

Annual Report 2022-23

Project Development
& Mentorship



ArctiConnexion

TABLE OF CONTENT

Foreword	3
Background	4
Board of directors and officers	5
Summary of Activities	6
Update on activities	7
Summary of human resources.....	16
Update on the 2019-22 Strategic Plan	17
Annual Financial Statement	17

Foreword

The present report provides a summary of the main activities conducted by ArctiConnexion during the 2022-23 fiscal year. It was compiled with the goal to make the information readily available to our partners, board of directors, and funders.

During 2022-23, ArctiConnexion has been very active in its mission to supporting community-based projects in indigenous communities. Our usual and normal activities resumed after the long wait caused by Covid. Regular travel trips resumed to the North and South. We expanded our human resources and internal capacity to provide services to existing communities including the hire of Leone Grosjean as program coordinator. We also hired Julie Gingras as an administrative assistant for finance. In partnership with the Spence Bay Hunters and Trappers Association we continued the development of the Aqviqtuuq protected area and the food-based conservation economy project Niqihagut. We renewed important funding grants to pursuing the marine monitoring programs in Rankin Inlet and expand to another community. We were granted a new research grant to monitor the environmental impacts of the Meliadine Gold mine near Rankin Inlet. We also accessed new funding grants to support the development of a young hunter's program in Pangnirtung and Baker Lake fostering skills acquisition and cultural continuity with the youth generation. ArctiConnexion was also granted several contracts with the Qikiqtani Inuit Association to monitor the country food species used by Mittimatalirmiut with a main emphasis on narwhal.

We worked toward improving the consistency of our projects, improving relationships with clients and partners, and worked toward ensuring continuity for the organization.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'VH' with a stylized flourish.

Vincent L'Hérault, President / CEO

Background

MISSION: To support, through mentorship and knowledge sharing, indigenous communities in the development of local competencies and leadership for research and applications promoting community well-being.



VALUES:

Equality & Respect

Acknowledging the past and the need for reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous cultures. Moving forward by combining our different epistemology; our strengths and weaknesses.

Caring

Developing genuine relationships with and understanding the needs of communities and people. Listening, being helpful, and maintaining continuity.

Leadership

Steering our own way based on resourcefulness and original expertise and knowledge. Leading by example and taking responsibilities. Being trustable and playing a positive influence on others.

Excellence

Maintaining high expectations in quality and ethics in all aspects of our work. Offering top-end services to communities to the best of our abilities. Showing high commitment and continually seeking improvement.

SERVICES: We provide guidance and training through personalized and culturally relevant mentorship. Mentorship is mostly delivered by Inuit mentors, promoting a balanced reconciliation of scientific and local knowledge. Mentorship emphasizes hands-on learning - observation and experience first- and takes place both in community settings and at “southern” partner institutions.

OUR DETAILED SERVICES ARE

Fundraising · Project planning & Coordination · Community-based Training & Implementation · Protocol development · IQ Documentation · Data Analysis & Reporting · Video production · Social Media & Outreach · Project expansion · Business Development

Board of directors and officers



JIMMY ULLIKATALIK
Manager, Spence Bay Hunters and
Trappers Association - Taloyoak



MAGGIE LUCY KILABUK
Community Justice Officer, Government
of Nunavut - Pangnirtung



ÉMILIE TRUCHON
Association des Constructeurs de Routes
et Grands Travaux du Québec



ANNIE LANDRY
Fisheries consultant,
Magdalen Islands



VINCENT L'HÉRAULT
(President)
ArctiConnexion



VÉRONIQUE PEREZ
(Secretary)
ArctiConnexion

Summary of Activities

FUNDING PROGRAM	PROJECT TOPIC	COMMUNITY	STAGE
CIRNAC/ISC	Young Hunters Program	Pangnirtung	Year 3 of 2
ECCC- Guardians	Guardians of Kangiqtualuk	Pangnirtung	Year 1 of 3
CIRNAC/ISC	Fish habitats	Baker Lake-Taloyoak	Year 3 of 2
CIRNAC/ISC	Young Hunters Program	Baker Lake	Year 1 of 3
CIRNAC/ISC	Niqihaqut- Cut & Wrap Facility	Taloyoak	Year 2 of 3
Cannor	Cut & Wrap Facility	Taloyoak	Year 1 of 2
ECCC-Guardians	Guardians of Aqviqtuuq	Taloyoak	Year 1 of 1
DFO- Oceans Management Contribution Program	Guardians Program	Taloyoak	Year 1 of 2
DFO- Ecosystems and Oceans Science Contribution Framework	Passive Acoustic monitoring	Taloyoak	Year 1 of 2
CIRNAC/ISC	Marine ecosystems	Rankin Inlet	Year 1 of 3
Arctic Net- IQP	Meliadine Mine monitoring	Rankin Inlet	Year 1 of 2
QIA	Food Baseline Study	Pond Inlet	Year 1 of 2

