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GeoCamp Iceland

From Lava Fields to Lesson Plans

**Empowering Educators Through Outdoor Learning in
Reykjanes Unesco Global Geopark**

9 September at GGN 2025
Kütralkura UNESCO Global Geopark, Chile



GeoCamp Iceland



GeoCamp Iceland is founded and operated by educators for educators. We arrange and operate study tours to Iceland where international student and teacher groups focus on geology, geography, climate challenges and STEAM subjects.



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*"To change the World we live in,
we must first understand the Earth we live on"*



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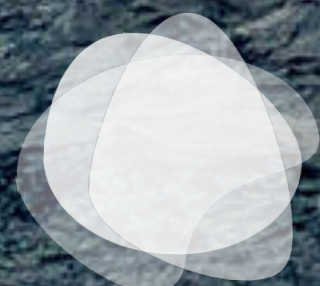
Educational Development in Reykjanes UNESCO Global Geopark



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Reykjanes

A living laboratory in nature's most dynamic classroom



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Empowering Teachers



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Educational Development



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International & Regional Projects



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International Development Projects

Along with Reykjanes Geopark, GeoCamp Iceland are active partners in several international projects that enhance teacher training, outdoor learning, and science communication through place-based education.

Projects include **Empowering Educators** building teacher capacity across Nordic Geoparks, supporting outdoor education; **YouthTrails** linking youth, teachers, and guides to create regenerative tourism pathways; **ACADIMIA** with focus on training opportunities for teachers; **AURORA** exploring climate and geoscience education; **GeoSchools** connecting schools in UNESCO Global Geoparks through Earth science and curriculum-linked exploration; **UpCycling** promoting circular thinking, youth creativity, and teacher-led innovation through design, reuse, and hands-on learning; **Empowering Educators** building teacher capacity for outdoor and SDG-linked learning across Nordic Geoparks; **Digitalisation vs. Nature** exploring how digital tools and outdoor learning can work together to foster ecological literacy among students and teachers.

Across these projects, we contribute to teacher training, cross-border learning, and the creation of field-based educational tools that connect students and educators to real-world sustainability challenges.



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KA122 Erasmus+ Teacher Mobilities

Through Erasmus KA1 teacher mobilities, we send local teachers abroad for professional development. They attend courses, workshops, or job-shadowing experiences in partner countries across Europe.

These aren't just training sessions. Teachers return with new teaching strategies, international perspectives, and a renewed sense of purpose. They bring back methods for outdoor learning, interdisciplinary teaching, and engaging students in topics like climate change, biodiversity, and local heritage — all through the lens of their own geopark.



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Nordplus: Empowering Educators

This project connects all the UNESCO Global Geoparks in the Nordic countries — Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Finland — in a two-year effort to strengthen teacher education in outdoor learning.

Reykjanes UNESCO Global Geopark leads the project. We use our shared geological and cultural heritage as the backbone of teacher workshops, classroom pilots, and resource development. For Reykjanes, this project expands our role as a training hub, with teachers from across the Nordic region visiting to experience how we teach in lava fields and hot springs.



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Regional Development Projects

Reykjanes UNESCO Global Geopark and GeoCamp Iceland lead local projects that strengthen place-based education and empower teachers as changemakers.

Projects include **UNESCO ASPnet** focused on the inclusion of all schools in the region in the network, embedding global citizenship, sustainability, and local engagement into classrooms; **Ripples in Reykjanes** funded by the Ministry of Education focusing on mapping outdoor learning sites near schools and co-creating an open-access lesson plan database with teachers; **Science Camps** which are hands-on field-based science days for older primary students, connecting classrooms with nature, research, and local industries; **STEAM Reykjanes** a collaborative project between schools, GeoCamp, and the business community to align STEAM learning with future skills in a geodynamically active region.

These projects create new opportunities for professional development, curriculum innovation, and meaningful connections between students, teachers, and their local environment.



