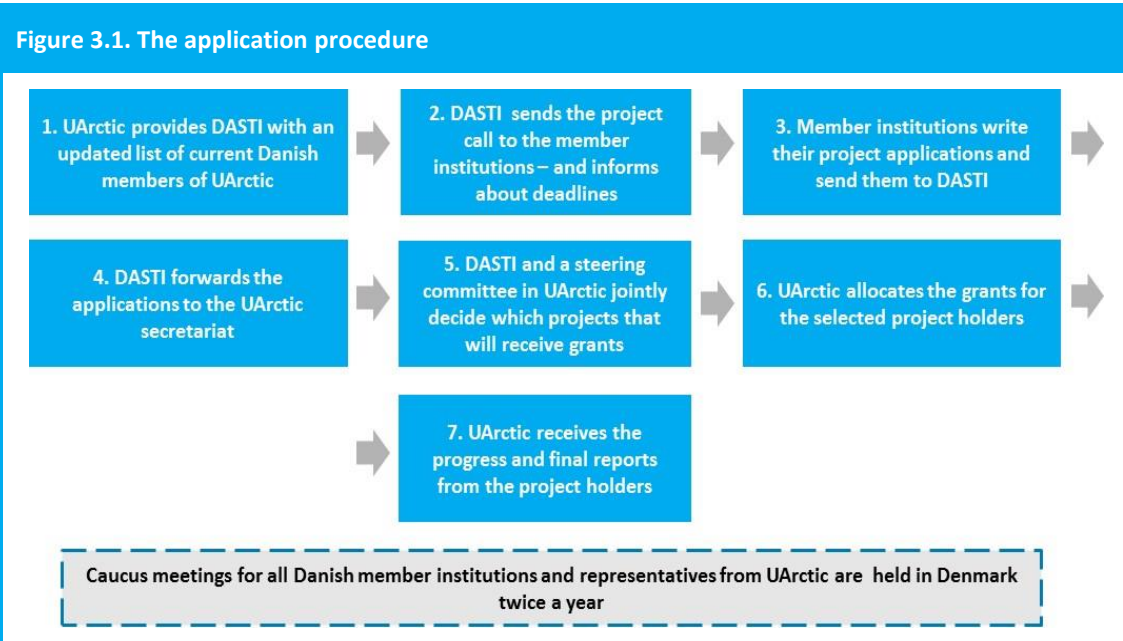
This primarily has to do with the size and funding period of the project grants, which will be elaborated further in section 3.3 below.

3.3. ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROJECT GRANTS

The following section *firstly* describes the administrative process and division of tasks between DASTI and UArctic. And *secondly* accounts for the applicants' assessment of the described procedures. *Thirdly*, the value added by including UArctic in the administration of the project grants is discussed. And *lastly* the expediency of the grant size and funding period are evaluated.

3.3.1. The administrative process

Figure 3.1. below provides an overview of the administrative process and division of tasks between DASTI and the secretariat of UArctic when member institutions from the Kingdom of Denmark apply for project grants.



As is apparent from the figure, both DASTI and UArctic are involved in the application process. DASTI informs the Danish members about the project call (including an outline for the project proposal, deadlines for submission of proposals, budgets, etc.) and receives the project proposals from the applicants. Afterwards, DASTI and UArctic jointly decide which projects will receive the grants based on how well the proposals account for:

- The project’s overall goal, progression, deliverables, activities and budget as well as the coherence between these parameters
- The coherence between the project and the UArctic mission
- The sustainability of the project. Thus, how the project holders make sure that the project can continue prospectively when the funding ends.³

When the decision is made, UArctic distributes the grants to the project holders and receives the mandatory reports on progress and results of the projects.

Aside from the activities related to the application process, DASTI invites all Danish member institutions and representatives from the UArctic secretariat to a so-called ‘Caucus meeting’ twice a year. Here, the member institutions discuss matters such as how to increase the involvement of the members in UArctic activities, progression on current projects and perspectives for future cooperation on projects.

Several interviewees – both among the project holders and representatives of the UArctic secretariat – emphasise that these meetings are an important way to engage and build up relations between the member institutions. The meetings are regarded as a crucial prerequisite to understand how to have a share in the project grants:

³ The evaluation criteria are explicated in the project call from 2016.

"If you don't come to these meetings, you don't have a chance to know how to have a share in the project grants. That's why all participate here."

