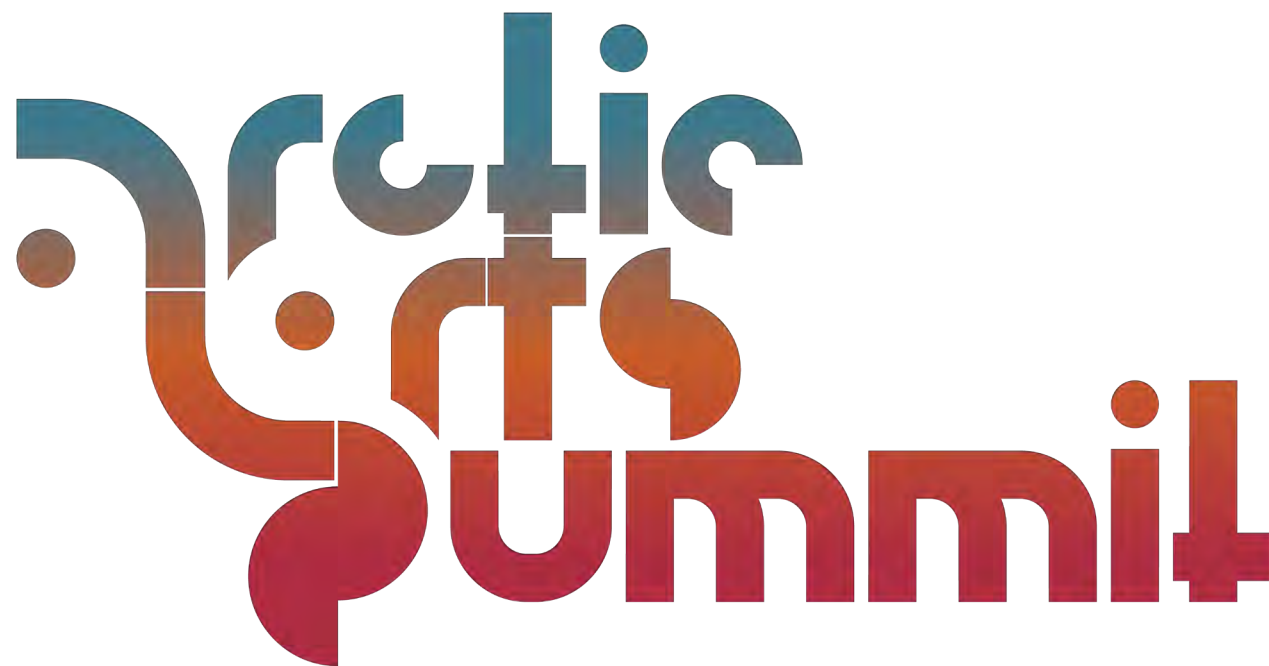




General Information

16.-18. June 2026

Umeje/Umeå, Sweden

Table of Contents

Buerie b��teme! Welcome!	02
About the 2026 Arctic Arts Summit	03
Language	04
Goals of the 2026 Summit	05
Themes of the 2026 Summit	06
Programming	07
Discursive Program	07
Plenary Sessions	07
Panel Sessions	08
Artistic Program	09
Off-summit Programming	10
Co-organizers	11
Workshops, Network Events and Closed Meetings	12
Delegates	13
Frequently Asked Questions	14
For More Information	15

Buerie b  eteme! Welcome!

From the heart of Saepmie, we at Viermie K welcome you to the Arctic Arts Summit 2026 in Ubmeje/Ume   and to the lands, stories and artistic visions of the North.

At the Arctic Arts Summit we gather artists and institutions to make possible a deep conversation between lands, peoples and futures.

Viermie K is a S  mi network for organizational, artistic and curatorial collaboration, born from the belief that Indigenous culture and art is a force that shapes Saepmie  s and the Arctic  s cultural, political, social and ecological realities. Rooted in Saepmie and connected across borders, we work to strengthen S  mi cultural sovereignty — to make visible the knowledge, memory, and innovation that flow through our people, languages and movements.

