

ARCTIC PORTAL

Developed by Iceland
An Arctic Venue on the Internet

www.arcticportal.org

Iceland has worked on the structuring and development of an Arctic Portal in close consultation and co-operation with members of The Arctic Council and its Working Groups, Permanent Participants, UArctic, The Arctic Centre at the University of Lapland and others.

Rather than spending funds and time on a costly feasibility study on various aspects of ever changing portal technologies, it was decided to concentrate on a functional portal with a flexible basic structure, which can be maintained with a relatively low cost, but can also be developed further with additional funds.

A prototype Arctic Portal was introduced to the Working Groups and the SAOs of the Arctic Council by an e-mail in July. Iceland is happy to note that the reaction was positive. A few amendments have been made and the Arctic Portal is now ready for being introduced at the Ministerial Meeting in Salekhard.

In its present form the Arctic Portal functions as a gateway into the Arctic on the internet, linking existing portals and homepages, with emphasis on the needs of the Arctic Council and its working groups as well as the overall Arctic community with an integrated calendar of events, integrated document library and an integrated project directory, advanced search, interactive mapping, homepages for AC projects etc. Its development has been financed by the Icelandic Government, the Municipality of Akureyri, the University of Akureyri and private funds at the estimated cost of around EURO 75.000,-

The University of Akureyri, UNAK, has agreed to host the Arctic Portal and ensure its core technical maintenance for a minimum of 5 years as well as providing professional support from its IT and library staff on technology and content. The estimated annual value of this contribution is around EURO 60.000,-.

UNAK pledges contribution from staff and students to further development of the portal in cooperation with other stakeholders.

The Arctic Portal content would be the responsibility of content providers, i.e. the managers of various websites and portals linked into the Arctic Portal. The Permanent Participants of Arctic Council would identify websites, portals and other content they want to be linked to or integrated with the Arctic Portal.

It is envisaged that the further development of the Arctic Portal will be done through selected projects, which will be interfaced with the portal for added value. Each project

The Iceport Group, Borgir, Nordurslod, 600 Akureyri, Iceland

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will be funded separately as any other AC project. Following are examples of important projects for developing the concept further. As IT is in constant development with prices and technical features changing almost every day, the estimated costs are for reference only.

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- Website integration tool. Development of a tool to make it possible to integrate and search “on the fly” low-tech websites. Estimated cost over a 2 year period Euro 200,000

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- Arctic Portal Interactive Mapping Portal. Evaluation, integration and adaptation to existing portals and data. Development of interpretation and presentation tools. Estimated cost over a 4 year period Euro 500,000

- Language conversions to the member and PP languages with Russian as the first priority. Estimated cost over a 4 year period Euro 600,000

- Important issue presentation. Highlight individual issues in a graphic way for a wider audience. Example: the proposed sailing route across the North Pole. Estimated cost for this example Euro 220,000.

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- Integration with other important projects such as the IPY

- A Functioning Pilot Portal accessible by the username and password, guest, can be found at <http://www.arcticportal.org>.

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The first phase of the Portal is ready to be opened at the ministerial meeting in Russia in October 2006.

The first phase of the Portal consist e.g. of

Implementation of content, operation and further development

It is proposed that AP content decisions are the responsibility of the AC and PP members who will individually provide a list of data and/or websites they desire to be linked or integrated thus maintaining the responsibility of content at the provider.

The annual cost of hosting and maintaining the first phase of the AP is estimated at EURO 65.000.- The University of Akureyri, UNAK, guaranties the hosting and core technical maintenance of the Portal for a minimum of 5 years as well as consultation contribution from its IT and library staff on technology and content. UNAK further pledges contribution from staff and students to the development of projects in the second phase.

Second phase:

It is proposed that a second phase of the