

PROJECT REPORT: SCIENCE FOR KIDS AND SCIENCE FOR SCHOOLS 2025-2026

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SCIENCE FOR KIDS

SUMMARY

The Arctic Frontiers Science for Kids program is a collaboration between Nordnorsk Vitensenter and Arctic Frontiers, which aims to spark scientific curiosity among kindergarteners from Troms and inspire them to create knowledge themselves. In the 2025-2026 iteration of Science for Kids, six kindergartens with about 70 children alongside kindergarten staff from all around Tromsø took part in Science for Kids. The program provides children with an opportunity to learn about science by asking questions and participating in research themselves, under the guidance of kindergarten staff who also receive pedagogical training.

INSPIRATION DAYS 2025

On September 2 and September 4 2025, kindergarteners from Tindfoten, Skittenelv, Straumbukta, Hvalrossen, Marsvegen and Furumoen kindergartens visited Nordnorsk Vitensenter to participate in Inspiration Days. Here, they met UiT marine biologist Lena Seuthe, who took them on a fictional research mission, taught them how to do research themselves by identifying marine creatures living in the sediments, and shared with them how it is to work as a researcher. The aim of the Inspiration Days is to spark curiosity among children to become more curious about the world in which they live in.

Following this, the kindergarten staff returned to Nordnorsk Vitensenter in September and October to get training in how to conduct research with children. They then applied this knowledge in the kindergartens by creating research projects based on the questions that came up from the children; the projects allowed the children to go out "in the field" to places such as local forested areas and the waterfront to answer questions like *Why can we find crabs at low tide, but not high tide?* and *Why do boats float on water?*



Figure 1: Kindergarteners participating in a "research mission" where they were taught how to identify different creatures from soil samples.

PLAKATFEST 2026

On January 23 2026, the kindergarteners returned to Nordnorsk Vitensenter to present their research and results in the form of research posters in the *plakatfest*, or poster party. With the exception of Furumoen kindergarten, which attended the Inspiration Day but not the poster party due to limitations on travel budget, all the participating kindergartens presented posters. In total, the kindergarteners enthusiastically presented five posters to the staff at Nordnorsk Vitensenter and Arctic Frontiers, and answered questions about their projects. The poster party was concluded with a science show hosted by Astrid Wara from Nordnorsk Vitensenter.



Figure 2: The Science for Kids posters, presented at Nordnorsk Vitensenter and later at the Arctic Frontiers Poster Session, showcase how the kindergarteners supervised by staff went "into the field" to satisfy their curiosity about spiders, crabs and more.

Following the poster party, the posters were exhibited for some weeks at Nordnorsk Vitensenter to all visitors, along with an information poster about the Science for Kids program. Several of the posters were also showcased at the Arctic Frontiers 2026 – Turn of the Tide poster session. We are grateful for the enthusiastic participation from all kindergartens in the program!

SCIENCE FOR SCHOOLS

SUMMARY

The Science for Schools program, organized by Arctic Frontiers in collaboration with Nordnorsk Vitensenter, is designed to showcase world-class research taking place in the Arctic region and inspire young people to get engaged in science themselves. The goal is that young people can meet researchers who showcase their careers and fields, and then work on their own research projects to showcase some of the relevant topics and research questions that are going on locally. Through Science for Schools, secondary school pupils get to engage with locally rooted examples of the application of knowledge in research. The pupils attended experts talks before conducting their own research into Arctic issues. Some of the pupils got an even closer look at Arctic research through visiting the Akvaplan-niva FISK research station, and attending the Arctic Frontiers conference poster session.

INSPIRATION DAYS 2025

In October and November 2025, Arctic Frontiers and Nordnorsk Vitensenter hosted the Inspiration Days under the Science for Schools program. Spread over four days, more than 430 pupils and teachers from around Tromsø visited Nordnorsk Vitensenter and the Fram Centre. This year, eight schools participated in the Inspiration Days – 10th graders from Langnes, Grønnåsen, Tromsø International School (TRINT), Sommerlyst, Storelva, Kroken and Lakselvbukt, and 2STF Forskerlinja at Kongsbakken VGS. Nordnorsk Vitensenter coordinated the attendance and subsequent participation of the schools.

For the Inspiration Days, Arctic Frontiers organized expert talks by early career scientists in various topics: *Coastal change – stories from under the sea* (Sanne L'Abée-Lund, Akvaplan-niva); *The Southerners are coming – sea urchins and a marine biologist on the move* (Johanna Bjånes Marcussen, Institute for Marine Research); *Humpback whales outside Tromsø and Skjervøy* (Ingvild Ytterhus Utengen, Akvaplan-niva); and *The gene edited animals – what is at stake?* (Torill Blix, NORCE). Following these expert talks, the students were then given the opportunity to ask questions to the researchers about their scientific work and their careers.

