

***How can research better serve Nunavummiut?  
Assessing research trends in Nunavut (2004-2018)***

*Project Summary*

**Research Team:**

**Gita Ljubicic**, Dept. of Geography and Environmental Studies, Carleton University (Co-lead)  
**Jamal Shirley**, Nunavut Innovation and Research Institute, Nunavut Arctic College (Co-lead)  
**Alison Perrin**, Dept. of Geography and Environmental Studies, Carleton University (PhD Student)  
**Amos Hayes**, Geomatics and Cartographic Research Centre, Carleton University (Collaborator)  
**Robert Oikle**, Geomatics and Cartographic Research Centre, Carleton University (Technical Support)  
**Shania Mahendran**, Northern Studies, Carleton University (Research Assistant)  
**Shari Fox**, SnowFox Consulting (Collaborator)

**Project Location:** Iqaluit, Nunavut (and reviewing research licenses from all Nunavut communities)

**Timeframe:** March 7, 2019 to December 31, 2020

**Project Description:**

The Nunavut Research Institute (NRI) has been developing, facilitating, and promoting scientific research in Nunavut since 1994. Any scientist who wishes to carry out research in Nunavut related to health, natural, and social sciences (including traditional knowledge) must first receive a license from the NRI, as required under Nunavut's *Scientists Act*. The NRI is responsible for making sure that research does not harm or interfere with the natural or social environment in Nunavut, and that research results are returned to Nunavut.

Before deciding whether to issue a research license, the NRI consults with community and other Nunavut organizations to make sure that the research is acceptable and will not cause any harm. After the consultation process is finished, and any concerns raised by community organizations have been addressed, the NRI will issue a license for the research to go ahead. To track the review and licensing process, the NRI maintains the longest running digital research database in Nunavut. Each year the NRI creates a report that highlights the research being conducted in Nunavut. However, there has never been a full review of the licensing database.

This project will conduct the first systematic review and analysis of the NRI research licensing database. This review is important to understand research trends. It is also a priority for the NRI to: 1) improve their licensing procedures; 2) understand how community organizations take part in the licensing process; 3) identify communities and topics that are over-researched; and 4) assess how well researchers are returning their research results to Nunavut. This work will help the NRI fulfill one of their main roles, which is to ensure that research is a resource for the well-being of Nunavummiut (people of Nunavut). This analysis of research licensing will help to identify ways to improve Inuit engagement in research, make research results more accessible to Nunavummiut, reduce community research fatigue, and encourage research on issues that are priorities for Inuit.

This project is a partnership between Jamal Shirley and Mary Ellen Thomas of the NRI and Gita Ljubicic of Carleton University. Our main research question is: "what is the current state of research in Nunavut, and how has research changed over the last fourteen years?" We share leadership, decision-making, and supervision of students in this project. The project is expected to contribute to the NRI's ability to review and track research licenses, as well as to help align their work with Nunavut's research

needs. It will also inform a possible future review of Nunavut's *Scientists Act* and other changes to research policy in Canada's North.

**Methodology:**

We will analyze the NRI research licensing database to understand research trends. This will involve:

1. Reviewing and updating the NRI research license database for completeness and consistency of entries from 2004-2018.
2. Summarizing and analyzing trends in the database to understand:
  - a. What questions are researchers seeking to answer in Nunavut?
  - b. Where is research in Nunavut being undertaken?
  - c. Who is conducting the research?
  - d. Who is involved in the research licensing review process?
  - e. What is the reporting compliance in the licensing process?
3. Developing metrics to more consistently track research activities, research outcomes and impacts, and engagement of Nunavummiut in research.

**Data:**

The research licensing data is provided by the NRI for the purposes of this project. After the project is complete the NRI will continue to use this data, and an updated database format, to support their administration of research licenses. The data will also be used for a pan-territorial research trend analysis as part of a PhD project; however, a separate research license will be acquired for that analysis.

**Reporting:**

Research results will be communicated through:

- A Detailed Report;
- A Summary Report;
- A NRI Report for Inuit Organizations;
- Public/Research Information Sessions;
- Journal Articles and Conference Presentations; and,
- Research Highlights for Nunavut communities or other stakeholders (e.g. pamphlets, posters, radio shows).