Lise Lotte Sørensen, Aarhus University

3.3.2. The applicant's assessment of the application procedure

Generally, both project holders and rejected applicants emphasize the application procedure positively for being quite simple and unbureaucratic. In their experience, there are only few formal requirements to the format and content of the project application compared to other application procedures, which makes it easier to write an application in accordance with the current needs of the university.

The opinion of most project applicants is that DASTI also has a clear and professional communication on the project calls, deadlines for project proposals, etc. ahead of the submission of proposals. And they assess that the applications are evaluated on the basis of relevant evaluation criteria.

Furthermore, the project holders generally assess that they have had an effective dialogue with the UArctic secretariat on matters such as distribution of the grants as well as submission of progress and final reports. Thus, most project holders perceive it to be a manageable task to debrief on project results. Generally, they assess the secretariat of UArctic as being very professional and accessible if questions occur.

However, some project applicants also believe that there are downsides to the open and unbureaucratic application procedure. For some applicants, the few guidelines have made it difficult to figure out what DASTI and UArctic require in the applications and how they weight the assessment criteria according to one another. Especially for those members whose applications were rejected, the assessment process appears somewhat opaque and they have had difficulties figuring out exactly why their project application was rejected.

"These grants have both strengths and weaknesses. On the one hand, it is not too complicated to apply, as the format and content of the application is very open. On the other hand, this also causes some unpredictability in the consideration of the applications. When the requirements and process are so unbureaucratic (but otherwise attractive) it is not quite transparent why the application is rejected."

Jørgen Ole Bærenholdt, Roskilde University

Furthermore, to a couple of project holders it is unclear how the progress and final reports are processed and used by the UArctic secretariat and DASTI.

Even though these challenges are emphasised from more sides, some interviewees also argue that the requirements to the application and evaluation criteria have become clearer in the recent project calls – and that it was primarily an issue in the first one or two calls.

Finally, some interviewees argue that both DASTI and UArctic could do more to *facilitate* networking and collaboration between member institutions getting together on applying for new projects. Not least because member institutions are encouraged to cooperate and coordinate each other's applications – and some members (particularly among the non-applicants) have

found it challenging to establish the cooperative constellations necessary. This is also part of the reason why they have abstained from applying for projects.

3.3.3. The value added by including UArctic in the administration of the project grants

Most interviewees assess that the inclusion of UArctic in the administration of the project grants has its benefits.

Firstly, all project holders consider that UArctic has played a crucial role in raising awareness about project activities among relevant target groups, particularly international students. The project holders have used UArctic as a platform for international marketing of the projects, e.g. by promoting the projects in UArctic's online study catalogue. And this has increased the project holders ability to access broader and more qualified groups of applicants than they would have otherwise.

Secondly, some interviewees – both among non-applicants and representatives of UArctic – argue that UArctic contributes to a more qualified assessment of the submitted project applications. As the UArctic secretariat is located at Nordic universities and daily cooperates with Arctic researchers, it has knowledge of ongoing activities within international Arctic research and education. This enables the secretariat to ask critical questions and point towards international researchers, who may be of interest for the project holders.

Even though the project holders in certain areas agree that the inclusion of UArctic in the administration of the project grants has its benefits, there are also critical remarks to the involvement of UArctic:

- *Firstly*, some interviewees – both among applicants and non-applicants – believe that DASTI and UArctic could encourage the member institutions to make use of UArctic's resources more actively, e.g. the thematic networks. Both in conjunction with projects and in general. They argue that the Caucus meetings primarily focus on the possibilities to get project funding and that they lack knowledge of how to get involved in UArctic activities that appear relevant. And so, the general attitude among these interviewees is that some members miss out on some of the potentials of being a member of UArctic.
- *Secondly*, some applicants question the involvement of UArctic in the administration of the project grants. They regard it to be a rather costly model, considering that 5-10 percent of each project grant goes to the coverage of overhead expenses in the UArctic secretariat and the project holders only make use of the resources of UArctic to a limited extent.

3.3.4. Assessment of the grant size and funding period

When it comes to the size and funding period for the project grants, there are differing views.

For most projects, the funding period of one year is regarded suitable relative to the objective and activities of the project. This applies particularly for projects in which both activities and time-span are rather narrowly defined, e.g. to develop and implement a summer school.

However, for projects consisting of activities with a longer time-span, the one-year grant period can be challenging. Firstly, because the project holder not necessarily has spent the project grant within the implementation period (e.g. University of the Faroe Islands has applied for extension of the project grant). And secondly, because it embeds an uncertainty in the project, as the project holders cannot be sure that projects can proceed when the funding has ended.

