



**ARCTIC VISIONS:
UNITING INUIT KNOWLEDGE WITH
PARTICIPATORY PHOTOGRAPHY TO PROTECT
COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS AND LIFEWAYS IN
NUNATSIAVUT**

ROBIN RIGBY TRUST MID-TERM REPORT



11 JANUARY 2023
MICHAEL PETRIELLO
Dalhousie University

Dear Robin Rigby Trust,

On behalf of all members of the Arctic Visions team, thank you for your financial support of our growing project. We are inspired by the mission to connect participatory research with photography to address the observed and anticipated regional effects of climate change with and for the coastal communities of Nunatsiavut. In this way, we are indebted to the Trust and are honored to carry the legacy of Patricia Robin Rigby forward through our research.

Three members of our research team, Michael Petriello, Melanie Zurba, and John Winters, visited Nain, Nunatsiavut, from June 24, 2022 to July 1, 2022, to hold place-based discussions and carry out the preliminary phases of our planned work with a fourth member of our team, Caroline Nochasak. The following mid-term report briefly reviews our steps, progress, challenges, and future plans for the second half of our funding period. Given that our work strives for transparent and equitable knowledge co-production that is based on timely and iterative participatory processes, we kindly note that certain details about the project may not be available. However, we are happy to elaborate on any details to the best of our shared ability at the request of the Trust. Again, thank you for your generous support and belief in our collective vision.

Kind regards,

Michael Petriello

Michael Petriello, on behalf of the Arctic Visions Team

BACKGROUND

The primary goal of our project is to assess the use of visual participatory methods (VPMs) (i.e., photovoice and participatory photography) as tools for knowledge co-production (KCP) for climate change in collaboration with coastal Labrador Inuit communities in Nunatsiavut, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada. The secondary goal of our collective work is to establish the foundation for an Inuit-led and determined VPM project. The success of both goals rests on three important pillars. First, they both depend on regular input and participation from Labrador Inuit who occupy different social sectors across Nunatsiavut. These include members of the Nunatsiavut Government (NG), artists, researchers, youth, and Elders. Second, these goals are reinforced by following advances in scholarship around the nexus of KCP, photovoice, and climate change. And third, the goals are strongly supported by semi-annual visits to the communities at the center of this research: Nain and Hopedale. To this end, this report focuses on the steps, challenges, and opportunities leading to and emerging from our first project-level visit to Nain, Nunatsiavut and our anticipated visit to Hopedale in March 2022.

Importantly, cross-sectoral research within and around the broad domains of KCP and climate change face many logistical and conceptual barriers. These may comprise constraints that impede the conceptual development of the project, particularly the difficulty of holding in-person place-based discussions in Nunatsiavut, the limited availability of funds for long-term co-production work, and institutional mismatches in project priorities. In addition, emerging research has shown that photovoice supports and complicates KCP projects by opening vital conversational spaces about research ethics and politics, appealing to distinct demographic subsets of project partners (e.g., people inclined to artistic mediums of expression), and muddling project members' understanding of methods and goals (Dharmiasih et al. 2022; West and Schill 2022). Elements of these challenges are present in our ongoing work, which we will briefly outline below.

Most importantly, we aspire to not only contribute to this budding area of participatory scholarship, but also identify paths for transforming these findings into practice. After months of conversation, our updated research questions (see below) help set this project in that very direction. Taken together, the following updates detail our progress towards these goals, the challenges we face, and an updated timeline and list of expenses to date that will help us chart a path towards our collective vision for a co-produced participatory photography project in Nunatsiavut.

PROGRESS TO DATE

KCP work takes time. Our progress to date reflects the iterative and paced processes fueling our collaboration. Here, we outline 4 key steps in our research process: 1) ethics approvals; 2) research visit to Nain, Nunatsiavut and its outcomes; 3) modified project research goals; and 4) future opportunities.

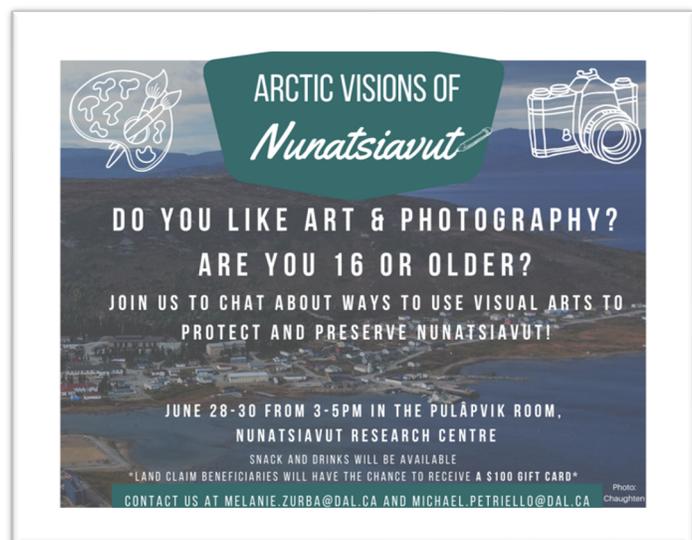
As stated in our proposal, our ability to move forward with the project depended on ethics approvals from Dalhousie University and the Nunatsiavut Government Research

