



Permafrost Young Researchers Get Their Hands Dirty: The PYRN-Thermal State of Permafrost IPY Project

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The Permafrost Young Researchers Network (PYRN) (www.pyrn.org) is a unique resource for students and young scientists and engineers studying permafrost.

It is an international organization fostering innovative collaboration, seeking to recruit, retain, and promote future generations of permafrost scientists and engineers. Initiated for and during IPY, PYRN directs the multi-disciplinary talents of its membership toward global awareness, knowledge, and response to permafrost-related challenges in a changing climate. Created as an education and outreach component of the International Permafrost Association (IPA), PYRN is a central database of permafrost information and science for more than 500 young researchers from over 40 countries. PYRN distributes a newsletter, recognizes outstanding permafrost research by its members through an annual awards program, organizes training workshops (2007 in Abisko, Sweden and St. Petersburg, Russia, 2008 in Fairbanks, Alaska and St. Petersburg, Russia), and contributes to the growth and future of the permafrost community. While networking forms the basis of PYRN's activities, the organization also seeks to establish itself as a driver of permafrost research for the IPY and beyond. We recently launched a series of initiatives on several continents aimed at providing young scientists and engineers with the means to conduct ground temperature monitoring in under investigated permafrost regions. Focusing on sites not currently covered by the IPA's "Thermal State of Permafrost" project, the young investigators of PYRN successfully launched and funded the PYRN-TSP project. They use lightweight drills and temperature sensors to instrument shallow boreholes in those regions. The first phase of the project was started in the spring of 2008 at Scandinavian sites. The data and results will be incorporated in the global database on permafrost temperatures and made freely available to the scientific community, thereby contributing to the advance of permafrost science and the strengthening of the next generation of permafrost researchers.