## Step 2 Evaluation Report

### CONFIDENTIAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Call reference</th>
<th>ERC-2011-AdG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>ERC Advanced Grant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding scheme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panel name</td>
<td>SH2 - Institutions, values, beliefs and behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal No.</td>
<td>295458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Arctic Domus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicant Name</td>
<td>David George Anderson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Arctic Domestication: Emplacing Human-Animal Relationships in the Circumpolar North</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PANEL MARKS

#### 1. Intellectual capacity, creativity and commitment of the PI

To what extent is the Principal Investigator's (and any Co-Investigator if applicable) record of research, collaborations, project conception, supervision of students and publications ground-breaking and demonstrative of independent creative thinking and the capacity to go significantly beyond the state of the art?

Is the Principal Investigator strongly committed to the project and willing to devote a significant amount of time to it (they will be expected to devote at least 30% of their working time to the ERC-funded project and spend at least 50% of their total working time in an EU Member State or associated country)?

**Mark:** 3.43 / 4

#### 2. Ground-breaking nature and potential impact of the research; methodology

**Ground-breaking nature and potential impact of the research**

To what extent does the proposed research address important challenges at the frontiers of the field(s) addressed?

To what extent does it have suitably ambitious objectives, which go substantially beyond the current state of the art (e.g. including inter- and trans-disciplinary developments and novel or unconventional concepts and/or approaches)?

**Methodology**

To what extent does the possibility of a major breakthrough with an impact beyond a specific research domain/discipline justify any highly novel and/or unconventional methodologies (“high-gain/high-risk balance”)?

To what extent is the proposed research methodology (including the proposed timescales and resources) appropriate to achieve the goals of the project?

To what extent are the resources requested necessary and properly justified?

If it is proposed that team members engaged by another host institution participate in the project is their participation fully justified by the scientific added value they bring to the project?

**Mark:** 3.76 / 4

#### Total mark

**Mark:** 7.19 / 8

Has the proposal passed the thresholds (2/4) for criteria 1 and 2?

**Yes**
This evaluation report contains the final marks awarded by the ERC review panel during the second step of the ERC Advanced Grant review. The panel based its appraisal on prior individual reviews conducted by panel members and external referees.

The panel closely examined all the individual review reports and, while not necessarily subscribing to each and every opinion expressed, found that they provide a fair overall assessment. The comments of the individual reviewers were the basis for the panel's discussion. In addition to these individual reviews the final conclusion of the panel is included in this Panel comment.

The PI's research activities have been remarkable in their theoretical scope, publications, and active fieldwork research - more than sufficient to provide confidence in the success of the project. He has supervised a number of funded projects in the Arctic region which gives him good leadership experience and a thorough knowledge of the issues involved. Speaking several of the relevant languages in the region is a prerequisite for the success of the proposed research and the PI speaks Russian, several local languages as well as Norwegian (Swedish) and English. The panel agreed that the PI is exceptionally well qualified to undertake a project of such wide ranging and ambitious aims.

The panel was particularly impressed by the interdisciplinary approach which is an essential part of the project. A team that is made up of anthropologists, archaeologists, geneticists, and which includes the taking of pollen and soil samples, in order to ascertain the development of domestication of animals in the Arctic regions is appropriate. Drawing on Science and Technology Studies as well as recent anthropological theory, a socio-ecological model will be developed that argues for the collapse of a wild / tame dichotomy still prevalent in the study of the history of human / animal relations. The methodology is complex and ambitious, but well developed and carefully argued. Multisited fieldwork in the different countries is sound and coupled with laboratory work with samples from each location makes the project especially interesting in novel ways not commonly encountered in a social science project of this nature. Altogether the panel was convinced that this project would be ground-breaking and bring important new insight into the domestication of animals, not just in the selected region, but also more generally.