As we welcome you to Ubmeje in 2026, we invite you to listen deeply. To the sound of languages still spoken. To the knowledge we inherited long ago. To the rhythm of our joiks and to the silent voices of our lands. This Summit is an opportunity to move beyond representation, toward relationships and a common future.

During the event, Arctic Arts Summit will host conversations, performances and encounters that center S  mi, Indigenous and Arctic perspectives within the global arts ecosystem. We welcome you to join these moments as compatriots in a shared creative future and hope that you make new networks and friends for life.

Let Arctic Arts Summit be a space where Arctic knowledge meets contemporary expression, where art becomes a bridge between histories and futures, and where every meeting is an act of recognition.

From Saepmie to the Arctic world — welcome to a Summit of voices, visions and vitality.

Viermie K
SAMISKT KULTURN  TVERK

Jerker Bexelius
Chair of the board





About the Arctic Arts Summit

Her Excellency the Right Honourable Mary Simon, Governor General of Canada, delivers a keynote speech to open the 2022 Arctic Arts Summit. Government of Yukon / Andrew Strain.

Arctic Arts Summit (AAS) is a unique international platform that operates at the intersection of arts, cultural policy, and research in the Circumpolar North. It is both the world's only Arctic cultural policy summit and a catalyst for artistic development.

The Summit brings together leaders, artists, cultural workers, academics and political decision makers of Arctic countries and Indigenous Nations across the Circumpolar North to strengthen arts and culture, stimulate international collaboration and facilitate timely dialogue from a Northern perspective.

The Summit emphasizes the social and community-building role of the arts, foregrounds Indigenous knowledge and leadership, and strengthens international networks across the Arctic. By bridging art, research, and policy, AAS highlights the importance of culture as a driver for sustainability, resilience, and geopolitical dialogue in the North.

Since its inception, the Arctic Arts Summit has travelled across the Circumpolar North, growing in scope and significance. The first Summit was held in **Harstad, Norway (2017)**, establishing a new platform for cultural policy dialogue in the Arctic. In **Rovaniemi, Finland (2019)**, the Summit deepened its academic focus on Arctic research and cross-border collaboration.

After a pandemic delay, the **Whitehorse, Canada (2022)** edition expanded the Summit into a hybrid model, centering Indigenous voices and reaching thousands of participants worldwide through a broad digital investment. Together, these editions laid the foundation for the Arctic Arts Summit as a unique meeting place where art, policy, and knowledge intersect.

While each event is unique to the location where it is held, every Summit includes three primary components:

1. a co-created discursive conference programme, prioritizing Indigenous perspectives, engaging with policymakers, academics as well as artists and cultural organisations which is accessible online and on-site;
2. a related festival programme to experience Arctic art and culture, stimulating artistic as well as creative production and collaboration; and
3. master classes, workshops and other exchange of knowledge formats to strengthen the Arctic ecosystem of collaboration through culture.



About the 2026 Arctic Arts Summit

Exhibition reception for Young Arctic Artists in 2019. Photo Janne Jakola.

Vierme K, Umeå kommun, Region Västerbotten, Swedish Arts Council, Umeå University and Arctic Arts Summit Secretariat will co-host the fourth Summit, themed “Land, Power, Art,” in Umeå, Sweden from 16-18 June 2026.

The program of Arctic Arts Summit 2026 will unfold across multiple formats and platforms, combining high-level dialogue with broad public engagement. Central to the Summit are the *plenary sessions*, where key voices from arts, Indigenous communities, academia, and politics come together. Alongside, a wide range of *parallel sessions* hosted by international partners will open space for diverse perspectives and discussions. The *Off-summit program* will activate venues across Umeå, giving grassroots organizations and small institutions opportunities to connect their projects to the Summit. Through the *Co-organizers program*, regional cultural actors in northern Sweden will gain capacity and visibility in an international context. The Summit also features *workshops, live TV broadcasts and podcasts*, ensuring broad accessibility and documentation. Artistic projects and presentations across the city — in exhibitions, performances, concerts, literature, and film — will create dialogue and resonance with the Summit's cultural policy themes.