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Ripples of Knowledge

Funded by both the Ministry of Education and Nordplus, Ripples of Knowledge focuses on STREAM-based outdoor learning for students aged 14–16.

We work with all primary schools in the area to develop and test outdoor lesson plans that connect science, technology, reading, arts, and mathematics to real places — like lava fields, beaches, geothermal sites, and forested coastlines.

We host field mobilities and are building a shared online platform for teachers to exchange ideas and access ready-to-use lesson plans that link to local sustainability challenges.



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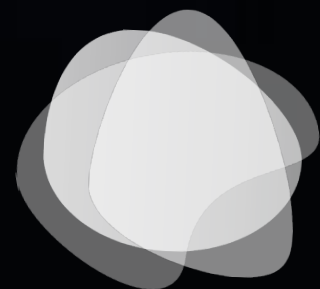
UNESCO ASPnet

All schools in Reykjanes are now part of the UNESCO Associated Schools Network (ASPnet). This gives us a unique opportunity to work across all age levels and schools to embed sustainability and global citizenship into the curriculum.

GeoCamp Iceland serves as the coordinator on behalf of Reykjanes UNESCO Global Geopark, supporting the project through outdoor learning days, teacher training, student-led projects, and shared initiatives like “GeoDays,” sustainability weeks, and hands-on science labs in the field.

It’s an example of what happens when geopark values meet whole-school commitment.

Impact



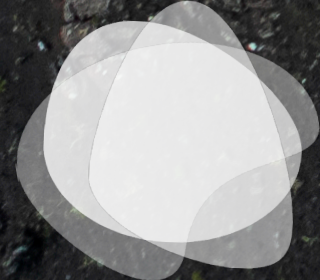
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Concluding Remarks

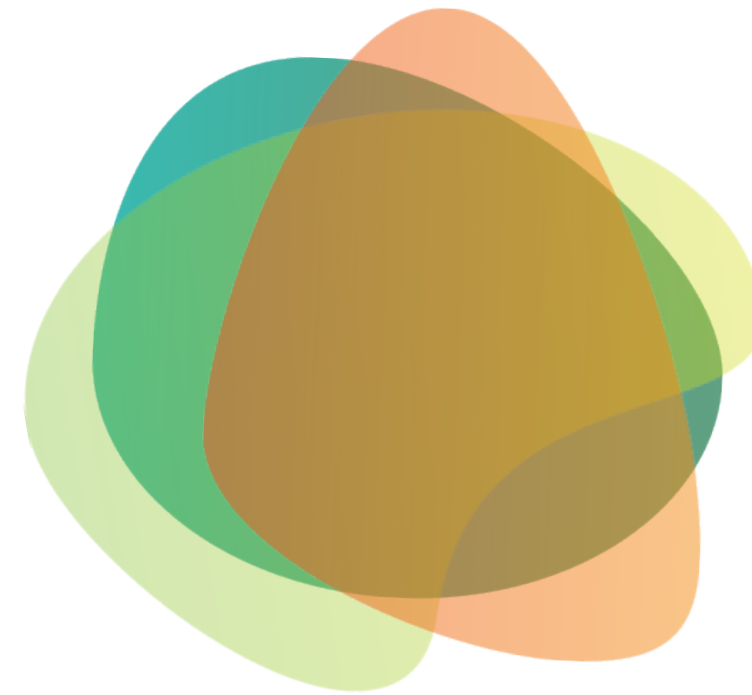


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www.geocamp.is
www.reykjanesgeopark.is



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Arnbjörn Ólafsson is the Managing Director of GeoCamp Iceland, with the focus on combining educational development, sustainability goals, and increase interest in geoscience. With nearly two decades of experience in educational development and international cooperation, I focus mainly on development projects, in field-based STEAM learning and science literacy.

Arnbjörn leads multiple EU-funded projects focused on renewable energy, climate literacy, and teacher training, and works closely with the Reykjanes UNESCO Global Geopark to bridge the gap between science, society, and industry.