In addition, most grant holders regard the grant size as suitable relative to the objective of the grant. However, this naturally reflects that project activities are customised to match the size of the grant. Thus, many members have applied for projects that evolve around educational activities, as the grant size of maximum 500.000 DKK in many cases is too small to fund research activities.

Some interviewees explain, that if the grants were to promote Arctic research with long-term effects, the 'best' way would be by building up Arctic research capacity at the member institutions. For instance, by hiring PhD or Postdoc students for a period of two or three years. However, this will often require a larger grant that extends over a longer period.

"If you want to do something that works in the long run, you should do more to educate researchers in the field. I believe it is better to invest in young PhD and Postdocs, who receive 4-500.000 DKK over a period of two or three years. It's all about building up research capacity. That means funds for people that you choose to invest in for a longer period."

Niels Vestergaard, University of Southern Denmark

3.4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the desk research and interviews, this section highlights four recommendations to provide inspiration for DASTI's prospective efforts to improve the project grants.

- **Consider possibilities to increase additionality of the grants – e.g. by enhancing competition for project funds.** The project grants have led to several positive effects for the project holders. However, some member institutions assess that they could have realised the same effects by applying for grants elsewhere. Thus, it is recommended to consider how to increase the number of applications and thereby improve the opportunities to support the projects that are considered to have the greatest additionality. For instance, by encouraging both non-applicants and new members to apply for projects. Furthermore, 7 out of 9 applicants have received a project grant, which means a quite high hit rate at 78 percent.
- **Explication of evaluation criteria and reasons for refusals of applications.** Generally, the applicants have a positive view on the open and unbureaucratic application procedure, and most applicants find the evaluation criteria relevant. However, some applicants argue that it is has been difficult to figure out what were required of the applications, how the assessment criteria were weighed and – for the rejected applicants – why exactly their application was rejected. It is therefore recommended that DASTI and

UArctic have a clearer and more transparent dialogue on these matters with its members.

- **More flexible grant size and grant period and increased focus on research activities.** For most projects, the grant size and period have been suitable relative to the objective of the project. But for some projects with more long-term activities the grant period is too short. Furthermore, the grant size is considered too small to finance most research activities. It therefore recommended to extend the period of the grant and to raise the maximum limit of the grant size, if the project grants are supposed to 1) have an effect on the aim to strengthen Arctic research and 2) support Denmark's leading position within Arctic research.
- **Strengthened involvement of UArctic in the administration of the project grants.** All project holders recognise certain benefits to the inclusion of UArctic in the administration of the project grants – especially when it comes to international marketing of project activities. However, there are critical remarks to the added value relative to its costs. Thus, it is recommended that if UArctic prospectively will be a part the administration of the project grants, their area of responsibility ought to be more clear. Furthermore, they should help the members become engaged with UArctic activities more actively, e.g. by linking the projects to the thematic networks of UArctic.

Chapter 4

The mobility grants

4.1. OVERVIEW OF THE MOBILITY GRANTS

From 2013-2015, DASTI has allocated two mobility grants for UArctic. The first grant (2013-2014) was implemented through a pilot project ('Mobility DK Pilot') and the second grant (2015) was implemented through UArctic's mobility programme 'North2North'.

In both grant periods, the mobility grant has covered travel expenses of students, researchers and other faculty staff⁴, who partake in educational or research activities at another institution than their own abroad. These activities include full semesters, conference attendance, field work, etc. Thus, it is possible to apply for a mobility scholarship for a wide range of activities of varying duration.

Furthermore, both mobility grants have covered travel expenses and salary of five students during their internship at the UArctic secretariat.

And finally, the first grant period covered a re-design of the student-focused section of the UArctic website as well as a stand reservation fee and registration fees at the annual European Association for International Education Conference in Prague 2014.

Table 4.1 below provides an overview of the number of granted scholarships for students and researchers throughout the period.

Table 4.1. Granted scholarships from 2013-2014 and 2015

| | 2013-2014 | 2015 | Total |
|-------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Students | 19* (24 %) | 27** (34%) | 46 (58%) |
| Researchers | 11 (14 %) | 23 (29%) | 34 (43%) |
| Total | 30 (38%) | 50 (63%) | 80 (100 %) |

**Including two internships, **including three internships*

The table shows that 19 scholarships for students and 11 scholarships for researchers were granted from 2013-2014. This number raised to 27 student scholarships and 23 researcher scholarships in 2015. The total number of scholarships has raised from 30 to 50 from the first to the second grant period and a few more scholarships (58%) have been allocated for students.

