

Polar Gateways Arctic Circle Sunrise 2008 Conference
Barrow, Alaska, January 23-29, 2008
<http://polargateways2008.org/>

Abstract

**The History of Svalbard as a Research Community
with Focus on Space Science**

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When the Norwegian Research Council for Science and Technology decided to establish a satellite telemetry station in Ny-Ålesund for tracking ESRO (European Space Research Organisation) satellites in 1965, an initiative was taken that opened the door for modern space research on Svalbard. The Auroral Observatory installed already in 1966, a field station in Ny-Ålesund for auroral research. This station has since developed into an international research center where scientists from about twenty countries are actively involved in polar research of different kind. The Auroral Observatory established in 1978, a field station close to Longyearbyen that has since been the auroral research centre on Svalbard and has later also served as a laboratory for students at UNIS. It is anticipated that the scientists at the EISCAT Svalbard Radar (ERS) that was established at Gruve-7 mountain in 1996 and completed in 2000 together with the scientists at the Kjell Henriksen Observatory will form a community that will contribute strongly to the science of the upper polar atmosphere for many years to come.