The panel therefore recommends that the proposal should be retained for funding with a grant not exceeding 2 497 830.00 Euro.
REVIEWER COMMENTS

The following individual reviews have been carried out independently prior to the panel meeting and do not necessarily reflect the panel's final opinion

Reviewer 1

1. Intellectual capacity, creativity and commitment of the PI:

The PI's CV shows excellent scholarly and disciplinary achievements. He has contributed to the development of the field in Russia and also developed original concepts that are well recognized in the field of anthropological archaeology, reinterpreting and shifting emphasis in the predominant understandings of the relationship between humans and the environment (sentient ecology), his scholarly excellence is evidenced by publications, career development and the high citation rate of his 2002 book.

He has management and leadership experience including leading expeditions and so is well positioned to conduct successfully this logistically and managerially complex but well planned project.

2. Ground-breaking nature and potential impact of the research; methodology:

Ground-breaking nature and potential impact of the research:

The project is theoretically and methodologically exciting and fascinating. It promises new knowledge about the relationship between human and animals and the history of breeding and domestication. Understanding and re-writing the history of the changing conditions of human and animal life in their interdependencies is the main aim of the project. This will inform expertise on the history of human culture, archaeology, ecology, and biology. The potential to re-configure in part how human history and its past development in exchange with surrounding nature and species are understood is highly important in relation to the question of natural interdependencies between life forms. The set of new technologies brought together to achieve a rich picture of this past is innovative and convincing. The inclusion of a philosophical perspective would enrich the project and so would an account of the relevance of a new history of the human animal relation for general historical and ecological awareness. The dissemination strategy of the project could go beyond the listed means of academic presentation and publishing – a communication strategy to wider audiences addressing the issues of domestication, and ecology would seem very desirable for this project.

Methodology:

The study design is fascinating, complex and innovative and well planned. The networks to conduct the multi-sited fieldwork across Russia, Canada, Scandinavia, and Scotland and the laboratories needed seem in place and the PI has tested the methods to be used. The integration of methods, if systematically developed and published on, could be very useful for other disciplines and research topics beyond archaeology and cultural and natural history. The research and will integrate diverse historical, ethnographic and archaeological methods including documentary analysis, excavation, expert interviews and a range of molecular biological and radiation tests on materials from living and dead animals. Good value for money.

Reviewer 2

1. Intellectual capacity, creativity and commitment of the PI:

A strong and relevant research profile. Having received his Ph.D. in 1996/1997, he has a remarkable international exposure both in terms of academic training/positions and in leading international projects.

His indication that he will devote an average of 60% of his time clearly reveals strong commitment to this project.

2. Ground-breaking nature and potential impact of the research; methodology:

Ground-breaking nature and potential impact of the research:

A well designed and competent proposal, which ambitiously tries to connect different disciplinary approaches.

Methodology:

The proposed research appears to have the potential to impact across domains and disciplines.

The research methodology appears appropriate, original and well described. The resources requested are high but justified in detail, as well as the collaborations of other institutions.
Reviewer 3

1. Intellectual capacity, creativity and commitment of the PI:

The PI is very accomplished in the study of socio-ecological relationships with respect to the circumpolar North. He has a strong track record of publication, fundraising, research management and supervision. His 2002 sole authored book (Oxford University Press) is widely cited as are his edited collections. He originated the notion of a ‘sentient ecology’.

Overall outstanding in a specialised field of research. The PI will devote an average of 60% of time to the project, ranging between 50% and 80% over the life of the project.

2. Ground-breaking nature and potential impact of the research; methodology:

Ground-breaking nature and potential impact of the research:

This is a strongly interdisciplinary project which identifies a clear gap - the absence of multi-method, systematic comparison across the Arctic region of the domestication process. The project is designed to challenge simplistic explanations of human-animal relationships (mastery over) to develop an ethnographically rich account, backed up by a consideration of issues from a STS perspective and by soil chemistry and pollen analysis and by genetic sampling and osteology. The main research questions are located in the social sciences and in social anthropology. Given the absence of systematic and comparative work on the populations (dogs, caribou and salmon), this work is likely to be ground-breaking and will certainly advance the state of the art.