The rise in the total number of scholarships from the first to the second grant period reflects that the mobility grant increased from DKK 750.000 to DKK 1.005.000.

⁴ Throughout the rest of the evaluation, 'faculty staff' are included in the same category as researchers.

The scholarships are eligible for students and researchers, who study or work:

- at an UArctic member institution in the Kingdom of Denmark and wish to have an exchange stay at another member institution *within* or *outside* the Kingdom of Denmark
- at a UArctic member institution *outside* the Kingdom of Denmark and wish to have an exchange stay at another member institution *within* the Kingdom of Denmark.

However, in the first grant period scholarships were not granted for students and researchers, who came from the Kingdom of Denmark and wished to go on exchange to another member institution *within* the Kingdom of Denmark. This was changed in the second grant period.

Table 4.2 provides an overview of how the mobility grants are distributed between students and researchers from the groups described above.

Table 4.2. Incoming and outgoing students and researchers in total, 2013-2014 and 2015

| | 2013-2014 | 2015 | Total |
|---|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Travels <u>outside</u> the Kingdom of Denmark | 20* (25 %) | 24** (30 %) | 44 (55 %) |
| Travels <u>within</u> the Kingdom of Denmark | 0 (0 %) | 7 (9 %) | 7 (9 %) |
| Travels from <u>outside to</u> the Kingdom of Denmark | 10 (12 %) | 19 (24 %) | 29 (36 %) |
| Total | 30 (37 %) | 50 (63 %) | 80 (100 %) |

*Including two internships, **including three internships

The table shows that 44 scholarships were granted to students and researchers travelling *outside* the Kingdom of Denmark, seven scholarships were granted to travels *within* the Kingdom of Denmark and 29 scholarships were given to students and researchers from abroad traveling to the Kingdom of Denmark. Thus, 55 percent of the scholarships have been allocated for students and researchers, who come from the Kingdom of Denmark and wish to have an exchange stay at an institution outside of the Kingdom of Denmark.

Furthermore, the number of foreign travellers who go to the Kingdom of Denmark has increased with almost 100 percent – from 10 travellers in the first grant period to 19 travellers in the second grant period.

4.2. EFFECTS AND ADDITIONALITY OF THE MOBILITY GRANTS

The following section *firstly* presents an overview of how the recipients of the mobility grants are distributed among different member institutions in the Kingdom of Denmark. *Secondly*, the effects and additionality of the mobility grants are discussed. And *thirdly*, the impact of the mobility grants on the overall and strategic objectives are discussed and evaluated.

4.2.1. Overview of the use of the mobility grants by member institution

The desk research and interviews reveal that there are quite big differences in the use of mobility grants by member institutions. Table 4.3 below provides an overview of the incoming and outgoing students and researchers (who have received scholarships) from each member institution. Thus, it reflects at which institutions the grants have led to the highest mobility rates.

Table 4.3. Incoming and outgoing students and researchers by institution, 2013-2014 and 2015

| | Travelers to member institution | | Travelers from member institution | | Total |
|---|---------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|
| | 2013-2014 | 2015 | 2013-2014 | 2015 | |
| Roskilde University | 1 | 1 | - | - | 2 (2 %) |
| Aalborg University | 1 | - | 3* | - | 4 (5 %) |
| University of the Faroe Islands | 1 | 5 | 2 | 11 | 19 (22 %) |
| DTU ARTEK | 3 | - | 3* | 4 | 10 (11 %) |
| University of Greenland | 2 | 13 | 12 | 5* | 32 (37 %) |
| Aarhus University | - | 7 | - | 6 | 13 (15 %) |
| University of Southern Denmark | - | - | - | 5** | 5 (6 %) |
| University of Copenhagen ⁵ | 1 | - | - | - | 1 (1%) |
| Uummanaq Polar Institute ⁶ | 1 | - | - | - | 1 (1%) |
| NORDECO | - | - | - | - | - |
| Copenhagen Business School ⁷ | - | - | - | - | - |
| Greenland Institute of Natural Resources ⁸ | - | - | - | - | - |
| Total | 11 (13 %) | 26 (30 %) | 19 (22 %) | 31 (35 %) | 87⁹ (100 %) |

*Including one internship, **Including two internships.

