

IARPC Organizational Primer

Overview: [The Arctic Research and Policy Act](#) of 1984 (ARPA) Public Law 98-373, July 31, 1984, as amended by Public Law 101-609, November 16, 1990, provides for a comprehensive national policy dealing with national research needs and objectives in the Arctic. The ARPA establishes a [U.S. Arctic Research Commission \(USARC\)](#) and an Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee (IARPC) to help implement the Act. IARPC was formally created by [Executive Order 12501](#). Its activities have been coordinated by the National Science Foundation (NSF), with the Director of the NSF as chair. On July 22, 2010, President Obama issued a [memorandum](#) that redefined IARPC as an Interagency Working Group of the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) Committee on Environment, Natural Resources, and Sustainability (CENRS¹), with the director of the NSF remaining as the chair of IARPC. The activities of the NSTC are overseen by the [Office of Science and Technology Policy](#) (OSTP) in the Executive Office of the President (EOP).

Principals: The IARPC Principals body is comprised of one policy-level individual from 14 Federal agencies², plus the Chair of the USARC (ex officio) and representatives from EOP agencies (OSTP and the Office of Management and Budget). (See attached list of current IARPC Principles by agency.) Responsible for coordinating federally-funded research in the Arctic, the Principals set the policy and overall direction for IARPC. The primary means by which they accomplish this task is through the development and implementation of the [5-year Arctic Research Plan](#), as called for in ARPA, that is designed to advance scientific knowledge of the Arctic. It does not cover all federally-funded research, but rather focuses on research that will be enhanced through interagency collaboration. The plan is approved by the Principals and is based upon [policy drivers](#)³ they have articulated. The Principals meet annually (sometimes more often if the need arises) and address Federal policy-related issues. They may, on occasion, direct the Staff Group to address particular issues, such as enhancing our understanding of model reanalysis or identify the role of IARPC in STEM education. All meeting notes and background material related to the IARPC Principals are archived on [OMB MAX](#), a federal-only online collaborative environment maintained by the Office of Management and Budget that IARPC uses for archiving purposes.

Staff Group: The IARPC Staff Group is an unofficial body created by the NSF with the blessing of the Principals to do the day-to-day work of IARPC. It is chaired by the Assistant Director for Polar Sciences (also the Executive Director of IARPC) in OSTP. Staff Group members are program managers from the 14 IARPC agencies and may include multiple representatives from one agency. (See the attached list of Staff Group members by agency.) After Principals have determined the policy drivers for 5-year plans (see above), Staff Group organizes the writing of the Plan by IARPC agencies. Once a plan is released, the primary role of the Staff Group is to monitor progress on, provide agency-related updates to and troubleshoot implementation of the Arctic Research Plan, and to undertake any other tasks given to it by the Principals. Staff Group members meet monthly to exchange information, deliberate on ways to improve communication and collaboration among agencies, and address issues that arise within

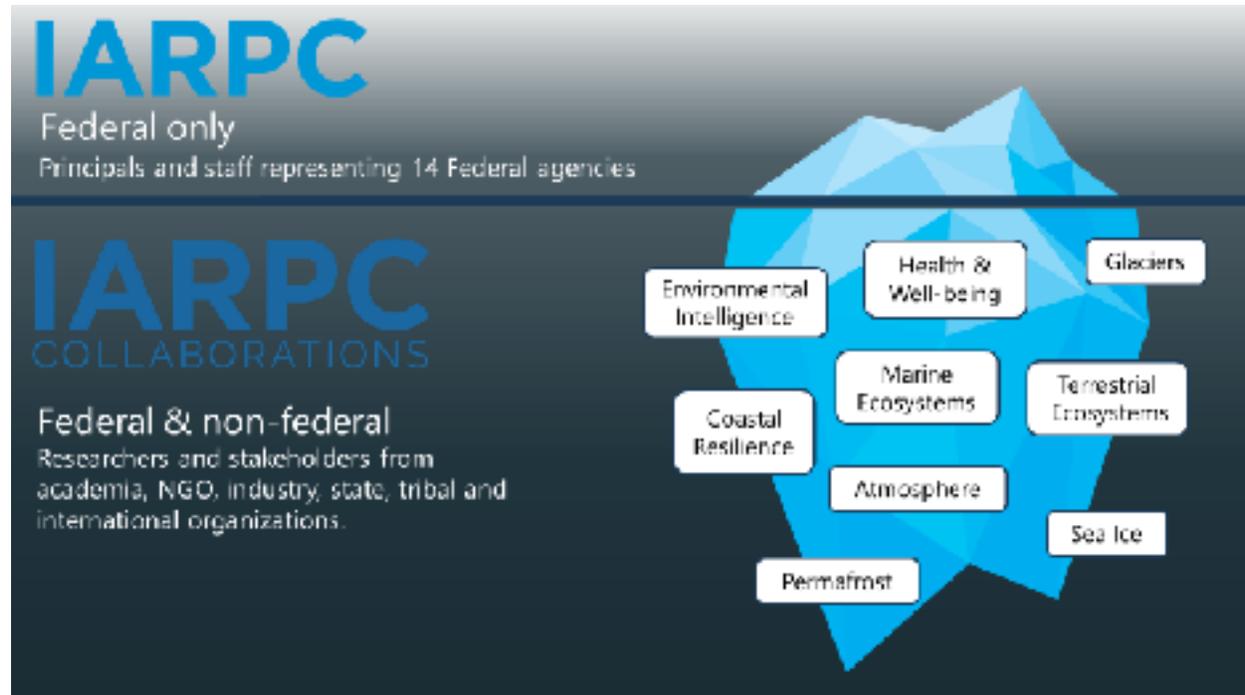
¹CENRS was renamed as the Committee on Environment in June 2018.

