



FINESTBAY AREA
DEVELOPMENT



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MEDIA RELEASE

ARCTIC EDUCATION CAMPUS, ARCTIC HIGH SCHOOL NETWORK AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMS TO KIRKENES - HIGH NORTH DEVELOPMENT GROUP STRENGTHENS TEAM AS KIRKENES PROJECTS EXPANDS

High North Development Group AS (HNDG), the Norwegian high north arctic region development company, has invited the Finnish company Finest Bay Area Development OY (www.finestbayarea.online) to join the development of the Kirkenes and Varanger areas with the “Triple E” -model (Education/Entrepreneurship/Entertainment). The project is called “Nothingness” and it aims to create gravity to the area. The “Nothingness” brand tailors an international audience, illustrating an area of opportunities and peace. The project brings new educational programs, students, startup companies and businesses to the region. This multi-year collaboration has already started.

The Kirkenes city old hospital building (22 000 m²) and its’ surroundings are being developed to an education campus that will act as a platform for university and school programs. The campus will also include facilities for companies of all sizes and dedicated programs run by different schools and operators. Focus areas will be hospitality/tourism, logistics, energy and food.

The education campus will adopt the “Salla” -model for high school education and act as key node for the recently announced Arctic High School Network. The plan is to offer, in collaboration with local Kirkenes high schools, international high school studies in a similar way as the Salla high school in Finland. Salla high school has been successfully operating this model for more than 16 years already. Languages planned in Kirkenes include Finnish, Norwegian and Russian. “Education is the future, and we want to be building it. Kirkenes and the Arctic environment offers a unique surrounding to education that draws interest around the world. The talent that will come to Nothingness will innovate and create new in this delicate environment. “, says Peter Vesterbacka, the Chairman of FEBAY.

The role of Kirkenes as the center of the arctic knowledge and activity is undisputable and will only become stronger. The project aims to support this growth by establishing a base for the companies and academia to center their focus in. The Nothingness facility will offer apartments and lodging combined with office space especially in the form of multi-functional co-working spaces. Educational institutions will be able to host study programs or full curriculum at the Nothingness campus. “We are excited about all this activity. It will change the future outlook for the whole High North”, says Pål Lund-Roland, the CEO of High North Development Group.

Operation has already started and will expand this year with new programs and events. The local development company Sor-Varanger Utvikling Ltd (SVU) and the partners in the “Nothingness” project are already offering for example “Workcation” packages for companies to establish an office in Kirkenes for short to medium term working stays. The Workcation concept has been adopted around the world by different types and sizes of companies. Company can take full teams to a completely new and remote place to work from for a month or two. Kirkenes offers fantastic surroundings for this type of innovation nurturing. The Nothingness program has set as its’ goal to score high on all the United Nations Social Development Goals (UN SDGs). We will measure and report our progress real-time.

United Nations Social Development Goals:

The Sustainable Development Goals are the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. They address the global challenges we face, including poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice ([Home | Sustainable Development \(un.org\)](https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/)).



High North Development Group:

Is a company dedicated to project and place development to create gravity in The Arctic region in general and in Kirkenes in particular. HNDG is involved in business-development projects related to Science and Education, Business Development and Start Ups, Tourism and Trade/Logistics. HNDG is also developing, owning and managing real estate and infrastructure projects.

Finest Bay Area Development:

Is a development company working on creating gravity and economic growth to the Finest Bay Area region. FEBAY is an ecosystem development company that is designing and preparing to start construction of the world’s longest undersea tunnel connecting Finland and Estonia. The tunnel project includes four station areas that will be developed as individual real estate and ecosystem elements. FEBAY is also active in developing the logistics connections from Kirkenes to central Europe.

Representatives of the initiative will be in Kirkenes during 21.-22.2.to answer further questions.

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