



***Dear Mr. Valery Korovkin and Mr. Satu Luro, Chairs of Joint Working Group on Tourism (JWGT)***

In October 2011 the Northern (Arctic) Federal University (Arkhangelsk) together with the University in Tromsø (UiT) have taken an honour of co-chairing the Joint Working Group on Education and Research (JWGER). The both universities are committed to continue implementing the positive and timely initiatives undertaken by Petrozavodsk State University during its 2009-2011 chairmanship, aiming at developing cooperation in the sphere of education and research for the benefits of all the participating countries and sustainable socio-economic development of the whole Barents Region under globalization conditions.

One of the main tasks at the start of our chairmanship is to revitalize the working group activities by strengthening the JWGER membership and streamlining the strategy and action plan in response to growing international challenges and needs in terms of human resources and research. The JWGER priorities in 2011-2013 include promoting education and research as efficient tools for regional socio-economic development, intensifying cooperation in academic and research spheres, supporting activities of consortiums and networks, increasing collaboration in applied interdisciplinary research and innovations, highlighting successful international projects and providing financial instruments for new joint initiatives implementation.

During the two years presidency the special focus will be put on JWGER contributing to solving climate change challenges and eco-efficient economy. Also, recognizing the role of academia and research as significant driving force for socio-economic development of the Barents Region, we strongly intent to concentrate our efforts on promoting cooperation with business and authorities by analyzing their needs as well as proposing concrete actions and joint projects.

Since education and research tasks are closely interlinked with other issues tackled by BEAR thematic working groups and are given special emphasis in the working group mandates and action plans, we are inviting you for creating better synergies between different groups and levels and will favour increased cooperation with other chairmanships. Therefore, we would appreciate JWGT contribution and proposals for joint activities of our groups.

We are looking forward to a constructive dialogue and efficient continued collaboration with our partners within the framework of Barents cooperation.

**Sincerely yours,**

<b>Co-Chair of JWGER</b> <b>Ms. Marina Kalinina</b> <b>Vice-rector of International Cooperation</b> <b>Northern (Arctic) Federal University</b> <a href="mailto:m.r.kalinina@narfu.ru">m.r.kalinina@narfu.ru</a>	<b>Contact person:</b> Natalia Kukarenko <a href="mailto:n.kukarenko@narfu.ru">n.kukarenko@narfu.ru</a>
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