Update on activities

1. Pangnirtung- Young Hunters Program & Guardians of Kangiqtualuk



FUNDER: Indigenous Services Canada, Environment & Climate Change Canada

MAIN PARTNER: Hamlet of Pangnirtung

COLLABORATORS: Maggie Lucy Kilabuk, Natalie Baird, Jamie Evic

OUTLINE: In 2021, we launched a Young Hunters Program offered to the youth of community and delivered by two local coordinators. We ran 10-week YHP programs at spring, summer, fall of 2021 and in the winter of 2022. Programs involved between 10 to 15 local youth from different age groups. Youth were taught traditional hunting and surviving skills and learned to build shelters and tools. Youth harvested country foods that they shared with Elders and family members in the community promoting food security. Youth were taught in Inuktitut during the programs promoting culture and language acquisition. Local partnership was established with the Attagoyuk high school to allow the youth attending both school and the YHP.

In 2022-23, the YHP has graduated over 60 youth from the community. The Pangnirtung YHP is very successful so far and has grown a lot of support from the community residents. We documented the program with the help of the local cameraman David Poisey and we will be starting the editing of a short movie to be used and shared with the community, other communities and partners. Many parents and Elders have praised the program, and the local Hunters and Trappers Association wishes for a permanent program in the community.

DELIVERABLES: 2022-23 Activity and finance report.

BUDGET: 2022-23 = \$215,013.35 (ISC/CIRNAC) + \$606,100 (ECCC)

2. Qamani'tuaq and Taloyoak addressing climate impacts and adaptations on fish habitats



FUNDER: CIRNAC/ Indigenous Services Canada

MAIN PARTNER: Spence Bay Hunters & Trappers Organization, Baker Lake Hunters and Trappers Organization

COLLABORATORS: Ryerson U, DFO.

OUTLINE: In 2022-23, Qamanituaq finalized the assessment phase of the project. However, Taloyoak has paused the program given the bloom of many community-funding programs an outstanding effort to develop a protected area on the Boothia Peninsula. At spring 2022 in Qamani'tuaq, we interviewed 9 Elders, men and women with the help of John Eteegoyok and Hosea Iksirak for translation. We organized small-group workshops, mapping, and recorded the discussions on camera. Through the voice of Elders, we learned more about the impacts of industrial development on freshwater habitats, including the construction of the Agnico Eagle Mine's Meadowbank and Amaruq projects. In the summer of 2022, we collected additional measurements on trace metals in the fish habitats along the tote road leading to the Meadowbank mine. We determined the most vulnerable water body and fish habitats, and measured salinity and trace metals.

DELIVERABLES: Activity and finance report. 1 movie on traditional fishing in production

BUDGET: Total = **2022-23 (Carry over)**

3. Baker Lake Young Hunters Program



FUNDER: CIRNAC/ Indigenous Services Canada

MAIN PARTNER: Baker Lake Hunters and Trappers Organization

COLLABORATORS: Carmen Igutak

OUTLINE: The Qamani'tuaq Young Hunters Program (QYHP) aims to develop climate change preparedness and adaptation skills for Inuit youth by promoting Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and intergenerational knowledge exchange.

In the winter of 2023 and prior to developing a Young Hunters Program, two YHP instructors from Qamani'tuaq travelled to Pangnirtung to take part of the ongoing Young Hunters program (YHP) and learn how it is operated on-site. The first 10-week YHP program was launched in Baker Lake in March of 2023.

The YHP involved local youth from different age groups. Youth were taught traditional hunting and surviving skills and learned to build shelters. Youth harvested country foods such as caribou and fish that they shared with Elders and family members in the community promoting food security. Youth were taught in Inuktitut during the programs promoting culture and language acquisition. Local partnership was established with the Jonah Amitnaaq Secondary School to allowing the youth attending both school and the YHP.

The first YHP in Qamani'tuaq was very successful and has received a lot of support from the community residents. Many parents and Elders have praised the program and the local Hunters and Trappers Organization's vision and efforts.