Language

English is the official language of the Arctic Arts Summit because of its wide use throughout the circumpolar region. However, we acknowledge, respect and uphold the many languages spoken throughout the Arctic and endeavour to make space for them in our programming on-site and online.

At the 2026 Summit, all major signage will be available in Ume Sámi, North Sámi, South Sámi, Lule Sámi, Pite Sámi, Finnish, Meänkieli, Swedish and English to celebrate Umeå's enduring Sámi community as well as the broad linguistic diversity of other communities who call it home.

Goals

of the 2026 Summit

TETHER exhibition reception for Arctic Arts Summit delegates. Mike Thomas photo/Yukon Arts Centre.

1. Strengthen cultural life in Arctic communities

Increase funding for infrastructure, networks, and programs that strengthen Arctic communities by supporting cultural spaces, institutions and systems that foster intergenerational learning and exchange. Ensure social and cultural sustainability are prioritized as fundamental aspects of community development.

2. Advance Indigenous self-determination and leadership in arts and culture

Center Indigenous knowledge, worldviews, and ways of being as guiding forces for artistic and cultural development. Create opportunities that increase the visibility, agency, and representation of Indigenous peoples in decision-making at all levels — from cultural practices and institutions to national and international policymaking.

3. Transform narratives about the Arctic

Shift perceptions of the North from a region of exploitation to one of knowledge, creativity, and cultural leadership rooted in Indigenous and northern perspectives.

4. Reshape power dynamics and resource flows

Change funding, investment, and political structures by reorienting priorities and values so that Arctic communities guide development to serve local people first, ensuring benefits in cultural, social, and economic development.

5. Strengthen geopolitical dialogue and preparedness

Affirm arts and culture as forces of sovereignty and resilience in the Arctic, where people-to-people diplomacy, cultural exchange and Indigenous leadership shape international discourse and collective preparedness.

6. Build sustainable collaborations and networks

Foster enduring relationships and partnerships across borders, disciplines, and sectors to expand support systems, amplify northern voices, and strengthen cultural infrastructure.



Themes of the 2026 Summit

Land Defenders Panel in Whitehorse. Photo
Government of Yukon. Andrew Strain

1. **Small places, strong communities**

Celebrating cultural life, language, and resilience in the Arctic. Arts and culture are drivers of thriving communities. These sessions will ask what defines a thriving community in the Arctic? What successful efforts are being made to revitalize northern languages?

2. **Indigenous Leadership**

Centering Indigenous knowledge, ways of being, and agency to transform institutions, practices, and policymaking. Almost all of the Arctic is Indigenous land, yet Indigenous People are rarely in agential positions in arts and cultural institutions, governments.

3. **Sovereign Stories**

Reclaiming narrative sovereignty to reshape stories about the Arctic on local and global stages.

4. **Sustainable Futures**

Centring arts and cultural practices to reshape values, resources, and priorities in the Arctic.

5. **The Art of Geopolitics**

Positioning arts and culture as forces of resilience, diplomacy, and preparedness in uncertain times.

6. **Sharing and shaping**

Fostering networks, partnerships, and collaborative dialogue between artists, institutions, governments, and communities across the Arctic.

Programming

Delegates in Rovaniemi 2019.
Photo Janne Jakola

The Arctic Arts Summit offers a wide variety of programming in order to create the strongest possible platform for international sharing, policy making, collaboration and understanding. Content proposals are welcome from organizations for various aspects of artistic and discursive programming, with submission methods noted below. The Summit organizers will collaborate in determining the final program.

Discursive Program

The Summit's discursive program provides opportunities for artists, policy makers, researchers, politicians and cultural workers to engage in cross-border dialogue on topics related to the Summit's themes. These sessions, hosted by various stakeholders across the Circumpolar North, create critical opportunities for delegates to make new and renew existing connections, share knowledge and extend conversations beyond borders.

[Suggestions for discursive programming are welcome online](#)

The 2026 Summit will offer 33 discursive sessions, along with 3 plenary sessions.

Plenary Sessions

Plenary sessions are a key component of the Summit's programming. Sessions are generally political and take place at the beginning of each day.

