

# JUSTNORTH NEWS



Newsletter: Issue I / November 2020

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Project start date June 2020



## CREATING A JUST NORTH

**Welcome to the first JUSTNORTH newsletter!** Every six months during the project's funding period (June 1, 2020 to November 30, 2023), we will use this outlet to provide news from the project and project partners.

To receive regular email deliveries of the newsletter and stay up-to-date please visit the JUSTNORTH website at [www.justnorth.eu](http://www.justnorth.eu) and fill out the "Contact Us" form on the homepage.

With the launch of the project a mere 6 months ago, we thought it useful to present the vision from the project's originators, Corine Wood-Donnelly and Roman Sidortsov. In this issue, Corine outlines JUSTNORTH's origins, motivations behind it and the team's expectations.

It goes without saying that none of it could be possible without the dedication and enthusiasm of a vast network of Arctic, legal, policy, indigenous, environmental and social scientists. Participants in the JUSTNORTH network are identified on the website [JUSTNORTH.eu](http://JUSTNORTH.eu), along with a list of our partner institutions.

If you have feedback on any of the newsletter items, or ideas to share, don't hesitate to contact us via mail, e-mail, or through our website.

JUSTNORTH consists of 6 empirical and substantive research Work Packages. The first of those to set sail is Work Package 1 in which the research agenda is to investigate and define the project's "Justice and Ethics Framework". The empirical Work Packages 2-4 began in full force this September. Their foci are "Justice in Transitions", "Justice in Scale and Distribution", and "Justice in Participation and Governance". Work Package 5, with a start date of Sept. 2021, aims to develop a tool for evaluating and balancing different notions of justice, "JUSTscore Integration". Work Package 6, starting in April 2022, is dedicated to analyzing "Legal and Regulatory Policy Pathways". Please visit our website for more detailed descriptions: [www.justnorth.eu](http://www.justnorth.eu).



NEWS FROM THE LEADERSHIP

**Corine Wood-Donnelly and Roman Sidortsov** reflect on what inspired the project, how it got to where it is today, and its challenges and goals.

*“If sustainable development is to become a reality for the Arctic, we need to better understand where economic viability and the ideals of sustainable development meet.” Corine Wood-Donnelly*

**Corine Wood-Donnelly**

**JUSTNORTH Project Coordinator**

**IRES Uppsala University & Nord University**

The ideas behind JUSTNORTH were planted as seeds in several workshops and discussion panels on Arctic Justice, which I organised in Uppsala and at Arctic scientific conferences. These events brought together a strong group of scholars with a background in Arctic research, or in justice and ethics, to discuss the issues and concerns of this region as a focus of economic development. Many of these scholars and their institutions are now part of the JUSTNORTH consortium.



where economic viability and the ideals of sustainable development meet.

The goal of the JUSTNORTH project is to determine if economic development for the Arctic can be founded on ethical viability, rather than merely profitability or technical feasibility. One of the project’s tasks is to gather the perspectives of the many stakeholders within Arctic development, understand what they value, and how these diverse values can inform policy and decision-making.

We recognise that the values of some stakeholders are already well-represented in economic decision-making. One important task for JUSTNORTH then, is to recalibrate the recognition and representation of values for different types of stakeholders—especially for those living in the Arctic, and for those who are not only stakeholders, but also rights- holders. A key challenge for JUSTNORTH in the near future is understanding how best to work together with stakeholders to achieve these results in the middle of a global pandemic.

The project design was developed in autumn of 2018, together with Roman Sidortsov – a long-time collaborator of mine who is JUSTNORTH Co-Coordinator - in response to the European Union’s call for projects to address the viability of sustainable economic development in the Arctic. Yet we were aware that evaluations of economic viability and



sustainability are incongruous, and in reality impossible, because they compromise the economic, environmental and social well-being of future generations. If sustainable development is to become a reality for the Arctic we need to better understand

It is a privilege to lead the development of JUSTNORTH from the seed of an idea to a successfully funded project in progress. Of course, a project of this scale comes with many challenges, especially as we launched in one of the most challenging environments that science and society faces in this generation.