There is a clear specification of the research questions and a clear explanation for the research design and the involvement of external experts. The aim of developing a new socio-ecological model is ambitious with an interesting focus on the construction of ‘wild’ and ‘tame’, ‘built’ and ‘created’ environments, and ‘trust’ and ‘domination and a sensitivity to regional differences. There is however relatively little in the proposal which discusses the literatures which are mentioned and how the new approach differs from the existing approaches theoretically.

Nothing is said about the risks entailed in a very strongly interdisciplinary research project. The PI has a very strong record of working in this way however.

Perhaps surprisingly given the importance of human-animal relations in the Arctic regions and the attention to these regions for cultural, social and economic (resource extraction) reasons, the proposal says nothing about the potential policy relevance of the results. The PI's publication record indicates, however, that he has written on issues with respect to their implications for issues livelihoods, aboriginal rights, social life, etc.

Methodology:

The discussion of the research design and methodology for this project is very clear. There is an excellent justification for the choice of regions and non-humans. Seven regions are to be included which seems manageable given the expertise of the PI and his collaborators. The project employs new techniques in new regions as well as ethnographic methods. The timing of the components is well through-out and justified as are the costs. Good consideration is given to the need to allocate time for synthesis and means of collating the field work results. The external members bring necessary relevant expertise.

The only costs that that may be questioned are 1) resources for translation of publications into Russian (clearly field notes in Russian need translation); 2) payment to Taylor & Francis publisher to make 3 peer-reviewed papers available on open access (highly desirable but not normally funded by projects). It may be necessary to pay costs of publication in science-based peer-reviewed journals regardless of open access issue as this is common and some of the results of this project are likely to be targeted to such journals. Clarification should be sought.

Reviewer 4

1. Intellectual capacity, creativity and commitment of the PI:

The PI is Professor of Archaeology and Social Anthropology at the University of Tromsø Norway, adjunct professor at Aberdeen and Alberta and is Canadian of origin. He is a former Professor at the University of Aberdeen, with PhD (1996) from Cambridge. He was a co-founder of the Anthropology of the North programme at Aberdeen in 2000 and has managed three large research projects that involved scholars from several countries above the Arctic Circle. The focus of his research has been, and continues to be, the anthropological study of environment and culture in Russia, Norway, Finland, Alaska. He speaks Russian and several local languages as well as Norwegian. His publication record is quite impressive, but not outstanding. This may be due to the relative short time since he completed his PhD. Two books that deal with regional Russian situation have been translated into Russian. His journal articles, however, are not published in central anthropological journals, but mainly in regional ones. An ambitious and highly competent researcher who, perhaps, is not yet ready for an Advanced grant.
2. Ground-breaking nature and potential impact of the research; methodology:

Ground-breaking nature and potential impact of the research:
The project builds on the PIs previous research in the Circumpolar region and aims to bring together a multidisciplinary team in order to investigate domestication patterns in the region. The main aim is to challenge the accepted model that holds that domestication as a sudden event that leads to a hierarchical relation of people over one particular species. Instead he will investigate “how humans and non-human animals engage each other in a complex social relationship” which, it is claimed, will lead to a socio-ecological model that challenges the dichotomy “wild / tame.” This is in line with much cutting-edge current thinking. The research focus will be on three animal species: canines, rangifer and salmon. The fact that representatives from environmental archaeology, history of science, osteology and animal genetics as well as social anthropology will be actively involved argues for a novel and solidly based research project. The project is highly ambitious and has the potential of being ground-breaking. However, although each sub-project seems well catered for methodologically, it remains somewhat unclear how the PI will be able to relate the findings from all the different experts into one overall argument.

Methodology:
The research will involve a mixture of methods: classical ethnographic fieldwork in seven sites in Northern Norway and Northern Russia; theoretical input from Science and Technology Studies (STS); and soil chemistry and pollen analysis. The scientific team is not only multi-disciplinary, but is drawn from a number of universities in Norway, Sweden, UK, and Canada as well as Russia. The majority of the team will be made up by young scholars, mainly post-docs, but also one PhD student. The intricate relationship with Russian authorities appears to be under control.