

To: Exploring Climate Cooling Oversight Committee

CC: Mark Symes, Exploring Climate Cooling Programme Director

December 18 2025

Re: Re-thickening Arctic Sea Ice (RASi) outdoor experiment series, January - Summer 2026

Dear Oversight Committee members,

Thank you for your letter of 9 December 2025, in which you shared your recommendations regarding the proposed outdoor experiments by the “Rethickening Arctic Sea Ice” (RASi) project team.

The Exploring Climate Cooling Oversight Committee was established in late 2024 to provide me with independent advice and recommendations, and with the following remit:

1. To support effective oversight of the programme’s outdoor experiments and to guide transparent communication of findings;
2. To help shape international norms and standards for the responsible governance of such experiments; and
3. To contribute constructively to the wider international discussion on potential governance mechanisms for climate cooling approaches.

While the ultimate decision on whether to release funding to support any given outdoor experiment rests with me as ARIA’s CEO, your independent advice and recommendations on the RASi team’s plans have been invaluable in helping me to reach a decision.

Any decision on the release or withholding of funding for an outdoor experiment requires very careful consideration across a number of axes (technical, regulatory, respect for the rights of indigenous groups, and public and local community engagement). In light of your recommendations, those of the programme team, and my own examination of the materials related to the experiments, I am reassured that this proposed set of outdoor experiments will meet ARIA’s requirements around robust governance and responsible and ethical research as summarised in our [Programme oversight and governance document](#).

My decision is therefore to approve the release of funding for this set of experiments, subject to the following conditions:

1. That (as per your recommendation (a)) the Exploring Climate Cooling programme team commissions an independent assessment that confirms that all relevant laws, regulations, and permitting requirements, including those relevant to Indigenous rights as set out in the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, have been followed. Should this assessment indicate that the project plans fall below an acceptable threshold in any of the above named areas, then I have instructed the programme team to conduct a review of the experiments.
2. That meaningful and respectful engagement with key communities continues and is strengthened (speaking to recommendation (b) in your letter), through the following specific pathways:
 - a. That the programme team (with assistance where practical from the RASi team) increases engagement with ICC and ITK through a range of channels, making sure that key stakeholders at these organisations are offered the opportunity to receive a briefing and share their views on the RASi project and the programme in general. I have reviewed the extensive evidence provided by the RASi team and I am satisfied that the required Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) for their experiments has been secured from the communities where this research will take place — Cambridge Bay and Qikiqtarjuaq. The aim of engaging with ITK and ICC should be to work towards building consent over time with these national and international-level bodies. I have instructed the programme team to keep a log of such activity and to use their very best efforts to consult with stakeholders at ITK and ICC before the experiments start.
 - b. That the RASi team documents and shares with local communities the following before the experiments start, in a manner that is accessible for those communities:
 - i. Information on their process(es) for achieving consent, for confirming continued consent, and for discerning/accepting withdrawal of consent. This information should include in particular how any dissent within the community and from Elders will be documented and handled.

- ii. Information on practices related to community benefit, including the approach to co-authorship that will be followed and the approach that they will take to other forms of recognition of contributions (including, for example: instruments, guidance on experiments, and insights from Elders and others).

To ensure the project continues to set best-precedent for outdoor experiments in this field, the RASi team should continue to work on the following during and beyond the duration of the experiments:

1. The keeping of journals/logs by Real Ice and Arctic Reflections of their engagement with local communities and rights holders, so as to have clear and robust records to support FPIC and ongoing consent and permissions.
2. Supporting good practice in the field by sharing information in the public domain on ways of working that might help future researchers and communities. This could, for example, take the form of peer-reviewed publications on their approach and learnings related to consent and permissions (maybe also in collaboration with local stakeholders).
3. Leveraging support from The Liminal Space and the programme team to develop and implement measures to communicate with diverse audiences about the project and its wider context. Communication could be through the various websites associated with the project, in the wider media, etc.

Coupled with the activities that members of the RASi team have undertaken to date, it is my view that the conditions and suggestions above constitute a reasonable basis on which to approve funding for this set of outdoor experiments, in keeping with our commitments to this research being conducted responsibly, respectfully, transparently and for the public good.

I am very appreciative of the advice you have provided to help me reach this decision. As always, the committee is free to comment publicly (collectively or individually) on this decision, or any other matter related to the programme or the wider field.

With very best wishes,



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