As the table shows, the mobility grants have mostly been used by researchers and students travelling to or from member institutions located in the Arctic region. Thus, University of Greenland and University of the Faroe Islands account for 37 percent and 22 percent of the incoming and outgoing students and researchers respectively. Then comes Aarhus University (15 percent), DTU ARTEK (11 percent) and University of Southern Denmark (6 percent).

Furthermore, the table shows that the number of incoming and outgoing students and researchers are generally high at small member institutions. Both University of Greenland and University

⁵ University of Copenhagen was not a member of UArctic during the Mobility DK Pilot project. However, as the university had expressed interest in becoming a member, it was decided to grant a scholarship to a researcher going to the university.

⁶ Uummanaq Polar Institute (Greenland) is not a member of UArctic. However, the first mobility grant period was a pilot project with the objective to gain experience of different forms of mobility, and therefore, the rules of grant distribution were more flexible.

⁷ Copenhagen Business School joined UArctic in 2015.

⁸ Greenland Institute of Natural Resources joined UArctic in 2015.

⁹ The number does not add up to 80, as some scholarships in the second grant period have been allocated to students or researchers who have travelled between member institutions *within* the Kingdom of Denmark. Thus, they count twice as both an incoming and outgoing student or researcher.

of the Faroe Islands have around 600 students, whereas DTU ARTEK has around 100 students. Thus, the degree of mobility is generally higher at smaller member institutions.

The distribution of the mobility grants must be seen in light of the fact that not all member institutions have decided to join the mobility programmes.

University of Southern Denmark was not a part of the Mobility DK Pilot project from 2013-2014, but decided to join the North2North mobility programme in 2015. And Aalborg University was a part of the Mobility DK Pilot project, but decided not to join the North2North mobility programme.

In addition, NORDECO, University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen Business School and Greenland Institute of Natural Resources have neither participated in the Mobility DK Pilot project nor the North2North programme.

4.2.2. Effects and additionality of the mobility grants

As is clear from the previous section, three member institutions have not made use of the mobility grants. In addition, some have only used the grants to a very limited extent. Thus, the mobility grants have had no or limited effects on student and researcher mobility at nearly half of the member institutions. The reason is both that not all member institutions have participated in the mobility programmes and only some member institutions have appointed an international coordinator¹⁰ to administer the grants (this will be elaborated further in section 4.3.1).

For the rest of the member institutions, the grants have had a positive effect on the student and researcher mobility.

It is not possible, though, to determine exactly what the recipients of the scholarships would have done without the mobility grants (the additionality of the grants) as this evaluation does not include interviews with students and researchers, who have received mobility scholarship.

Interviews with the international coordinators and project holders suggest, however, that the recipients probably would have applied for mobility grants from other programmes such as Nordlys, Nordplus and perhaps Erasmus as well as smaller private funds.

But since travelling in the Arctic is very expensive and grants from North2North are relatively small – particularly for those travelling abroad for longer periods of time – some interviewees explain that recipients of North2North scholarships *also* apply for grants as the before-mentioned as one of several contributions to cover all travel expenses. It is necessary to apply for grants from more sides to have the extensive expenses covered:

“We have managed to raise mobility funds for our students at ‘West Nordic Studies’ from other programmes like Nordplus. But this is not enough for the students to have all their expenses covered abroad a whole semester. So, the students are very dependent on grants from for instance North2North. It is an important offer.”

Lau Blaxekjær, University of the Faroe Islands

¹⁰ The universities who have enrolled in North2North have appointed an international coordinator to administer the institution’s North2North scholarships.

Thus, even though other mobility schemes cover the same types of expenses for travels in the Arctic, the interviewees generally assess that North2North meets an important need, due to very high travel expenses in the Arctic.

Finally, two project holders (from Aarhus University and University of the Faroe Islands) explain that there are important synergies between the mobility and project grants. Thus, students from the West Nordic Studies master programme often use North2North when they take the mandatory semester abroad, cf. the previous paragraph. Likewise, students who follow Aarhus University's semester in Greenland (which was funded with the project grant in spring 2015) often have their travel expenses covered with a North2North scholarship:

"The mobility grants are a good supplement to our project. Our project (semester in Greenland) now continues without the project grants. But the students who take our courses travel to Greenland with help from the mobility grants. The mobility grants support the projects."

Lise Lotte Sørensen, Aarhus University

4.2.3. Effects of the mobility grants on the overall and strategic objectives

The desk research and interviews show that the mobility grants *primarily* have had a positive effect on Arctic research and education at five of the current 11 member institutions (University of the Faroe Islands, University of Greenland, Aarhus University, DTU ARTEK and University of Southern Denmark).

