



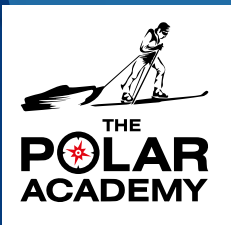
THE
POLAR
ACADEMY

**INSPIRATION
THROUGH
EXPLORATION**

Turning young adults into role models
for the next generation.

INTRODUCING THE POLAR ACADEMY **WHO WE ARE**

Charity registered in Scotland no. SC044605



INTRODUCING THE POLAR ACADEMY



Craig Mathieson and Chris Tiso

A MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDERS

After first supporting Craig on the Scot 100 Expedition to the South Pole, Tiso continued to sponsor Craig as he gave talks sharing his experiences and insights to schools nationwide. A chance encounter at one of these talks led to Craig mentoring a young person on an expedition to the North Pole. The trip changed not only the boy's life but that of his entire family in the most

positive and unexpected way. Seeing the extraordinary potential impact evidenced first-hand, Craig was determined that this not be a unique event and instead be a catalyst for something far greater and more ambitious – a national Academy designed with a singular purpose – to directly address issues relating to low self esteem and build confidence and self-belief in the next generation.

Craig went on to set up the Polar Academy with practical support and encouragement from Chris along the way. Funding in the early years proved very challenging and a huge debt of gratitude is due to those companies and individuals who believed in the pioneering endeavours of a fledgling charity.

Today, the organisation benefits from a hugely supportive alumni, a committed board of trustees and the legacy of several expeditions impacting countless lives – young and old.

Securing the future of the Polar Academy depends on continued investment without which the ability and confidence to run effective programmes and expeditions is compromised. Your time and consideration is greatly appreciated. The work of the Polar Academy is genuinely life changing – and you can be part of it.

“Their confidence soars with every step.”





WHO WE ARE

The Polar Academy is the brainchild of Craig Mathieson, who remains its principal. Craig is an accomplished and respected explorer, having led the first dedicated Scottish expedition to the South Pole, taken a 16-year-old youth to the North Pole and led many other expeditions to the Arctic. In 2013, he was awarded the title of “Explorer in Residence” by the Royal Scottish Geographical Society and he is a committee member of the Explorers Club Great Britain and Ireland Chapter. Together with his team of professionals from the SportsScotland Glenmore Lodge, the National Outdoor Training Centre, they make up the training and expedition team.

WHAT WE DO

The Polar Academy is now internationally recognised as an organisation which really delivers true life changing opportunities to the children and families who need it the most.

Working with the ‘invisible’ children – the victims of bullying, abuse or children crushed by a lack of self-esteem and confidence – the Polar Academy helps build them into leaders and role models, to truly inspire thousands of other young people, so that they too can reach their full potential.

The training is unapologetically demanding with the goals set often being beyond what most can dream of – our children always succeed. Participants are put through a rigorous ten-month training programme before being immersed in the wilds of Greenland, navigating through some of the world’s remotest terrain for ten days. Their confidence soars with every step.

On their return to Scotland, each pupil shares their experiences with their peer groups, speaking to

more than 30,000 school children in their region. They are living, breathing proof that dreams are attainable and that ordinary pupils can achieve the truly extraordinary.

Since the inception of the Academy, the small yet highly successful team have created and delivered a number of successful programmes and expeditions relying on the support of Patrons, corporate sponsors and trusts and foundations. Craig and his senior team, with support from families involved, have raised all of the money themselves to ensure the children and young people in Scotland and Greenland benefit from this unique and life changing opportunity.

We make no concessions when it comes to the safety of our children and make no compromises on quality of equipment used by seeking out the leaders in their field for outdoor and expedition kit.

HOW WE DO IT

The Polar Academy conducts visits to schools and offers a selected number of the young adults, between the ages of 14 and 17 years old, a truly once in a lifetime opportunity to be part of a major Arctic Expedition. This expedition will be beyond anything that they have ever determined to be possible and will positively change the lives of the participants and their families. Returning to the UK as true role models they will have a wide ranging and positive impact on their communities, as each participant will give back to their peers and community a programme of positive outcomes – each participant is tasked with inspiring a minimum of 3,000 other young adults in their community.