Advisory Committee (NGRAC). We received preliminary approvals from the Dalhousie University Research Ethics Board (REB #2022-6004) on April 26, 2022, with amendments approved on June 10, 2022. On May 17, 2022, we submitted amendments to our NGRAC application (NGRAC 17227452) that was originally approved as part of the larger arts-based research occurring with the Sustainable Nunatsiavut Futures Project. The amendments to account for our planned photovoice work were approved on June 20, 2022. For more details on the Sustainable Nunatsiavut Future Project, we kindly direct the Trustees to two recent publications (Zurba et al. 2022; Petriello et al. 2022).

Through ongoing conversations about our stated research goals, we developed a cohesive direction for our participatory work. Building on the goals in the report background, we refined our focus towards visually documenting Labrador Inuit hopes, values, and knowledge embedded in the Nunatsiavut coastal landscapes to inform climate adaptation and resilience strategies in the region. This research goal is informed by our commitment to bridge research and practice in ways that directly benefit Nunatsiavut community members beyond a scholarly exercise. We anticipate sharing more details in following reports and publications.

Furthermore, three members of our research team, Michael Petriello, Melanie Zurba, and John Winters, visited Nain, Nunatsiavut, from June 24, 2022 to July 1, 2022, to hold place-based discussions and carry out the preliminary phases of our planned work with a fourth member of our team, Caroline Nochasak. During this visit, Petriello and Zurba were introduced to various community members to build a sense of familiarity and comfort with Nain residents. During these informal meetups, we were regularly asked the same refrain: “When are you coming back?”. This question echoed the legacy of parachute science in the region, acting as a kind of litmus test to determine the seriousness and commitment of our work there. To demonstrate our primary commitment to community relationships, we elected to forego data collection on this first trip on the recommendation of Nochasak and Winters. Instead, we hosted informal “art and photography chats” (see flier posted on FaceBook and in local places of business, such as the Nain Post Office) with prospective research partners to discuss the roles of art and photography in their lives. These conversations provided a springboard for exploring the types of questions we can ask and answer through photography, as well as a proxy measure of community interest in photography as a knowledge documentation and research tool.

Through one-on-one meetups and the photography hangouts, we recruited 4



participants in Nain. We are waiting for recruitment in Hopedale to begin land-based photography in both communities. We will travel to Hopedale in March 2023 in connection with the Sustainable Nunatsiavut Futures project's inaugural knowledge forum (uKalagalaak). The trip also allowed us to bring 10 cameras to Nunatsiavut. Caroline Nochasak retained 5 for her component of the research in Nain and John Winters returned to Hopedale with the remaining 5 cameras (see budget below for details on the cameras and other equipment purchased).

Lastly, the project has garnered wide interest from several ancillary projects, allowing us to likely expand the networks and underlying potential of this project. This extended network is emerging from our pursuit of extended funding through a research fellowship with the Center for Collaborative Conservation located at Colorado State University, USA, and a large-scale, multi-partner Arctic monitoring project to be potentially funded through the National Science Foundation's Navigating the New Arctic (NSF NNA) program. Both funding channels have the potential to expand the network of collaborators connected to this project, foster valuable connections between Inuit communities in Nunatsiavut and Kotzebue, Alaska, USA (e.g., the NSF NNA proposal aims to foster coast-to-coast cultural exchanges between Nain and Kotzebue, an Iñupiat community in Alaska). These conversations have already grown our research team. As of October 2022, Dr. Michael Gavin from Colorado State University has joined our team.

CHALLENGES

Our project has currently faced two central challenges: 1) logistics, timing, and feasibility in terms of coordinating visits with the seasonality of community activities; and 2) meeting with multiple community members.

As sea ice continues to form later and later in the season (e.g., moving from October to January) and sea ice retreats earlier and earlier, our window to travel to Nunatsiavut when sea ice is present combined with prospective photographers' ability to capture their knowledge and values embedded in the ice is limited. Moreover, travel to Nain and Hopedale takes several days depending on the route. These trips can be costly depending on the time of year and distance (e.g., Petriello travels from the United States, which can cost upwards of \$1500 per trip, and hotels are generally \$200/night, making a week-long visit cost approximately within the range of \$3000-\$3500). Flights are regularly cancelled during the winter, which can add 2-3 days of additional food and lodging costs to the trip.