² Department of Agriculture, Department of Commerce, Department of Defense, Department of Energy, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Interior, Department of State, Department of Transportation, Environmental Protection Agency, Marine Mammal Commission, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Smithsonian Institution

³ Enhance the well-being of Arctic residents, Advance stewardship of the Arctic environment, Strengthen national and regional security, Improve understanding of the Arctic as a component of planet Earth

agencies that would benefit from an interagency approach. Staff Group may address interagency issues which are not articulated in the Arctic Research Plan and indeed most topics that arise in Staff Group are raised by agency representatives for interagency consideration. All Staff Group meeting notes and background material related to the group are archived on OMB MAX.

Collaboration Teams: Collaboration teams were created by Staff Group in 2013 to assist with the implementation of the [Arctic Research Plan 2013-2017](#), and they continue to play a key role in the implementation of the [Arctic Research Plan 2017-2021](#). [Collaboration teams](#) enhance implementation of the plan through research and stakeholder engagement and are open to anyone wishing to advance knowledge about the Arctic. Collaboration teams include members from Federal agencies as well as outside partners such as the State of Alaska, Alaska Native organizations and communities, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, and the private sector. Collaboration teams are responsible for implementing each of the [nine goals, and their constituent research objectives and performance elements, articulated in the Arctic Research Plan 2017-2021](#). Each team is led by at least one Federal employee and one non-federal person. IARPC Collaborations, a web-based platform, is maintained by IARPC as a platform for the Federal agencies, the research community and stakeholders to share information, generate innovative ideas, and report on performance elements. Collaboration teams can recommend changes to the plan, but they cannot modify it without Staff Group and/or Principals' approval.



Self-forming Teams: IARPC provides for the development of self-forming teams. There are three types of self-forming teams.

- **Working Group:** These are groups that have been formed at the direction of the IARPC Principals or Staff Group to perform a specific ongoing or short-term function. Examples of on-going Working Groups are the Field Operations Working Group, the STEM Education Working Group, and the Diversity and Inclusion Working Group. Occasionally, the Principals or Staff Group will stand up a short-term team to address a specific issue or concern and ask for a response from the group within 12-month

period. These groups are called “[Action Teams](#).” Examples of Action Teams are the Bering Sea Action Team (BSAT) and the Systematic Improvements of Reanalyses in the Arctic (SIRTA). Working groups and action teams receive secretariat support for their work. Action Teams may be federal-only to discuss pre-decisional material and do not have to have a presence on the IARPC collaborations space.

- **Networks:** These are groups that are proposed by the Arctic research community who desire to use the IARPC collaborations website to build a community of interest around a topic and address specific issues. They may share information on the site and may convene meetings. They have access to the webinar capabilities of IARPC. Beyond website curation and videoconferencing, they do not receive secretariat support.
- **Forums:** These are research-community-generated groups which wish to utilize the website only for sharing information. They do not use videoconferencing resources of IARPC and do not convene, but they use the platform to amplify their message or bring together a community of interest around a given topic. They do not receive support from the secretariat.

For a full listing of the self-forming teams see the [teams page](#) on the IARPC collaborations website.

Secretariat: The [IARPC Secretariat](#) provides support to the IARPC Principals, Staff Group, and Collaboration Teams to effectively carry out their responsibilities as defined in the Arctic Research and Policy Act of 1984 and the July 2010 Presidential memorandum that established IARPC as a chartered Interagency Working Group of the NSTC. The secretariat meets weekly with the IARPC Executive Director. The responsibilities of the Secretariat are to:

- 1) Support the implementation of the Arctic Research Plan 2017-2021 by providing hands-on, timely support to IARPC Collaborations Teams;
- 2) Provide a platform—IARPC Collaborations—to enhance the sharing of information, to generate innovative ideas, and to report on performance elements in the Arctic Research Plan;
- 3) Support the IARPC Principals and Staff Group in facilitating interagency collaboration in the U.S. Federal Arctic research endeavor;
- 4) Engage with other NSTC bodies to ensure coordination in the pursuit of efficiency and elimination of redundancies.

For a comprehensive overview of IARPC and IARPC Collaborations, view the PowerPoint at <https://www.iarpccollaborations.org/about.html>.