WHY WE NEED TO DO IT

Passionate about inspiring the next generation, Craig has shared his experiences with many schools. The replies he received to questions such as “what do the pupils aspire to?” and “what motivates and inspires them” led him to conclude that irrespective of social background, many young adults have very little self-confidence and motivation and are of the general opinion that they will not be able to achieve anything significant in their lives. Craig decided to do something about addressing this; it was out of this experience that the concept of The Polar Academy was born.

WHAT'S NEXT?

In 2021, a new phase in the Polar Academy's history began; expanding the Academy's activity in line with the organisation's ambitious domestic and international growth plan. We have doubled our capacity and are now engaging with two schools in Scotland annually. We are continuing to look for support to expand further to extend this programme into both other parts of the United Kingdom, Norway and potentially beyond.

How can you help? As a Charity, we rely on donations; whether financial or kit, to annually deliver our vision of inspiring youth through exploration. **If you are interested in making a donation or becoming a sponsor, contact us today.**

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Testimonials

"I am not the same person I was two years ago, in fact far from it. I have achieved so much. I have climbed mountains, seen the northern lights, been to ice caves, trained for months on end and skied across Greenland for days. I am so much more confident and resilient than I was. I have done unimaginable things that I would've never dreamed of doing. I wouldn't be the person I am today without the Polar Academy." *Emma*



Emma



Kim

"Before Polar Academy, I was this shy little girl who would freeze every time I had to talk to strangers. I had no confidence at all due to bullying and I had serious anxiety in school which was affecting my studies. Now I'm doing talks in front of hundreds of adults and students my own age. I've probably only grown an inch since it started but I feel like I'm on top of the world." *Kim*

"From the very start of getting involved with The Polar Academy, everyone around me noticed increasingly positive changes within me. The Polar Academy has changed us all in a number of ways, but most importantly given us all a new confidence and mindset and for that I'll always appreciate being part of something so wonderful." *Alex*



Alex



Matt

"In the past I have been bullied at school which made me feel like I wasn't good enough. Now I realise can overcome whatever challenges life gives me. I have less self-doubt and more confidence. I am not that person who is nervous about what other people think of me and that's thanks to Polar Academy." *Matt*

"The Polar Academy experience has altered my mindset and general approach when it comes to things I otherwise might've thought insurmountable. I'm also sure it helped a great deal with my university application and will continue to help me in future." *Holly*

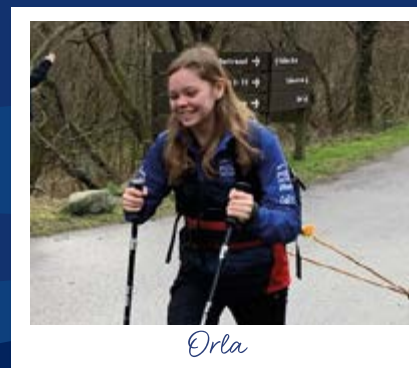


Holly



Testimonials

"I loved the endurance weekends. Getting to haul tyres for 30k through Scottish hills might not sound like fun but it really was! When we got to Greenland this really helped me feel prepared. It was great knowing we'd worked hard as a team, and we knew we'd be ready." *Orla*



Orla



Abbie

"Being to Greenland and participating in the Polar Academy has not only helped to shape me into the confident individual I now am but has also completely changed my perspective of life. I will be forever grateful." *Abbie*

"I believed that I would never do anything interesting or special with my life as I was just an "ordinary" person. Polar Academy made me believe that I can do anything, as long as I have the determination to do so. Through intensive training, I developed a drive to succeed and a strong work ethic to achieve." *Robyn*



Robyn

Parent Testimonials

"What the Polar Academy offers is hope. Hope to kids who are struggling to see their way; to parents that their kids will gain the resilience to carry them through life's many challenges; and to the many school children who have heard of our kids' experiences that they too can achieve incredible things."

Parent of graduate

"It's a tough training programme and a tougher expedition, but with every week I could see the changes in my daughter. It has been an amazing journey to be part of the Polar Academy."

Parent of graduate