DELIVERABLES: Activity and finance report

BUDGET: 2022-23 = \$219,130

4. Niqihaqut



FUNDER: CIRNAC/ Indigenous Services Canada Adaptation, Arctic Inspiration Prize, Cannor

MAIN PARTNER: Spence Bay Hunters and Trappers Association

COLLABORATORS: WWF-Canada, Hamlet of Taloyoak, MakeWay Foundation, Nunavut Food Security Coalition.

OUTLINE: Niqihaqut is a project born in Taloyoak, Nunavut, addressing the problem of country food access under the dire of climate change. Our goal is to prepare and build capacity to develop new country food services in the community improving food access for all. In order to make sure that our country food access remains resilient, we will prepare and put into action an adaptive Sustainable Harvest Plan based on traditional values and integrating monitoring data on environmental and wildlife changes and create training opportunities through intergenerational exchanges.

In 2022-23, we initiated the planning of a new Food Processing Centre in Taloyoak. We worked with a construction company to develop blue prints of the building accounting for all different equipment and systems required to process country food, and complying to sanitary regulations defined by the Government of Nunavut's Health Department. We hired a business consultant, Chris Kantowicz from Skipper Otto, to help us develop a budget appraisal, for Niqihaqut.

In April of 2022, a cameraman followed a team of local hunters to document muskox hunting and promote the cut & wrap of muskox meat as part of the Niqihaqut business project.

A team of two people from our Niqihaqut committee, Kubluk Tucktoo and Peter Aqqaq, travelled to Vancouver in 2022 to meet with Skipper Otto and other local fisheries industry and farmer markets. The experience helped the project to think through the development of markets for the selling of country food in Taloyoak, in other communities and abroad, with the priority to sell processed meat at affordable price for the Taloyoak market.

The community of Taloyoak, driven by the work of the Guardians of Aqviqtuuq, collected baseline data through the monitoring of different wildlife species including caribou, muskox, fish, seal and whales. We held a workshop with the SBHTA board members, Elders, and active hunters in the community to collect information on traditional harvest practices and land stewardship with the Taloyoak and drafting a Sustainable Harvest Plan based on the data and information recorded. The Sustainable Harvest Plan will be used as a main tool to guide the supply chain of country food entering the Food Processing Centre.

DELIVERABLES: Short film: Muskox (available at <https://vimeo.com/906786389?fl=pl&fe=sh>)

BUDGET: 2022-23 = \$389,082.50 (CIRNAC/ISC) + \$199,500 (Cannor)

5. Aqviqtuuq



FUNDERS: Environment & Climate Change Canada, DFO

MAIN PARTNER: Spence Bay Hunters and Trappers Association

COLLABORATORS: WWF-Canada

OUTLINE: Spearheaded by the Taloyoak Umarulirigut Association (TUA), the Aqviqtuuq Inuit Protected and Conserved Area (IPCA) is a land that seeks permanent protection from industrial development. The IPCA will protect 45,039 km² of land (0.44% of Canada's terrestrial area), 40,730 km² of surrounding ocean (0.77% of Canada's marine area) and 4,413 km² of freshwater habitat. The Aqviqtuuq IPCA will make a significant contribution to the federal government's commitment to protect 30% of Canada's lands and waters by 2030.

In April 2022, we hired Léone Grosjean as project coordinator who's mandate is to support the work of the Taloyoak team. In June 2022, we hired Lena Neeveacheak as full-time administrative assistant who's mandate is to support our project manager Jimmy in all type of office work. Finance managing is currently being handled by ArctiConnexion (support and training), Lena Neeveacheak and the SBHTA accountant. The budgeted position as finance manager has then been used to hire a Guardian coordinator, Nathan Mannilaq, supporting assistant manager Peter Aqqaq. We purchased office supplies and computer equipment for the new employees.

In July 2022, two Guardians travelled to Quebec City to train with ArctiConnexion and develop skills to run ecological monitoring in Taloyoak. The Guardians were trained for drone operation, gathering of observations on tablets, laboratory work and the mooring of marine acoustic recording devices. We equipped the Guardians with new devices called Ulephones to help them gather their observations on the land.

In October of 2022, we filmed the stewardship activities of the Guardians on the land and launched a movie to promote the work of the Guardians.

In March 2023, we developed an exhaustive marine monitoring protocol that will allow the setup by the Guardians of sampling stations on the sea ice in the spring, and in the open water in the summer. The marine monitoring will start early in the new fiscal year and will allow the Guardians to sample physico-chemical parameters of the sea, collect Ice-algae and Phytoplankton, Zooplankton, benthic invertebrates, and fish species.