Principles:

- Speakers should be selected with the input of regional and Indigenous representatives, NGO's and national and international government agencies (including Indigenous governments).
- Sessions should be programmed with the goal of encouraging meaningful conversation, rather than providing a platform for political platitudes or provocative content for the sake of provocation.

Panel Sessions

Delegates in Rovaniemi 2019.
Photo Janne Jakola

The 2026 Summit will offer 33 discursive sessions across three days of programming. These conversations are a core part of the Summit's ability to affect change. Sessions are hosted by a variety of organizations across the Circumpolar North. Hosts agree to pay for the relevant costs of sessions (such as speaker fees) and should be invited to collaborate on determining the specific shape of the session.

Principles:

- Each panel should be composed of participants from different nations and always have Indigenous representation. No panels should support discussion only between participants of one nation.
- Panel topics must relate to one of the Summit's themes and work to achieve its stated goals. Speakers should represent a variety of perspectives who do not often have the opportunity to be in discussion with each other (such as artists and policymakers).
- Selection should reflect diversity in art forms, types of actors, and perspectives, with particular emphasis on Indigenous and minority representation (such as LGBTQIA+, gender, disability, etc.)
- International delegation organizers should be consulted on potential speakers from their respective region.
- Session hosts should be invited based on affinity to the topic. Approximately half of the hosts should be international.

Artistic Program

Detail of Sonya Kelliher-Combs, *Idiot Strings*, in 2019. Photo Janne Jakloa

The Summit's Artistic Program creates opportunities both to showcase existing artistic projects and create new exhibitions, performances and artworks. The Artistic Program showcases the breadth and depth of contemporary artistic practice across the Arctic, and ensures artists' voices remain central to the Summit's activities. Organizations and collectives [can submit proposals for artistic programming online](#).

Artistic Commissions

The Summit will commission limited amounts of original artwork, across disciplines, for debut at the event.

Principles:

- Commissions should reflect the Summit's themes and goals, with particular attention to Land, Power, Art.
- Projects should be collaborative, engaging artists, curators, and communities from across the Circumpolar North.
- Commissions should highlight Indigenous leadership and knowledge, and promote cultural exchange across borders.
- Works should be presented during the Summit and, when possible, have a continued life afterward—through touring, publication, or digital presentation.
- Sustainability and respect for the land and local communities should be embedded in both process and presentation.

Off-summit Programming and Co-organizers

Off-summit Programming and *Co-organizers* are two complementary funding instruments designed to translate the overarching goals of the Summit into practice by stimulating both breadth and depth in the artistic and discursive program.

Both Off-summit Programming and Co-organizers are directed toward northern Sweden but serve different functions: Off-summit opens the Summit's thematic framework to a wide range of smaller actors and projects in the region, while Co-organizers strengthen established artistic environments and their capacity to act on an international stage. Together, they contribute to fulfilling the Summit's overarching goals of strengthening the role of culture in sustainability, collaboration, and leadership in the Arctic. International projects are an integral component of the Arctic Arts Summit, but are ineligible for consideration as Co-organized programming. International organizations can [submit a proposal online](#) for consideration as part of the Summit's artistic programming.

Off-summit Programming

Purpose: The Off-summit program is intended for actors in northern Sweden and strengthens the goal “*Build sustainable collaborations and networks*” by offering top-up funding to smaller organizations, associations, groups, and small institutions. The support is directed towards artistic, professional, or discursive projects connected to the Summit's topics, particularly “*Small places, strong communities*” and “*Sharing and shaping*.” Through this support, new meeting places can be developed, local perspectives made visible, and intercultural exchange promoted. Organizations can [submit proposals for Off-summit programming online](#).

Principles:

- The funding should function as complementary, not full financing.
- Projects must stimulate participation, presence, or collaboration in connection with AAS.
- Selection should reflect diversity in art forms, types of actors, and perspectives, with particular emphasis on Sámi actors and national minorities in northern Sweden.
- Off-summit programming will be based on an open call and subject to available venues and budget.

Funding model: Each actor may be granted 30,000 SEK in top-up funding.