Thus, these institutions have had the highest proportion of incoming and outgoing students and researchers. This particularly applies for University of the Faroe Islands and University of Greenland who account for 59 percent of the total mobility at all member institutions.

Furthermore, the desk research and interviews suggest that the mobility grants *primarily* have supported educational activities, as most of the scholarships were allocated for student exchanges and students internships (58 percent).

This may have to do with the size of the scholarships, which will be elaborated further in section 4.4 below.

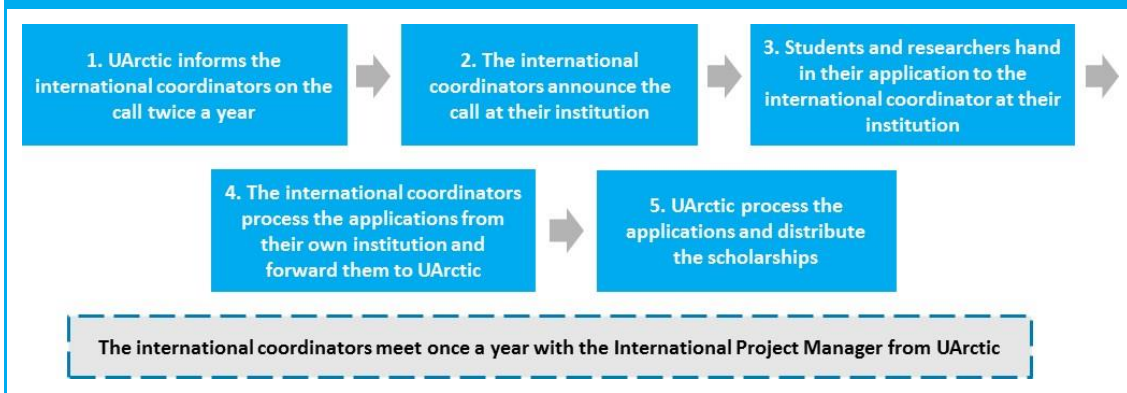
4.3. ADMINISTRATION OF THE MOBILITY GRANT

The following section *firstly* describes the administrative process and division of tasks between the member institutions and the UArctic secretariat when distributing the North2North scholarships. *Secondly*, the interviewees' assessment of the administration procedures and certain framework conditions around the North2North programme are discussed.

4.3.1. The application process

Figure 4.1 provides an overview of the administrative process and division of tasks between the international coordinators at the member institutions and the UArctic secretariat, when students and researchers from the member institutions apply for North2North scholarships.

Figure 4.1. The application procedure



As shown in the figure, the North2North call is open twice a year. In conjunction with each call, UArctic informs the international coordinators at the member institutions about deadlines of the calls. Subsequently, the coordinators inform both students and researchers at their respective institution on the possibility to apply.

Students and researchers who wish to apply for a scholarship, submit an application to the international coordinator at their institution who process all applications from the institution. If there are more applicants than scholarships reserved for the institution, the international coordinator makes a prioritised list based on the assessment criteria described at UArctic's webpage¹¹.

The international coordinators forward the applications to UArctic that distributes the scholarships among the applicants. If the total number of applications exceeds the number of scholarships, UArctic decides how the scholarships are distributed among the applicants from the institutions. Yet, this situation has not occurred, and scholarships were in excess in 2015. Thus, to distribute the entire mobility grant, the call was open for a longer period than planned.

Furthermore, the international coordinators have up until now met twice with the international project manager from the UArctic secretariat to take stock of the mobility grants and discuss the form of administration. Prospectively, the international coordinators have decided to have such meetings once a year.

4.3.2. Assessment of the application process and framework conditions

The international coordinators generally consider the application procedure to be quite un-bureaucratic and manageable despite some administrative confusion to begin with. For instance, the international coordinators were unsure whether the applications should be sent to UArctic or the exchange institution. Uncertainties like these have been resolved at the meetings between the international coordinators and UArctic.

¹¹ See the criteria at: <http://education.uarctic.org/mobility/eligibility/>

However, some interviewees emphasise certain aspects of the North2North programme that may have contributed to a limited demand for scholarships:

- *Firstly*, some of the member institutions (Aalborg University and University of Copenhagen) have not enrolled in North2North, as they lack internal resources to appoint an international coordinator who can administer the applications from students and researchers at the institution.
- *Secondly*, the target group is quite narrow compared to other mobility programmes (e.g. Erasmus) and the universities often have scarce resources to market the mobility programmes. Hence, North2North in some cases tends to ‘lose momentum’ among the broad range of mobility programmes that have a broader target groups and more scholarships. Thus, if knowledge of the programme is to be disseminated, it often requires international coordinators, or other faculty staff members, who have a special interest in the programme.
- *Thirdly*, the North2North scholarships are quite small¹², which make them less interesting for particularly researchers who often need to raise funds for longer-term activities such as field work.
- *Fourthly*, North2North is still a quite new mobility programme. Naturally, it will take time before knowledge of the programme has spread more widely among students and researchers.