In addition, the Inspiration Days hosted several activities. On October 8, the pupils from Kongsbakken, in addition to science talks, engaged in two activities at Nordnorsk Vitensenter: a workshop on how to conduct research, led by associate

professor Siw Killengreen, and a "kitchen chemistry" activity in the lab, led by PhD student Marja Gächter, both from UiT. On the fourth Inspiration Day on November 4, which was also held at Nordnorsk Vitensenter, the visiting pupils from Kroken and Lakselvbukt got to attend the *Klimaløypen* interactive exhibition.

After the Inspiration Days, the school pupils returned to school to work on research projects of their own and, under guidance of the teachers, create scientific posters. Over the course of the autumn, the pupils presented these posters in the schools, with the schools making an internal selection of which posters to be presented at the Science for Schools Student Conference.



Figure 3: Pupils attending the *Klimaløypen* activity at Nordnorsk Vitensenter.

STUDENT CONFERENCE 2026

In the last week of January, the 2026 edition of the Student Conference was hosted at Nordnorsk Vitensenter on January 26, 27 and 30. On the first two days, a total of 18 posters were presented from groups of two to four pupils from Kroken, TRINT, Grønnåsen, Sommerlyst, Storelva and Langnes. On the final day, five groups from Kongsbakken VGS presented their posters. Unfortunately, Lakselvbukt did not participate in the project after the Inspiration Days and subsequently did not partake in the Student Conference.

In the morning, the students attended additional expert talks held by scientists from UiT: *The Power of the Small: Researching the Microbial World* (Marja Helena Gächter); *Ice, Carbon and You: tales from a Changing Arctic* (Martí Amargant Arumí); *Nanophotonic sensors – sensing the Arctic* (Jan Viljanen); and *Now what? Opportunities, challenges and solutions in the blue* (Vebjørn Jacobsen Melum). The talks, held in the Planetarium at Nordnorsk Vitensenter, also invited the attending pupils to once more ask questions to the scientists.



Figure 4: Pupils from Kongsbakken VGS present their research, while jury members Marja Helena Gächter (UiT) and Johanna Bjånes Marcussen (IMR) listen and provide feedback.

Following a lunch break, the students presented their posters in front of a jury. On Monday and Tuesday, Jan Viljanen from UiT and Arctic Frontiers staff members Andrea Krokan (Monday) and Thomas Helland-Hansen (Tuesday) formed the jury; on Friday, Johanna Bjånes Marcussen and Marja Helena Gächter, from IMR and UiT respectively, were jurors. They listened to the pupils presenting their posters, provided feedback and asked questions about the research project. The juries were also responsible for choosing the winning posters of the competition, in the categories "Best Poster" and "Best Presentation". Two posters won each day, for a total of six posters. The high school posters from Kongsbakken had a more extensive judging process, to account for the fact that these included more rigorous pupil-conducted research.

While the jurors made their final decision about the winning posters, the pupils attended a science show hosted by Astrid Wara (Nordnorsk Vitensenter), with some of the pupils helping out in the experiments themselves.



Figure 5: Led by Astrid Wara, the science show at Nordnorsk Vitensenter was quite a blast for the Student Conference attendees.

In total, 23 posters from seven schools were presented:

Jan 26		Jan 27		Jan 30	
School	# of posters	School	# of posters	School	# of posters
Kroken	4	Sommerlyst	6	Kongsbakken	5
TRINT	1	Storelva	1		
Grønnåsen	4	Langnes	1		

As with the Science for Kids posters, all pupil posters as well as information posters about the Science for Schools program were presented for some weeks in the Nordnorsk Vitensenter exhibition area.

Four winning posters were chosen from the 10th graders, and two were chosen from Kongsbakken VGS. The winning groups participated in two activities on February 2, the first day of the Arctic Frontiers 2026 – Turn of the Tide conference: an excursion to the Akvaplan-niva FISK research station on Kvaløya, and presentation of their posters at the Arctic Frontiers conference poster session. The pupils presented their posters with significant enthusiasm and highly positive feedback from the conference participants, and they themselves got to check out the other science posters and talk with the other presenting scientists.



Figure 6: Pupils proudly presenting their science posters at the Arctic Frontiers 2026 Poster Session.

WINNING POSTERS

10th Graders

Best Poster (Jan 26): [Treasure or Threat? \(Kroken\)](#)

Best Poster (Jan 27): [From blue seas to pools of acid \(Sommerlyst\)](#)

Best Presentation (Jan 26): [Tiny plankton, BIG problems \(TRINT\)](#)

Best Presentation (Jan 27): [The price of editing life \(Langnes\)](#)

Kongsbakken VGS

Best Poster: [Adapting to Change](#)

Best Presentation: [Check out our Mussels](#)

THANKS

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