DELIVERABLES: Annual Report, short movie 'The Guardians of Aqviqtuuq' available at <https://vimeo.com/865564203?fl=pl&fe=sh> . Short movie 'Aqviqtuuq IPCA' available at <https://vimeo.com/689728154?fl=pl&fe=sh> .

BUDGET: 2022-23 = \$1,720,070 (DFO) + \$718,000 (ECCC)

6. Monitoring of shipping noise and marine mammals in the Aqviqtuuq Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area near Taloyoak, Nunavut



FUNDERS: DFO- Ecosystems and Oceans Science Contribution Framework

MAIN PARTNER: Spence Bay Hunters and Trappers Association

COLLABORATORS: WWF-Canada, UQAR (ISMER)

OUTLINE: As part of the efforts to protect Aqviqtuuq, the community of Taloyoak wish to develop their own capacity to research and monitor their marine environment. One of the main priorities is to address the cumulative effects on the marine mammals they hunt and use for food.

In this project, ArctiConnexion and the Institute des Sciences de la Mer (<https://www.ismer.ca>) will support the SBHTA to develop local capacity and leadership for the scientific monitoring of oceans. More specifically, we will develop and implement monitoring programs using passive acoustic to study the soundscape of the marine environment and marine mammals' responses to shipping disturbance. The project will be led locally by the Spence Bay HTA and with the contribution of local Elders (Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit) and the Aqviqtuuq Guardians.

In 2022, protocols were developed and training was delivered in Quebec City in July to four guardians. Data collection in Taloyoak was postponed to 2023-24 given that funding was received after the summer season. Mapping data and interview data were collected in January 2023. One Master student was hired at ISMER to help with the fieldwork project in 2023.

DELIVERABLES: Annual Report

BUDGET: 2022-23 = \$152,260.00

7. Climate and Ecosystem Changes in the Kivalliq – Monitoring, Preparedness and Adaptation



FUNDER: CIRNAC/ Indigenous Services Canada

MAIN PARTNER: Kivalliq Wildlife Board

COLLABORATORS: U Laval, U Rimouski (ISMER)

OUTLINE: In partnership with Clayton Tartak at the Kivalliq Wildlife Board, our goal was to develop an ecosystem-based vision of our marine country foods under the dire of climate change. We expanded the project to the community of Tikiqrajuq (Whale Cove).

We merged local Inuit knowledge (Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and scientific methods to i) document changes in the marine microscopic organisms (e.g. ice algae), ii) study how country food species (Arctic char, ringed seal, bearded seal, beluga, and polar bear) make use of different food chains and iii) document changes in the diet and abundance of country food species. In 2022-23, we have been able to pursue the marine monitoring program during spring, summer and fall in Kangiqliniq. We haven't been able to develop the partnership with Whale Cove in 2022-23 nor to meet with Elders.

DELIVERABLES: Annual Report

BUDGET: 2022-23: \$306,520 (CIRNAC/ISC)

8. Inuit knowledge and molecular biology addressing industrial impacts in the Kivalliq



FUNDER: Arctic Net- IQP

MAIN PARTNER: Kivalliq Wildlife Board

COLLABORATORS: U Rimouski

OUTLINE: Industrial development has long been present in the Canadian Arctic but has undergone a rapid development in Nunavut in the last 20 years. In the Kivalliq region, local Elders and hunters have associated gold mining and related activities to environmental impacts and a source of stress for fish and wildlife Inuit rely on for food. These can affect Inuit culture, health, and well-being.

ArctiConnexion is helping the Kivalliq Wildlife Board, in partnership with and academic researchers, to develop in Kangiqliniq (Rankin Inlet) a new approach to monitor the impacts of the Agnico Eagle Mine's (AEM) Meliadine project on freshwater and marine ecosystems. This approach will combine Inuit knowledge and molecular biology to develop indicators of environmental, ecological, and biological stress that will help the community of Rankin Inlet, and other communities, to research mining impacts. The project is community-driven, employ local people, involve our youth and Elders, and build capacity and expertise locally for new procedures and approaches.

Our main question is to address the impacts of the Agnico Eagle Mine's (AEM) Meliadine project on freshwater and marine ecosystems near Kangiqliniq. Obj. #1- Address the current environmental impacts, ecological impacts, and biological impacts of wastewater discharge at Tasirjuaq (freshwater) and Itivia (marine). Obj. #2- Address the potential environmental, ecological and biological impacts of a water pipeline leakage on adjacent water bodies.