Co-organizers

Purpose: The Co-organizers support is directed at arts and cultural environments in northern Sweden to strengthen the Summit's long-term anchoring in the region. The support is particularly connected to the goals “*Strengthen cultural life in Arctic communities*” and “*Reshape power dynamics and resource flows*,” as well as the topic “*Sustainable Futures*.” By supporting local capacity, organization, and infrastructure, the program enhances the ability of regional actors to actively engage in AAS while simultaneously building international networks. Organizations can [submit proposals for Co-organized programming online](#). Organizations are encouraged to think expansively about what opportunities they propose, including but not limited to artistic programming, meetings, workshops, tours, receptions and public events.

Principles:

- The support should be targeted at environments with clear development needs and potential.
- Selection should contribute to long-term reinforcement of artistic and institutional structures in the region.
- Collaboration, capacity-building, and visibility in international contexts should be prioritized.

Funding model: Support may be granted in the range of 50,000–150,000 SEK, depending on the needs, size, and development potential of the organization.

Workshops, Network Events & Closed Meetings

Kaylyn Baker at Unorthodox store during the Arctic Arts Summit's Art Crawl.
Mike Thomas photo/Yukon Arts Centre.

Workshops

Workshops offer opportunities for skill sharing, capacity building and cross-border exchange. Workshops run concurrently with discursive sessions and so should generally be accomplishable in that time frame, except in rare cases where a workshop can run across multiple sessions.

Suggestions for workshops can be [submitted online](#).

Principles:

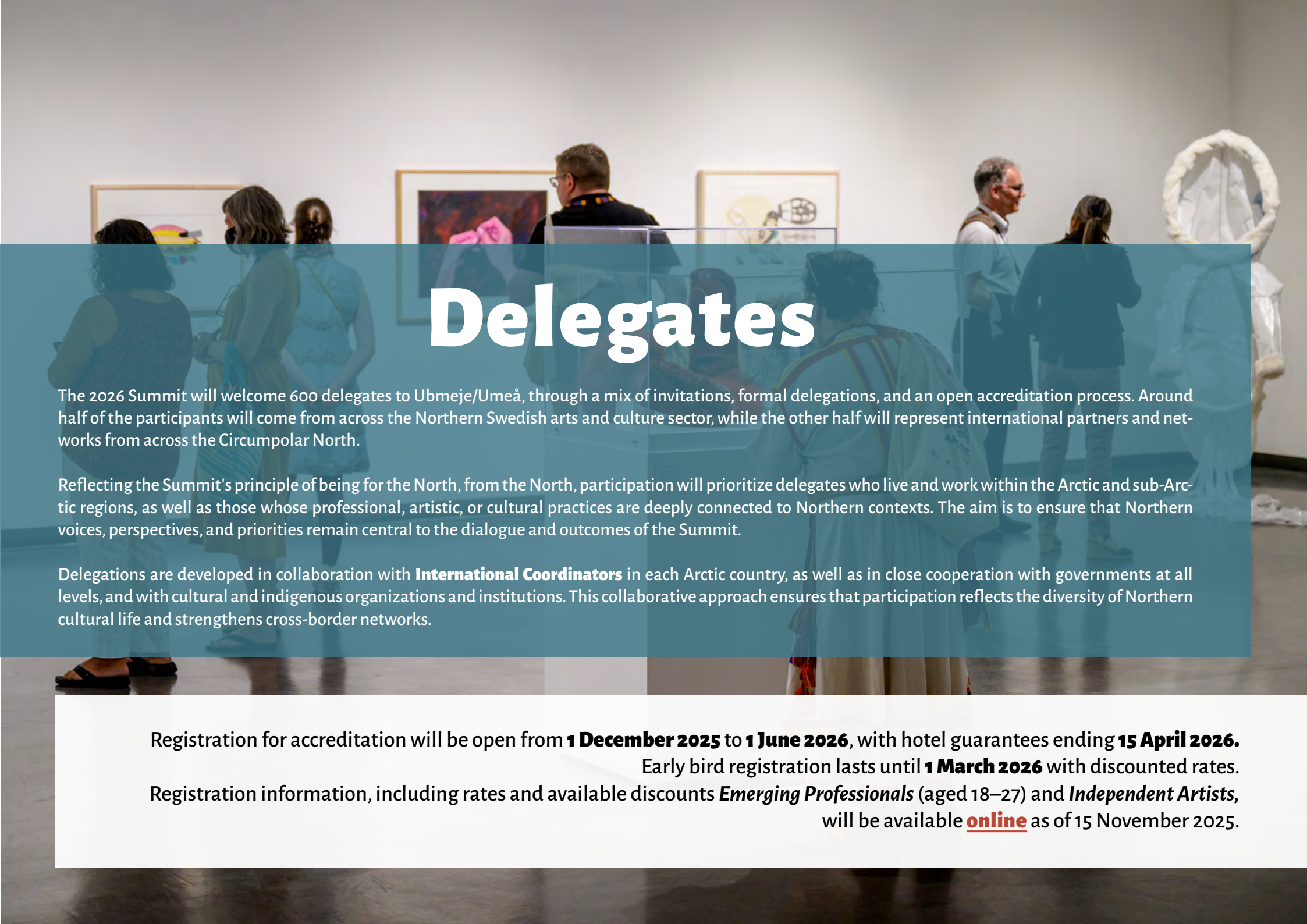
- Workshops should focus on capacity-building, knowledge-sharing, and skill development relevant to Arctic arts and cultural work.
- Priority should be given to workshops led by Indigenous and national minorities practitioners, artists, and cultural leaders.
- Each workshop should aim to produce tangible outcomes — such as new tools, collaborations, or shared methods — that can continue beyond the Summit.
- Workshop formats should encourage active participation, peer learning, and intercultural exchange.
- Accessibility should be ensured by considering linguistic, physical, and cultural needs of participants.

