Within the general theme of Challenges in a Changing Environment: Survival Strategies – past and present the project “the role of ICT in business development in Greenland” has its focus on the fact that the development of new information technologies and means of communication is in the process of contributing to a radical change in the balance between the importance of moving people and goods on one hand, and information and knowledge products on the other. At the same time a marked change is ongoing in the business structure, as networks, clusters of competence, and innovation in close contact between producers and users, is becoming a still more important parameter in competition. In this process there seem to be a new opening of opportunities for the sparsely populated remote regions to overcome some of the physical and geographic restrains which have limited their access to the markets and to competitive business development. Consequently, there have been great expectations regarding future business development in the North in conjunction with the increase in up-to-date ICT technologies. From a tradition with high level of public involvement in business development in the North, the last ten years has shown a situation with an increased focus on liberalization and profit oriented activities, and this process has also had a profound influence in the field of telecommunication and information technology. As catching up with the present speed of development in the ITC technologies may require a marked increase in investments, this process of privatization may have a negative influence on the speed of development in the ITC sector, eventually leading to an increase in the centralization process which may result in an increase in the out-migration of both young people, new jobs, and new initiatives. By means of comparative studies of ICT-development in Greenland and indigenous communities in Canada and Alaska, the research project will look into concrete experiences in positive business activities in order to verify the potentials of ICT in the future development process in the North. A workshop on ITC and Indigenous Business Development is planned together with project participants in Canada and Alaska to take place in 2006.

Prime Investigators: A consortium including participants from Faroe Islands, Greenland, Canada and Alaska and NORS-Roskilde University (Rasmus Ole Rasmussen). Greenland contact: Birger Poppel.