While we have navigated many of the early administrative and bureaucratic challenges that accompany EU funded projects and working in a consortium of 18 partners, we have remaining challenges to overcome as the work unfolds.

We hope that these challenges will be met with courage and a focus on what really matters in JUSTNORTH—seeking pathways to achieve a better justice for the Arctic and moving towards a future of truly sustainable development.

## JUSTICE AND ETHICS FRAMEWORK WORKING GROUP REPORT

**Don Mitchell**, Professor of Geography at the Department of Social and Economic Geography at Uppsala University, discusses the group's research goals and how they relate to the larger JUSTNORTH initiative.

Just about all of us have a common-sense notion of what justice is - a nearly innate sense of fairness - and we tend to know, and get outraged, when it is lacking in the world. From an early age we learn to shout "That's just not fair!" even as, over time, our sense of what is fair might become more nuanced as we learn the complications of the world. And as the world opens up to us, we quickly come to realize that what we know is fair or unfair might be very different from what some other person, or group of persons, knows is fair or unfair. Our common sense may not be the same as theirs and all of a sudden, we are dumped into one of the most fundamental philosophical questions that people face: On what exactly is justice founded? What is its fundamental, ineluctable core? Does it even have one, or is justice totally relative, completely historically and socially conditioned, a matter of convenience or an expression of power? How can we know, beyond a basic reliance on intuition or commonsense, that this or that process, this or that event, this or that relationship, this or that development is just or not?



cosmopolitanism, as well as the "capabilities approach") that form the core of contemporary justice theorizing. We are seeking to understand their ontological underpinnings, the epistemologies within which they work, and the specific ways in which they understand (for instance) distributive and retributive justice, substantive and procedural justice, and responsibility to past and future generations.

Through this process we are seeking to understand where these different schools converge and diverge in framing what constitutes a just outcome or a just world; where they are ontologically compatible and where they are not in assessing justice claims; how they differently account for the role of power in justice determinations; and what – in the real world we live in with all its contradictions – they are simply blind to.

From these understandings we aim to identify how these different schools provide analytical tools for assessing the justice of development in the Arctic, each no doubt limited in particular ways but together helpful for understanding the moral and ethical bases on which different actors (local communities, states, investors, etc.) make their claims as to the justness of their desires, actions, arguments and practices, with implications then for the likely "justness" of the outcomes of sustainable development initiatives.

JUSTNORTH is premised on the idea that no development, no matter how environmentally sound, climate-smart, technologically appropriate, profitable, or sensitive to local surroundings and global needs, can be sustainable if it is not also just. But what does that mean?

The job of the Justice and Ethics Framework Work Package – one of seven into which the project's main tasks and research are organized -- is to develop some kind of a common analytical foundation for assessing the justness, or not, of development initiatives in the Arctic. Our working group is made up of social theorists, ethicists, geographers, and legal scholars and our task is two-fold. First, we are sorting through the major schools of justice philosophy (liberalism, feminism, various radical approaches, libertarianism,

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*"The question of justice really is among the most fundamental philosophical questions people face." Don Mitchell*

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Our second task will be to undertake a similar analysis of what we call "applied theories of justice," that is to say, theories of environmental justice, climate justice, spatial justice, and energy justice, among others. Here, we will seek to understand their philosophical underpinnings (which their theorists often make tacit rather than pronounced) and subject them to the same sort of analysis and synthesis that we are doing for the

“schools of justice” again with the aim of seeing how they help (or do not help) assess the justness of development efforts and outcomes.

You can get a quick and dirty sense of how we are thinking about the various philosophical schools of justice in the **series of short podcasts posted on the JUSTNORTH website**. These are very quick (usually ~3 minutes) and anything but nuanced, but they do give a flavor of our findings so far. Before the end of January 2021, we will deliver a series of Discussion Papers on the schools of justice philosophy (along with a synthetic introduction to them) to the European Commission. In addition, these will be posted to the JUSTNORTH website. It is our sincerest hope that our summaries will indeed form the basis for sharp discussion across the whole of the JUSTNORTH project and among the public more broadly.

The question of justice really is among the most fundamental philosophical questions people face. We hope you will want to help us improve our thinking about them and sharpen the analytical tools we will eventually create.