Network Events

Since the Summit brings together artists, cultural workers, academics and policy makers from across the Circumpolar North, it is the perfect place to organize international, discipline-specific gatherings. Space can be provided for these gatherings with advance notice; applications can be [submitted online](#).

Closed Meetings

As a cultural policy forum, the Summit encourages those attending to engage in meaningful work, collaboration and policymaking during the event. Meeting space can be provided for closed door meetings with advanced notice; applications can be [submitted online](#).

The background of the entire page is a photograph of an art gallery. Several people are seen from behind, looking at various artworks on the walls and in display cases. The lighting is soft and even, typical of a museum setting. The overall tone is professional and cultural.

Delegates

The 2026 Summit will welcome 600 delegates to Umeå, through a mix of invitations, formal delegations, and an open accreditation process. Around half of the participants will come from across the Northern Swedish arts and culture sector, while the other half will represent international partners and networks from across the Circumpolar North.

Reflecting the Summit's principle of being for the North, from the North, participation will prioritize delegates who live and work within the Arctic and sub-Arctic regions, as well as those whose professional, artistic, or cultural practices are deeply connected to Northern contexts. The aim is to ensure that Northern voices, perspectives, and priorities remain central to the dialogue and outcomes of the Summit.

Delegations are developed in collaboration with **International Coordinators** in each Arctic country, as well as in close cooperation with governments at all levels, and with cultural and indigenous organizations and institutions. This collaborative approach ensures that participation reflects the diversity of Northern cultural life and strengthens cross-border networks.

Registration for accreditation will be open from **1 December 2025** to **1 June 2026**, with hotel guarantees ending **15 April 2026**.

Early bird registration lasts until **1 March 2026** with discounted rates.

Registration information, including rates and available discounts *Emerging Professionals* (aged 18–27) and *Independent Artists*, will be available **online** as of 15 November 2025.



Frequently Asked Questions

Delegates in Rovaniemi 2019
Photo Janne Jakola

I'm an independent artist. How can I participate in the Arctic Arts Summit?

Independent artists are welcome to register for the Summit at a discounted rate, available online.

I work at an arts organization, non-profit or NGO. How can I participate in the Arctic Arts Summit?

You are welcome to participate in many ways. If you would like to propose artistic or discursive programming, please do so using the relevant online forms above. You may also register to attend the Summit as of 1 December 2025.

If you need assistance, please email contact@arcticartssummit.com

I have an art project I would like to present at the Arctic Arts Summit - can I?

