SECOND ARCTIC PROFESSIONALS NETWORK EVENT LEAVES PARTICIPANTS WANTING MORE



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On Wednesday 15 May, the Second Arctic Professionals Network Event (and the first such event to be held in Brussels), welcomed nearly 20 professionals working in the political sector as well as natural and social scientists working in polar research.

Representatives from the International Polar Foundation joined members of the Arctic Institute and APECS (Association of Polar Early Career Scientists) Belgium in hosting the event. The goal was to create a bridge between early-career polar professionals and more experienced polar stakeholders from different disciplines and backgrounds in an informal and relaxed atmosphere, outside of the hustle and bustle of a formal meeting or conference.

"Over the last few years there has been an increase in formal networking events for decision-makers and politicians about Arctic and polar issues in Brussels, yet there is a lack of informal gatherings where one can engage with key stakeholders," according to Liubov Timonina from the Arctic Institute, one of the co-initiators of the event who reached out to the International Polar Foundation and APECS Belgium to help organise the evening.

"Informal networking events where people can gather and chat are still one of the most productive ways to create healthy and robust cross-sector and multidisciplinary relations," added Romain Chuffart, also one of the co- initiators of the event from the Arctic Institute.

Those who turned up to the networking evening included a diverse group of polar professionals, such as scientists who have done research at the "zero-emission" Princess Elisabeth Station in Antarctica, academics specialised in Arctic policy issues, and representatives from the European Institutions and European Member State regional offices. One academic even travelled all the way from Amsterdam to join in.

Due to the interest shown by those who attended the event on 15 May to attend similar informal gatherings in the future, the organising partners are considering holding another networking event before too long. Keep following the International Polar Foundation's website and social media accounts for information about the next networking event!