4.4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on results of the desk research and interviews, this section highlights four recommendations. The first two recommendations focus on how to increase the engagement of member institutions in North2North. The following two recommendations emphasise how to increase the demand for scholarships among researchers and students.

- **Enrolment of new member institutions in North2North.** To some of the member institutions the mobility grants have had a relatively large impact on student and researcher mobility. To others, though, the grants have had limited or no effect, caused by e.g. lacking resources of the institution to appoint an international coordinator. Thus, it is recommended to explore whether it is possible to reduce the institutions’ administrative costs by participating in North2North. For instance, by reserving a part of the mobility grant to cover some of the costs associated with the administration of the scholarships. Or by establishing initiatives where resources to administration of the grants are bundled across institutions.

¹² Students and researchers can apply for a maximum of EUR 3000 (around DKK 22.000).

- **Increased marketing of North2North targeted at member institutions.** Five member institutions have not enrolled in North2North for various reasons. Therefore, it is recommended that UArctic and DASTI increase their efforts to inform member institutions about North2North and the benefits of being a part of the programme.
- **Increased marketing of North2North targeted at researchers and students.** North2North is a new and rather small mobility programme compared to other mobility programmes such as Erasmus. Thus, awareness of the programme remains limited among students and researchers. Therefore, it is recommended to consider how the member institutions can increase the marketing efforts at their respective institutions – and thereby increase the number of applicants for scholarships.
- **More flexibility in the size of scholarships.** The interviewees generally consider the mobility grant to be an important contribution to the coverage of the student's and researcher's travel costs when going abroad. However, some interviewees consider the scholarships to be too small to be of 'real' interest for particularly researchers. It is therefore recommended to raise the maximum limit of scholarships sizes. Thus, making it possible to apply for both small and larger grants. Furthermore, some interviewees suggest that the destination (and not only the purpose) of the travel should be decisive for the size of the scholarship. However, this may imply that the application procedure becomes somewhat more bureaucratic.

Chapter 5

The distribution of the grants to UArctic

5.1. OVERVIEW OF THE OPERATING GRANTS

From 2010-2015 the operating grants have been allocated for a wide range of UArctic related activities.

Desk research reveal that throughout the first implementation model from 2010-2012 where the whole grant (DKK 3m per year) was allocated for operating costs of UArctic, the grants have been used to provide financial support for member institutions who host UArctic activities. For instance, they have helped increase the administrative capacity at the International Secretariat (University of Oulu) and the UArctic Finance Office (University of Alaska Fairbanks). Additionally, the grants have, among others, helped finance various seminars, functions of the Vice-President Indigenous, meetings in the Rectors' Forums of UArctic and the Council of UArctic and much more.

Interviews with representatives from UArctic show that throughout the second implementation model from 2013-2015 where a part of the total grant (DKK 0,75m per year) was allocated for operating costs, the operating grants have been used to provide various forms of information services. This includes, among others, salaries of employees responsible for communications tasks (e.g. maintenance of the website), arranging the annual UArctic congress, publication of annual reports and the UArctic magazine 'Shared Voices' and more.

Throughout the whole funding period, UArctic have had autonomy to dispose the grants for operating costs itself.

5.2. EFFECTS OF THE SHIFT IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF GRANTS

The interviews with representatives from UArctic reveal that the shift in the distribution of grants has had a positive effect on the engagement of Danish member institutions in UArctic related activities.

Thus, it was decided to change the implementation model to activate the Danish member institutions, whose engagement was 'lagging behind' compared to other member institutions abroad. At this point, UArctic had positive experiences of allocating part of the Norwegian grants for projects, thereby enhancing the engagement of the Norwegian member institutions.

According to UArctic representatives, this strategy has worked. Particularly, they believe that the project grants have increased the participation of member institutions in e.g. thematic networks and conferences of UArctic:

"I believe this is also a good model for UArctic because UArctic does not make sense if we don't have engaged members. And it is fair that the Danish funding covers activities that engage the Danish members. And after we did that change we have had a stronger engagement. So, it has had positive effects and I am very happy for the present structure."