In addition, proper relationships and trust take time and patience to develop. While this is not so much a challenge as a necessary step in our work, it means that our ability to attract and retain multiple photographers will not only require multiple visits, but also multiple opportunities to meet with them. As such, one challenge we confronted was drawing community members to our photography hangouts. Indeed, only one person attended the hangouts. After our place-based reflection as to the reasons why few people showed up, we believe that the fliers were not posted early enough in Nain stores and the Facebook fliers were not properly posted. We aim to remedy this

concern by posting all fliers at least 2 weeks in advance, including repeat postings on Facebook.

BUDGET EXPENSES TO DATE

As of January 11, 2023, we have used 55% of our \$12,600 budget. The remaining \$5674 will be used to enact the next steps described below.

Total requested	Cost per item	Number of Items	Total Expenses
<i>Total Expenses as of January 11, 2023</i>			\$6,926.73
Equipment & Honoraria			\$1,958.17
AKASO Brave 7 LE	\$149.26	10	\$1,492.60
USB wall charger 4-pack	\$15.02	3	\$45.06
DB90PRO voice recorder	\$46.40	2	\$92.80
iGadgitz U6690 voice recorder hard case	\$13.79	2	\$27.58
Sandisk 32 GB microSD for recorder 2-pack	\$16.39	11	\$180.29
Equipment tax on purchase 1	\$107.36	1	\$107.36
Equipment tax on purchase 2	\$12.48	1	\$12.48
Photography hangouts ("workshops") in Nain			\$849
Nunatsiavut Research Centre Pulâpvik Room	\$345	1	\$345
Frank's gift cards (purchased as honoraria for attendance in Nain and Hopedale)	\$20	20	\$400
Food and drinks for photography workshops	\$104	1	\$104
Travel to Nain			\$1,497
Flight (Ohio, USA to Halifax, NS)	\$1,388.55	1	\$1,388.55
Foreign transaction fee	\$42.19	1	\$42.19
PAL Airlines baggage fee to Nain	\$66.64	1	\$66.64
Lodging in Goose Bay and Nain			\$2,053
Royal Inn, Goose Bay	\$175.52	2	\$351.04
Atsanik Inn, Nain	\$185	8	\$1,480
Atsanik Inn tax	\$27.75	8	\$222.00
Per diem			\$568.72
Halifax & Goose Bay/ travel to and from Halifax & Goosebay	N/A	N/A	\$179.35
Nain	N/A	N/A	\$389.37

FUTURE PLANS

Our next steps include:

1. Travel to Hopedale to meet with prospective photographers, develop a place-based plan to engage prospective photographers, and introduce us to the community.
2. Disseminate research materials to community members in Nain and Hopedale who expressed an interest in using photography to express their hopes, values, and knowledge as they experience and observe them in the Nunatsiavut coasts.
3. Conduct interviews and focus groups with photographers in both communities to elicit detailed responses about their values, hopes, and knowledge.
4. Synthesize results by analyzing transcripts of interviews and focus groups for shared themes around the above focus.
5. Identify pathways for translating and integrating Inuit values and hopes into climate change adaptation strategies.
6. Hold digital and in-person photography exhibits in Nain, Hopedale, and potentially at Qaumajug, the world's largest collection of Inuit art located in the Winnipeg Art Gallery (in collaboration with Ocean School, a media-based youth education non-profit organization). Although preliminary conversations are ongoing but have been occurring for over 6 months, Ocean School has voiced a strong interest in collaborating in this project.
7. Write technical report, policy brief, and peer-reviewed publication for the Nunatsiavut Government and communities as a whole.

REFERENCES

- Dharmiasih W, Fisher M, Dwiyantri NLE, Bhisnaya IGY, Verheijen B. (2022). Apertures of knowledge co-production: Facilitating multigenerational photovoice at Bali's UNESCO Cultural Landscape. In Acabado S, Kuan D-W (Eds.), *Indigenous Peoples, Heritage and Landscape in the Asia Pacific: Knowledge Co-Production and Empowerment* (pp. 151-167). Routledge.
- West S, Schill C. (2022). Negotiating the ethical-political dimensions of research methods: A key competency in mixed methods, inter- and transdisciplinary, and co-production research. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications* 9(1):1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-022-01297-z>.
- Petriello MA, Zurba M, Schmidt JO, Anthony K, Jacque N, Nochasak C, Winters Ja, Winters Jo, Bailey M, Oliver ECJ, McCarney P, Bishop B, Bodwitch H, Cadman R, McLaren M. (2022). The power and precarity of knowledge co-production: A case study of SakKijânginnaniattut Nunatsiavut Sivunitsangit (the Sustainable Nunatsiavut Futures Project). In Gomez S, Kopsel V (Eds.), *Transdisciplinary Marine Research: Building Science and Society* (pp. 127-148). Routledge.
- Zurba M, Petriello MA, Madge C, McCarney P, Bishop B, McBeth S, Denniston M, Bodwitch H, Bailey M. (2022). Learning from knowledge co-production research and practice in the twenty-first century: Global lessons and what they mean for collaborative research in Nunatsiavut. *Sustainability Science* 17(2):449-467. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-021-00996-x>