

THE THOR HEYERDAHL INSTITUTE



Projects / Research / Studies / Expeditions / Conferences



WHAT IS THE THOR HEYERDAHL INSTITUTE?

The Thor Heyerdahl Institute is a foundation that was established by Vestfold County Council as a tribute to Thor Heyerdahl, with the aim of developing new projects in his footsteps:

- Interdisciplinary research
- International dialogue / multi-cultural interaction
- Protection of the global environment



The Institute was founded in the year 2000 and is located in the town of Larvik, Norway, where Heyerdahl was born. Vestfold County Council and Larvik Municipality have granted financial support to the Institute each year since its establishment. From 2006 onwards, The Thor Heyerdahl Institute has also received funding from the Norwegian Government. The Institute is developing well and is involved in local, regional, national and international projects.

PROJECTS

Local initiatives

Heyerdahl Anniversary 2014: The Institute is represented in a municipal anniversary committee and will play a main role in the national and international celebration of «Thor Heyerdahl 1914-2014».

Heyerdahl Room at Larvik Public Library: A separate Heyerdahl Room has been established at Larvik Public Library. It contains the Institute's Thor Heyerdahl

collection of 350 books, videos and DVDs as well as Larvik Library's own collection.

Heyerdahl Town (Larvik): The Institute has been an active member of the steering group for the local Heyerdahl Town project in Larvik.

Regional initiatives

Heyerdahl Centre: The Institute has proposed the establishment of an innovative, high-tech and sustainable centre based on Thor Heyerdahl's values of courage, curiosity, bridge-building and the dissemination of information.

Cultural monuments and tourism: Since 2003 the Institute has worked in partnership with The Moffat Centre at Glasgow Caledonian University, a leading European centre within tourism, business and research. This partnership has prepared analyses and proposed measures for the development of cultural monument destinations in the counties of Vestfold, Telemark and Buskerud. In 2011 University Campus Suffolk (England), Division of Tourism, Heritage and Events, joined the partnership as a new member.

RESEARCH

The Institute established and implemented a 4-year Thor Heyerdahl professorship in co-operation with the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (UMB) from 2008-2012. Professor Arild Vatn was appointed to this professorship, which is unique in a European context. Research has been concentrated on four areas:

- Climate politics
- Health and development
- Institutions and behaviour
- Environmental governance



The Thor Heyerdahl Summer School in Environmental Governance:

This summer school has been established in co-operation with UMB. It was organised in 2011 and 2012 with young researchers and doctoral students from more than 30 countries. The aim is to develop the participants' skills in the analysis of environmental political issues.

STUDIES

In co-operation with Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU), The Thor Heyerdahl Institute has established two multi-disciplinary Master's degree programmes. Students from all over the world have taken the **MSc Cultural Heritage Studies**, offered at GCU. A second Master's degree programme, **MSc International Tourism Management**, was introduced by the partnership in 2011. Vestfold County Council offers a scholarship to qualified candidates who wish to follow this programme of study.

EXPEDITIONS

Tangaroa 2006

The Institute helped to finance the Tangaroa Expedition in 2006. This was a successful expedition following in the wake of Kon-Tiki. The raft and expedition were intended as a tribute to Thor Heyerdahl and his Kon-Tiki Expedition. The aim of the Tangaroa Expedition was to increase public awareness and involvement in the fight against pollution and global warming. Tangaroa completed the crossing from Peru to Rarua Atoll 31 days faster than Kon-Tiki.

Kon-Tiki 2012

In 2011 the Tangaroa was converted into a copy of the Kon-Tiki. The Tangaroa was then used in the production of the new Kon-Tiki film that was released in 2012. In connection with the film premiere, members of the public were invited to join a unique voyage up the Norwegian coast on the raft that had both crossed the Pacific and played the star role in the Kon-Tiki film. The Kon-Tiki voyage in 2012 was initiated



by the owners of the raft together with The Thor Heyerdahl Institute and sponsors from Larvik. In addition to Thor Heyerdahl's birthplace (Larvik), 25 other port calls were made along the southeast Norwegian coast and Oslo Fjord area.

CONFERENCES

The Institute organises an annual international environmental political conference, «The Thor Heyerdahl International Day», where an international lecturer is invited to speak on a global theme.

- 2006 **Global Identity.** Author Amin Maalouf, France/Lebanon
- 2007 **The Polar Regions and the Environment.** Dr Robert Corell, USA
- 2008 **Indigenous Populations in the World.** Dr Mary May Simon, Canada
- 2009 **Fighting for the Environment.** Dr Robert Corell, USA
- 2010 **Protection of the Global Environment.** Professor Edgar Hertwich, NTNU
- 2011 **A Polycentric Approach to Climate Change.** Nobel Prize winner in economics, Professor Elinor Ostrom, USA
- 2012 **Water and the Development of Human Civilization.** Professor Terje Tvedt, Universities of Oslo and Bergen

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Mission: We shall continue and develop the concepts and ideals of Thor Heyerdahl.

Vision: We shall maintain a holistic approach, dialogue and interaction through new knowledge.

Cultural values: We shall be inspiring, challenging, boundary-breaking, bridge-building.



Promises: We shall stimulate interdisciplinary research and a holistic approach.

We shall inspire international dialogue and multi-cultural interaction.

We shall participate actively in contemporary global challenges.

CONTACT US

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