

“REINDALEN”

Reindalen Film Project - Sharing Reindeer Science Beyond Academia

Svalbard Environmental Protection Fund – Final Report

Samantha Dwinnell

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We made a 15-minute short film that shares the story of how Svalbard reindeer are surviving in a rapidly warming Arctic through the eyes of two young researchers living among them. Our film highlights the complexities around how climate change can affect the unique fauna of Svalbard. Our goal was to use visual storytelling to engage broader audiences in a story about Svalbard’s unique natural heritage to establish the relevance of scientific research on Svalbard to communities throughout the world.

The final cut of our film can be viewed here: [Reindalen](#).

Direct download of the film (5.1 GB) can be provided upon request (contact samanthad@unis.no).

We believe we have achieved our overarching goal of using effective and creative science communication to engage audiences—across many communities and geographic scales—with scientific knowledge of Svalbard’s vulnerable species. By sharing our scientific discoveries

through visual storytelling, we have provided both local and international audiences with an argument for protecting the wildlife and nature of Svalbard that we all value and rely on.

Furthermore, we are using our film both for science communication and education. As a product of the University Centre in Svalbard, we have been positioned well to use our film, *Reindalen*, as a teaching tool for students and instructors. This has included incorporating the film into curriculum in Arctic Biology courses at UNIS. Also, we have used our film as an example of effective science communication during professional development events at UNIS.

Specific achievements of our film project include the following:

Local Education and Outreach

- UNIS Learning Forum Sharing Session: “*Science outreach – the example of the professional film production: Reindalen*”, November 2024
Sharing session abstract: “Transdisciplinary approaches in science communication, that integrate arts and sciences to foster creative sharing of knowledge, are an effective way of promoting societal shifts needed for solving environmental problems. Even still, many scientific institutions lack efforts in art-science integration as a way of disseminating research findings. In this sharing session, we will discuss examples of how visual storytelling can be used as an effective tool for creatively sharing scientific knowledge with broader audiences. This will include a screening of a UNIS supported film production, ‘*Reindalen*’, followed by a discussion of the process of working with artists to provide a discourse that is easy for non-scientific audiences to understand and connect with.”
- Screening of film in Arctic Biology courses at UNIS, including AB 203: Arctic Environmental Management and AB 329: Arctic Winter Ecology
- Event at Kulurhuset with film screening, scientific presentations, and panel discussion. Scheduled for 25 March 2025, but awaiting final confirmation

Local Art Exhibition

- Film screening and art exhibition at Nordover in spring 2025. Contact with Nordover has been established and planning is in progress.
 - Set for installation in late-spring 2025. This will include daily screening of the film at the Nordover theater for tourist, including cruise-based tourists, to attend throughout the late spring and summer.
 - The film screening will be accompanied with an art exhibition in the entryway of Nordover, displaying photographs and materials of the fieldwork conducted on Svalbard reindeer in Reindalen.

International Film Festivals

We have submitted to 15 film festivals so far. Our film has been accepted into three festivals, rejected by three festivals, and we are still awaiting responses from organizers of the remaining festivals.

The following are festivals we have submitted to or plan on submitting to, including the dates of the festivals:

Festival	Submission status	Submission deadline	Festival dates	Location	Response
Environmental Film Fest (DCEFF)	submitted	10 December 2024	20-29 March 2025	Washington DC, USA	Accepted
Flagstaff Mountain Film Festival	submitted	15 December 2024	3-6 April 2025	Flagstaff, AZ, USA	Accepted
International Wildlife Film Festival	submitted	30 November 2024	19-24 April 2025	Missoula, MT, USA	
5 Point Adventure Film Festival	submitted	17 January 2025	24-27 April 2025	Carbondale, CO, USA	
Seattle International Film Festival	submitted	19 December 2024	15-25 May 2025	Seattle, WA, USA	
Mountainfilm	submitted	17 November 2024	22-26 May 2025	Telluride, CO, USA	
Tribeca Festival	submitted	18 December 2024	4-15 June 2025	New York City, NY, USA	
Raindance Film Festival	submitted	28 February 2025	18-27 June 2025	London, UK	
Port Townsend Film Festival	submitted	1 January 2025	18-21 September 2025	Port Townsend, WA, USA	
Crested Butte Film Festival	submitted	20 December 2024	24-28 September 2025	Crested Butte, CO, USA	
Siena Awards Festival	submitted	9 January 2025	27 September 2025	Siena, Italy	Accepted
Santa Fe International Film Festival	submitted	4 March 2025	15-19 October 2025	Santa Fe, NM, USA	
Jackson Wild		15 May 2025	September 2025	Jackson, WY, USA	
CinemAmbiente		Spring 2025	Summer 2025	Turin, Italy	
Wildscreen Festival		Spring 2025	Autumn 2025	Bristol, UK	
EKOFILM		Spring 2025	Autumn 2025	Brno, Czech Republic	
Banff Mountain Film Festival		Summer 2025	Autumn 2025	Banff, BC, Canada	
Tromsø International Film Festival		October 2025	January 2026	Tromsø, NO	
Sundance		Summer 2025	February 2026	Park City, UT, USA	
Wild and Scenic		September 2025	February 2026	Nevada City, CA, USA	
International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam		July 2025	November 2026	Amsterdam, Netherlands	
Berlin Independent Film Festival	submitted	12 November 2024			Declined
Cannes Short Film Festival	submitted	5 December 2024			Declined
CPH:DOX	submitted	26 November 2025			Declined

Submission to film festivals is ongoing, and we will continue to seek out relevant festivals for submission.

Digital platforms

We are currently in the process of submitting *Reindalen* to New York Times Op Docs. We are also considering submitting to NRK (Norway), PBS (USA), and National Geographic Short Film Showcase.

Other Media Coverage

Katz, C. (December 2023). [The World's Smallest Reindeer Get Their Day in the Sun](#). *Smithsonian Magazine*. Photographs by Mo Heim.