Due to internal administrative issues at summer 2022, our project has not been able to accept IQP funding before fall 2022. We had to postponed our fieldwork to summer 2023. However in the meantime, we've trained three employees and project lead Clayton Tartak that travelled down to our headquarters. We documented IQ with four land users during the summer of 2021 and analysed the results in the fall of 2022. We started the laboratory work at UQAR to calibrate the eDNA and oxidative stress methods using samples collected at summer 2021.

DELIVERABLES: 2022-23 Annual Report.

BUDGET: 2022-23 = \$127,968.50 (Arctic Net- IQP)

9. Food baseline monitoring in Pond Inlet



FUNDER: Qiqiktani Inuit Association

MAIN PARTNER: --

COLLABORATORS: --

OUTLINE: QIA requires additional support from ArctiConnexion in order to complete a Country Food Toxicology Study. The Toxicology Study is part of the Pond Inlet Country Food Baseline

Study, an Inuit-led study on the subject of Inuit food security/sovereignty, conducted in and by the community of Pond Inlet. The study will provide data on community country food consumption and country food quality.

In partnership with the Mittimatalik HTO, we launched in the summer of 2022 a narwhal sampling program in the community of Pond Inlet. We started the same program in the fall in the community of Ikpiarjuk (Arctic Bay). We wanted to compare the overall condition of narwhal, their stress levels and trace metals concentrations in their tissue. We compared narwhals from the Eclipse Sound, where mining development and shipping have been active for over a decade, and Admiralty Inlet, where no development has occurred in the recent years.

In the fall of 2022, professor Frank Tester -hired as an independent consultant- and our CEO Vincent travelled to Ikpiarjuk and Pond Inlet to meet with local land users, Elders and women. They documented on camera the observations and experiences addressing changes in the marine environment and narwhals' populations and conditions, concerns relating to climate change, and the social and cultural importance of narwhal in the north Baffin communities.

DELIVERABLES: Annual Report

BUDGET: 2022-23: \$348,510.50 (2YR)

Summary of human resources

a. Core's activities

COMMUNITY	PROJECT TOPIC	NB MENTORS (AC)	NB LOCAL EMPLOYEES	NB PEOPLE WITH HONORARIA	NB ELDERS
Pangnirtung	Young Hunters Program	2	3	0	0
Qamani'tuaq	Fish + Young Hunters Program	3	5	12	10
Taloyoak	Niqihaqut	2	1	5	5
Taloyoak	Aqviqtuuq	2	12	2	2
Rankin Inlet	Marine Ecosystem & Meliadine	3	5	8	4
Pond Inlet	Food Baseline	1	0	12	7
Arctic Bay	Food Baseline	3	0	10	6
TOTAL		16	26	49	34

b. Administration

- 1X Administrative assistant
- 1X Accountant

c. Management

- 1X Executive director

d. Projects

- 1X Research Analyst
- 1X Project Coordinator

e. Business development & Marketing

- 1X Graphic designer
- 1X Movie producer

Update on the 2019-22 Strategic Plan

Driven by the firm desire to improve our service offer and relationships, ArctiConnexion's board of directors developed in 2019 strategic directions that will enable our personnel to work toward common objectives for the growth of our organization.

THE 2019-22 STRATEGIC PLAN ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING FIVE PRIORITIES:

1. Increase mentorship capacity and diversify our expertise;
2. Improve organizational structure & capacity;
3. Establish a working relationship framework with partners;
4. Build reputation by:
 - consolidating our leadership in mentorship & indigenous capacity building
 - clarify our service offer and make it known to communities;
5. Ensure the sustainability of our activities in the future

DURING 2022-23 WE IMPLEMENTED SEVERAL ACTION ITEMS LISTED IN OUR 2019-22 STRATEGIC PLAN.

- We diversified our expertise by stepping into new opportunities with the development of a country food business in Taloyoak. We also expanded our work related to mining assessment and environmental impacts with new contracts signed with QIA
- We improved our organizational capacity by hiring a finance administrative assistant who directly contributed to the development of an online data platform to ease the book keeping, operations related to account payable and receivable, and annual reporting/auditing
- We worked toward improving the reputation of our organization by putting some efforts in the development of our marketing such as the release of short films documenting our work in communities.

Annual Financial Statement (March 2023)

See separate document

