

## Arctic Festival – a traditional event connecting Czech and Arctic (Nordic) culture and science

*Dr Zdeněk Lyčka, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Czech Republic*



The Arctic Festival is a traditional festival of Arctic and Czech culture and science. Its main goal is to deepen existing contacts between Czech and Arctic artists and scientists and to establish cooperation between new partners. Thanks to the Festival, both the professional and non-professional public can enjoy the results of the work of Czech and Nordic scientists in Arctic research and learn about joint Czech-Arctic cultural and scientific activities in Czechia and the Arctic. The Czech public can gain an awareness of the Arctic nations and enjoy a unique culture from different parts of the High North. On the contrary, the public in the Arctic can get acquainted with Czech culture.

The festival seeks to show how culture can generate media interest in Arctic scientific research, how science can be brought closer to non-professional audiences, and how public interest can influence stakeholder access to and increase funding for further scientific research. And vice versa - the scientific community, with its long presence in the Arctic, the number of personal contacts and its prestige, opens the door to music, art and other cultural projects that would not otherwise get to these places, and even Arctic culture in the Czech Republic would not be so known. It is therefore a mutually beneficial symbiosis.

It turns out that the presentation of scientific research together with culture is not a pointless slap in the water, but rather a very significant and innovative achievement, as evidenced by the science and culture festivals At Home in Svalbard 2018, Arctic Festival 2019, Arctic Festival 2020-21 and Arctic Festival 2022.