Lars Kullerud, President UArctic

Additionally, interviews with e.g. University of the Faroe Islands show that the university has become more actively engaged in UArctic after receiving the project grants. For instance, the university has established a new thematic network. Furthermore, the project grants and the shift in distribution of grants have for two of the most recent members of UArctic (Copenhagen Business School and Greenland Institute of Natural Resources) been important factors to their enrolment, c.f. chapter three.

The enhanced engagement of the Danish member institutions is assumed to particularly strengthen research activities of the member institutions, since the thematic networks and conferences etc. largely serve as a meeting place for international Arctic researchers.

5.3. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Increased focus on engagement of the member institutions.** The change in the implementation model has had positive effects when it comes to engagement of the member institutions from the Kingdom of Denmark. However, interviews with representatives from the member institutions suggest that – despite improvements – there is still potential for further engagement in UArctic related activities. Therefore, it is recommended to consider how to use the present implementation model as a lever to further enhance the engagement. For instance, by improving links between projects and activities of UArctic, such as thematic networks.
- **Documentation of how grants for operating costs are spent.** Through interviews with the UArctic secretariat it has been possible to uncover which activities the grant for operating costs has covered. However, desk research reveals that the current format of the annual reports (from 2013 and onwards) does not require documentation of the use of the operating grants. Therefore, it is recommended to consider to add such documentation to ensure greater transparency in the use of the operating grants.

Appendix

Method and data

As a part of the evaluation, a total of 19 interviews have been conducted with project owners, rejected project applicants, non-project-applicants, international coordinators, UArctic representatives and representatives from the three newest member institutions. The interviews were conducted from October till the beginning of November 2016. Table A below provides an overview of all interviewees.

Table A. Interviewees

| Type of interviewee | Name and institution |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Project owners | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lau Blaxekjær, University of the Faroe Islands• Sigurð í Jákupsstovu, University of the Faroe Islands• Lill Rastad Bjørst, Aalborg Universitet• Robert Thomsen, Aalborg Universitet• Pernille Erland Jensen, DTU ARTEK• Niels Hoedeman, DTU ARTEK• Lise Lotte Sørensen, Aarhus University |
| Rejected applicants | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jørgen Ole Bærenholdt, Roskilde University• Gert Mulvad, University of Greenland |
| Non-applicants | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Niels Vestergaard, University of Southern Denmark• Finn Danielsen, NORDECO |
| International coordinators | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Helle Rod Søgård, Roskilde University• Anette Møller, University of Southern Denmark |
| UArctic representatives | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lars Kullerud, President UArctic• Outi Snelman, Vice President Organisation UArctic• Pirkko Pulkkanen, International Project Manager, UArctic |
| New members | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pernille Mogensen, University of Copenhagen• Dorte Salskov-Iversen, Copenhagen Business School• Thomas Juul-Pedersen, Greenland Institute of Natural Resources |

Aside from the interviews, extensive desk research has been carried out on various written material provided by DASTI, the UArctic representatives and own web research. Text box B below provides an overview of the reviewed material underpinning the evaluation.

Text box B. Written material

- Contracts/frameworks for the grant funding of University of the Arctic
- Annual reports from UArctic to DASTI
- Project calls from 2015 and 2016
- Overview of the total number of project applicants
- Project applications
- Final reports from projects
- UArctic Steering Committee – Terms of reference
- Evaluation on the mobility pilot DK project (2013-2014) from UArctic
- Overview of DASTI funded UArctic mobility results 2013-2016
- UArctic: Evaluating 10 years of collaboration
- UArctic Strategic Plan 2020
- The UArctic Magazine: Shared Voices

The methodology underpinning the evaluation has both its strengths and weaknesses.

The qualitative approach has made it possible to obtain an in-depth understanding of the content, effects, additionality and administrative process around *all* the completed projects from the evaluation period. This provides a strong basis for recommendations on how to improve the project grants – not least based on the experiences of the project holders.

Furthermore, the written material and interviews have given important insights into how the mobility grants are distributed and at which institutions they have had the largest impact. However, as the recipients of the mobility scholarships are not included in the evaluation, it is not possible to determine exactly what difference the mobility grants have made. This would have required either additional interviews or a survey among the students and researchers in question.

Finally, the interviews with the UArctic representatives have given important insights into what activities the operating grants have covered from 2013-2015, which was not evident from the written material.