

# FINAL REPORT ON ACTIVITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

ICC EMERGING LEADERS INITIATIVE



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**2018-2022**



## INTRODUCTION

The 2018 Utqiagvik Declaration mandates ICC to “Support Inuit youth organizations and encourage Inuit youth to share and participate fully in all ICC activities.” In response, ICC Alaska launched the Emerging Leaders Initiative. The initiative is funded by a grant from the Oak Foundation.

The initiative’s main goal is to build the next generation of Inuit leaders who are familiar with and interested in ICC’s work, thereby ensuring organizational leadership transition and succession. We believe that this effort will contribute to overall organizational sustainability.

Emerging Leaders have been mentored by ICC leadership and have attended international meetings with their mentor. In addition, they attended ICC Alaska Board meetings, ICC Executive Council meetings and the Circumpolar Inuit Health and Wellness Summit.

The main deliverable of this initiative is recommendations, from the youth perspective, on how to improve engagement of youth in ICC. The recommendations will be delivered to Delegates at the 2022 General Assembly.

## SUMMARY OF INITIATIVE OBJECTIVES

- Build relationships with Inuit youth, six Alaskan, one Canadian, one Greenlander, and one Chukotkan who will learn about ICC history and current efforts at the international level by attending international meetings while being mentored by ICC leadership. Their experiences will be utilized to gather insight to help determine future youth engagement efforts.
- Develop recommendations, from a youth perspective, for improving Inuit youth interest and engagement in the ICC; to share and discuss with ICC leadership in anticipation of the 2022 ICC General Assembly, where delegates can consider further action.

## HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

The question of how to best engage youth in ICC has been on the organization's mind for a long time. More pressure was put on the organization when the Inuit Circumpolar Youth Council was dissolved in 2006 and ICC no longer facilitated youth and elders’ conferences during the ICC General Assembly due to the increasing costs associated with having two separate international meetings. As a result, ICC has struggled to determine the best ways, given the limited resources, to engage youth in ICC's work but yet recognition and attention to the issue has remained on the organization's agenda ever since.

The need for a youth strategy was identified at the 1992 General Assembly and thereafter the Inuit Circumpolar Youth Council (ICYC) was established in Kuujuaq, Canada in November 1994. ICYC began working on a variety of fronts to address youth issues and also to be a part of the decision making process creating solutions for common issues and priorities that youth deal with in our homelands. Due to financial constraints, the ICYC was not able to continue as a youth organization and moved to have a youth and elder seat on the delegation at the ICC General Assemblies.

The Emerging Leaders Initiative was the first time ICC provided an opportunity for youth to directly engage in the organization in this way.



## DEVELOPING THE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Initiative was designed for the Emerging Leaders to directly engage in the organization, reflect on their experience and solicit input from other Inuit youth to develop a set of recommendations to deliver to the delegates at the 2022 General Assembly.

The Emerging Leaders decided to take a multi-pronged approach towards developing the draft recommendations first by deploying an online survey and then hosting virtual/telephonic focus group meetings. The final draft recommendations will then be circulated to Circumpolar Inuit youth and feedback will be solicited through virtual/teleconference meetings to finalize the recommendations.

### THE SURVEY

The engagement survey was created by the Emerging Leaders to help ICC identify ways to improve engagement of young Inuit, 18–35 years old. The survey results helped determine a way to move forward in the development of recommendations and to gain information on youth interests in ICC. The survey was translated and is available in English, Russian, Inuktitut and Kalaallisut (Greenlandic) to ensure participation from youth across Inuit Nunaat.

#### Survey Results

The survey received 69 participants from Alaska, 36 from Canada, 39 from Greenland and 10 from Russia with a total of 154 participants addressing questions regarding issues and priorities for youth in Inuit Nunaat. Below is a breakdown of each ICC region's top three priorities based on the survey results.

- **Alaska:** *Food Sovereignty, Indigenous Knowledge, Culture*
- **Canada:** *Environment, Food Sovereignty, Human Rights*
- **Greenland:** *Environment, Culture, Human Rights*
- **Russia:** *Environment, Culture, Education*

### FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS

The Emerging Leaders hosted virtual focus group meetings to engage directly with Inuit youth while creating a safe space to connect and discuss best ways to communicate and engage youth in ICC. The Emerging Leaders hosted four focus group meetings throughout the year along with a workshop on “*Ways to Advocate for your Community*” at the First Alaskans Elder and Youth Conference. These focus group discussions helped tremendously as the Emerging Leaders drafted the recommendations on ways to engage youth in ICC.



# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

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## **1. For ICC to create space for young Inuit to learn and advocate for ourselves through empowerment and intergenerational Elder to youth connections by**

- a. Holding an Inuit Youth Summit that engages generational knowledge sharing of our histories, traditions, languages and priorities;
- b. Supporting fundraising efforts in creating and maintaining space for Inuit youth that allows a safe and inclusive space for cultural conversation;
- c. Creating a learning and skills building opportunities for Inuit youth to gain strength in advancing youth priorities;
- d. Including Inuit youth at ICC involved organizations and effectively communicate knowledge to our communities.
- e. Facilitating events that create space for Inuit youth-led and regionally-based gatherings

## **2. For ICC to ensure youth are included in all spaces that decisions are being made to create skills and generational knowledge building/capacity by**

- a. Creating two youth seats, as full participants, on the ICC Executive Council that rotates over countries.

## **3. For ICC to create educational/training opportunities for Inuit youth by**

- a. Developing a resource toolkit and providing education materials with information about ICC involved organizations (locally, regionally, internationally) for young people to learn more about ICC and its activities
- b. Participation and engagement through webinars, lectures and traditional ways of learning
- c. Intentionally engaging Inuit youth-in-transition who have aspirations or completed post-secondary education and support the advancement of their career through training and development.

## **4. For ICC to identify ways of eliminating/addressing barriers through**

- a. Ensuring that urban, rural, countries, and those outside traditional homelands are equitably engaged
- b. Facilitating a space for youth to engage in traditional family skills and child-rearing practices
- c. Ensuring documents, resources, and communication materials is made available in all Inuit languages
- d. Working with countries, regions, and communities to address ways of accessing programs or funds for sustainable hunting
- e. Continuous advancements regarding infrastructure deficits in Inuit Nunaat
- f. Engaging with young Inuit in defining development and economic stability in our communities

## **5. For ICC to continue to advocate for the revitalization of Inuit culture, language, and traditions by**

- a. Ensuring ongoing efforts are made to create and sustain programs that revitalize and enhance our culture, language and traditions.
- b. Encouraging traditional healing methods and ways of thinking with youth engagement
- c. To ensure Inuit youth have access to traditional knowledge holders and Inuit Elders

# CONCLUSION

*To address the needs and gaps of Inuit youth engagement at ICC-involved activities will be for ICC to identify ways to implement the recommendations within the organization. This could be done by way of creating an Inuit youth strategy embedded into the operational plans in each region and involving Inuit youth perspective in the development of ICC's Declaration. It has been noted that Inuit youth aspire to participate in activities internationally but lack financial support to meaningfully engage in forums. There is also recognition that each region across Inuit Nunaat are very similar, yet unique and access to funding varies across the board. It is encouraged that ICC continues to leverage their existing connections in their respective partnerships to advocate for enhanced financial support to strengthen youth involvement and to build capacity amongst youth through mentorship and training opportunities. This approach will help to amplify empowerment amongst youth to participate and assist in the strengthening of our future and our communities.*





# ABOUT THE INUIT CIRCUMPOLAR COUNCIL

Since the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) was founded in 1977 by the late Eben Hopson of Utqiaġvik, Alaska, ICC has flourished and grown into a major international Indigenous Peoples' organization representing approximately 180,000 Inuit of Alaska, Canada, Greenland and Chukotka (Russia). ICC holds the Non-Governmental Organization Consultative Status II with the United Nations Economic and Social Council and is a registered NGO with consultative status with numerous UN specialized agencies and bodies (i.e., registered observer for multiple UN treaties and conventions). ICC is a Permanent Participant of the Arctic Council.

ICC strives to strengthen unity among Inuit of the Circumpolar; promote Inuit rights and interests at the international level; develop and encourage long-term policies that safeguard the Arctic environment; and seek full and active partnership in the political, economic and social development of the Circumpolar North. The ICC represents the interests of Inuit, and we have offices in four Arctic regions – Alaska, Canada, Greenland and Chukotka. We are one people, in a single homeland, across four countries.

The ICC receives its mandate from a General Assembly held every four years. At the Assembly, delegates approve a declaration that is the international organization's mandate for a four-year term.



INUIT CIRCUMPOLAR COUNCIL

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