

MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors



Real reindeers for journo students' Christmas holidays

Two UTAS students will be joining 26 students from around the world to study environmental journalism in the Arctic Circle.

UTAS students Emma Ring and Georgina Burgess will be attending courses at the University of Helsinki in Finland and Sami University College in Northern Norway.

Georgina, who is based in Launceston, said she was looking forward to being part of a completely global class.

“It’s a once in a lifetime opportunity - how often do you get to go to the Arctic Circle and be part of a completely global class?” she said.

“It will be amazing.”

The students will be visiting the Sami people, the traditional inhabitants of the Arctic Circle. Some Sami herd reindeer and rely on the animal for food, tools, and clothing.

The students will learn about a number of issues threaten the reindeer’s role in herding Sami culture, including global warming and land encroachment

The exchange is enabled by the Global Environmental Journalism Initiative.

UTAS’ Journalism, Media and Communications Program has combined with four European and three Australian universities to form the Initiative, which was awarded \$1.5 million in funding under the EU-Australia cooperation in higher education and training program.

During the three year-program, 12 scholarships valued at \$8500 each are awarded to UTAS journalism students to fund one semester’s study at a leading European institution

Co-ordinator of Journalism, Media and Communications (JMC) at UTAS, Dr Libby Lester, said that the primary aim of the Initiative is to foster collaborations between academics and students from all the universities, and not just between students who were on exchange.

“Students across the institutions are able to work together online to produce and analyse journalism in a way that would not be possible if they were working in isolation in Tasmania.”

Dr Lester said as environmental risks and politics are increasingly played out on a global stage, the need for journalists equipped to communicate these complex issues has never been greater.

Students from European institutions will also come to UTAS to study environmental journalism at JMC.

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