Listen to our 3-minute JUSTNORTH podcasts on Schools of Justice!

- Liberal Schools of Justice
- Cosmopolitan Schools of Justice
- Feminist Schools of Justice
- Capabilities Approach to Justice
- Radical Schools of Justice
- Libertarian Schools of Justice (coming soon).

## RECENT JUSTNORTH ACTIVITIES

Stefansson Arctic Institute researchers **Dr. Catherine Chambers** and **Dr. Niels Einarsson** highlighted JUSTNORTH at the recent *Icelandic Arctic Talks II: Iceland an Integrated Part of the Arctic*. Their presentation “*The Humans – Reflections on Icelanders and Arctic Research in the Anthropocene*,” drew attention to two case studies - changing coastal communities, distributive impacts of fisheries governance and equity issues in Iceland, and communities, globalisation and marine tourism in Northern Iceland. The full webinar can be viewed from the JUSTNORTH website at [www.justnorth.eu/ongoing-news/](http://www.justnorth.eu/ongoing-news/).

The 2020 European Polar Science Week was held online October 26-30. **Dr. Corine Wood-Donnelly** (Uppsala University) showcased JUSTNORTH as a participant amongst the Polar Cluster of EU-funded polar research. Her presentation is available on the website at [www.justnorth.eu/ongoing-news/](http://www.justnorth.eu/ongoing-news/).

**Dr. Tanja Joona** (Arctic Center at the University of Finland) and colleagues Sirpa Rasmus, Bruce Forbes (CHARTER) and Pasi Rautio (ArcticHubs) published an article, *Three large EU Horizons 2020 projects to support Northern research* in the March 2020 issue of the professional reindeer herders’ magazine “*Poromies*”. The full article in Finnish is available on our website at [www.justnorth.eu/2020/11/13/horizon-arctic-projects-discussed-in-reindeer-husbandry-poromies/](http://www.justnorth.eu/2020/11/13/horizon-arctic-projects-discussed-in-reindeer-husbandry-poromies/).

**Dr. Hannes Hansen-Magnusson**, JUSTNORTH researcher at Cardiff University, has written an opinion column in *Global Policy* on the need for both a sense of an international shared responsibility and a sensitivity to local needs when developing Arctic policy. The full article is on our website at [www.justnorth.eu/2020/11/13/shared-responsibility-for-the-arctic-region/](http://www.justnorth.eu/2020/11/13/shared-responsibility-for-the-arctic-region/).

**Dr. Tanja Joona** of the Arctic Center at the University of Finland has established a blog describing the research being carried out by Work Package 4 partners on Justice in Participation and Governance. The blog is available on the Arctic Center website at: <https://www.arcticcentre.org/blogs/JustNorth>.

**Dr. Elena Conde**, Profesora Titular de Derecho Internacional Público Complutense Institute of International Studies (ICEI) at Complutense University of Madrid, and co-leader of JUSTNORTH Work Package 6, “*Legal and Regulatory Pathways*“, held a lecture on “*El Ártico: retos de la región ante el cambio climático*” (The Arctic: Challenges for the Region in the Face of Climate Change) on October 5, 2020 at the XXXVIII International Youth Encounters Conference 2020 of Gijón (Principado de Asturias). A video of the presentation is available on our website at: [www.justnorth.eu/2020/11/17/dr-elena-conde-discusses-arctic-challenges/](http://www.justnorth.eu/2020/11/17/dr-elena-conde-discusses-arctic-challenges/).

JUSTNORTH QUIZ #1

Test your knowledge of the Arctic and Justice. Answers at the bottom of page 6.

1. In what year was the Arctic Council founded in Ottawa, Canada?

- a. 1996
- b. 1998
- c. 2000

2. What are the common names for *Rangifer tarandus*?

- a. Reindeer and caribou
- b. Ringed seal and harp seal
- c. White wolf and grey wolf

3. Which of the following schools of philosophy subscribes to the “principle of openness to new worldviews”.

- a. Feminist Justice
- b. Cosmopolitan Justice
- c. Radical Justice



Sunset over þingvallavatn, Iceland. Photo Credit: Corine Wood-Donnelly, 2011.

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Quiz answers: 1a; 2a; 3b