Please submit your project for consideration as part of the artistic or discursive programming using the submission forms: [discursive programming](#), [general artistic programming](#), [Off-summit programming](#), [Co-organized programming](#), [workshops](#) and [network events](#).

If you need assistance, please email contact@arcticartssummit.com

Is the Arctic Arts Summit only for Indigenous peoples and national minorities?

No, the Summit is a cultural policy forum for everyone across the Circumpolar arts landscape. While advancing Indigenous leadership across all aspects of the arts is a goal of the 2026 Summit, the event is inclusive of participants from all backgrounds.

Can anyone apply to register for the Arctic Arts Summit?

Yes, anyone can apply to register for the Summit. Due to limited space, not all applicants may be able to register. However, reflecting the Summit's principle of being for the North, from the North, participation will prioritize delegates who live and work within the Arctic and sub-Arctic regions, as well as those whose professional, artistic, or cultural practices are deeply connected to northern contexts. If you need assistance, please email contact@arcticartssummit.com

Do I have to live in the North to attend the Arctic Arts Summit?

No, you do not need to live in the North to attend. You are welcome to apply to attend the Summit. Please note that due to limited space, priority will be given to those working in the arts and culture field in the Circumpolar North.

If you need assistance, please email contact@arcticartssummit.com

How do I get to Umeå/Ummeje?

Umeå/Ummeje is easily accessible by air, train, bus, or car. Umeå Airport (UME) is located just 10 minutes from the city center, with frequent direct flights from Stockholm Arlanda (ARN) airport, as well as connections from other Scandinavian cities such as Helsinki, Oslo, and Copenhagen. Airport buses and taxis provide quick transport to central Umeå.

You can also reach Umeå/Ummeje by train, with direct daily connections along Sweden's main north-south railway. The journey takes about 6 hours from Stockholm and 5-6 hours from Luleå, arriving at Umeå/Ummeje Central Station in the city center.

Are there hotel booking blocks reserved for delegates?

Yes, hotel blocks have been reserved for delegates until 15 April 2026. Information will be available [online](#) at the Arctic Arts Summit's website as of 1 December 2025. If you need assistance, please email contact@arcticartssummit.com

Do I need separate tickets to attend the artistic programming?

Delegates do not need separate tickets to attend artistic programming at the Summit.

Is the artistic programming available to the public?

Some, but not all, artistic programming will be available to the public. More specific information will be available [online](#) in the months leading up to the event,

Will there be translation available during discursive sessions?

No, translation will not be available during discursive sessions. While we recognize and respect that many languages are spoken in the North today, the Arctic Arts Summit's official language is English due to its prevalence and widespread use across the Arctic. Official delegations may arrange to bring their own translators, and signage will be available in 9 languages throughout the Summit.

Will the city square venue be open to members of the public?

The city square venue will be open to the public in the daytime, but only available for delegates in the evening. More information on program and activities will be available [online](#) in the months leading up to the event.

Can you put me in touch with an artist participating in the Arctic Arts Summit?

No, we cannot put you in direct contact with an artist participating in the Summit. Most of the artists participating have public representation available online, and we encourage you to contact them directly.

Is there an available list of all delegates attending the Arctic Arts Summit?

No, the list of delegates will not be published to comply with privacy legislation.

I am looking for partners in the North for a project I am working on. Can you help me?

No, we cannot recommend potential partners for independent projects. We encourage you to read the Arctic Arts Summit's program and [digital platform](#), as well as attend available events, like Off-Summit programs.

How can I participate in the digital platform?

We welcome submissions to the [digital platform](#), which publishes news, spotlights, original articles, interviews and artist profiles regularly.

Please send your request to contact@arcticartssummit.com for more information.

A longer list of frequently asked questions, which is updated regularly, is available on the [Arctic Arts Summit's website](#).

For More Information

Interested individuals are encouraged to check the [Arctic Arts Summit's website](#) regularly, [sign up to the Arctic Arts Summit's newsletter](#), follow the Arctic Arts Summit on social media. Specific questions can be sent to contact@arcticartssummit.com

