

Annual Report 23-24

**INUK
ROCK**
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April 2023
to March 2024

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A Message from Inukrock's President Joanassie Oweetaluktuk

The 2023-2024 year was an incredible journey where we discovered our purpose and the impact Inukrock could have on Nunavimmiut youth. We found our passion for sharing and teaching rock climbing, witnessing how it fosters trust and responsibility for both our staff and participants. Through this experience, we recognized the need for improvements to our climbing facilities. As a result, we invested in new climbing holds, mats, and volumes for our gym!

We also took the next step in developing our staff by training them to set climbing routes, with guidance from Rose Bloc. This led to a climbing competition with the youth of Inukjuak, which was a great achievement. During the summer, we brought our staff to Montreal for a leadership camp, allowing them to experience the climbing community in a large city while developing their skills in a new environment. For many, it was their first time, and it was an eye-opening experience that demonstrated the sense of community that rock climbing can offer.

Building on this exciting season, we held a vision and mission workshop for Inukrock. In Montreal once again, we reflected on the experiences of the past year and came together to define the direction we want Inukrock to take and the values we hold. Our goal is to use rock climbing as a tool for promoting well-being and leadership within our communities.

This year was fun, rewarding, and full of meaningful growth!



About us

Our Story

Follow this link to watch the “Lagoon Cliff Sparks”, a 3-minute video recap of 2022, our funding year.

Our journey brings us back to September

Our journey brings us back to September 2019, when Audrey Hachey, a passionate climber and social worker working in Inukjuak brought climbing equipment to the village. Over the following years, she introduced many children and youth to indoor rock climbing at the local recreation center. Despite the installation of a small climbing wall during renovations in 2015, the lack of appropriate gear and training left it unused.

A pivotal moment in Inukrock’s journey came in May 2021 when a teacher introduced Joanassie Oweetaluktuk, Daniel Samisack, Sandy Williams, and Samwillie Tullaugak to Audrey, who continued to introduce people to climbing. This meeting ignited the spark that led to the formation of Inukrock as it is known today.

The collective passion and potential of these youth quickly became contagious. In summer 2021, a few young climbers began exploring a cliff that would come to be known as the lagoon cliff which already featured anchors from a prior project by the UNAAQ Men’s Association of Inukjuak years earlier. Sirivik, a long-standing partner organization, purchased climbing equipment to support the group’s outdoor climbing efforts, even if it meant repeating the same two routes over and over!



In August 2021, Sandy and Joanassie, who had graduated from high school, moved to Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue to pursue their studies. There, they joined the John Abbott Climbing Club and discovered the sport's vibrant community. This experience inspired dreams for their home community. When they returned to Inukjuak for the summer of 2022, the original climbing group reunited to climb once again the same two routes... whilst looking at the cliff's untapped potential.

Audrey Hachey shared that she knew a professional from the South who could help develop the cliff further. The next day, the group approached the mayor to request \$10,000 in funding to bring this vision to life. A few weeks later, after many hours of hard work and numerous mosquito bites, the lagoon cliff boasted 23 climbing routes. Additionally, Joanassie, Daniel, Sandy, and Samwillie became certified rock-climbing animators, while Audrey earned her certification as an instructor.

In August 2022, Sandy, Joanassie and Audrey co-founded Inukrock Climbers Club to ensure a sustainable future for rock climbing in Nunavik, offering a wide range of empowering work and personal development opportunities for Inuit youth.



Our Commitments and Vision

Inukrock uses rock climbing as a stepping stone to foster youth leadership, improve self-esteem and develop lasting trust bonds.



We **value the active lifestyle** and the networks of healthy relationships that climbing promotes



We commit **to improve the accessibility of climbing in Nunavik** both indoors and outdoor



We aspire **to create new communities of Nunavimmiut rock climbers** who can gather to challenge themselves and support each other.

Our Team

Board of Directors and Co-founders

SANDY WILLIAMS
Vice-President

JOANASSIE OWEETALUKTUK
President

AUDREY HACHEY
Secretary-Treasurer

Administration team

AUDREY HACHEY
General Manager and climbing instructor

JULIEN PELLETIER
Project coordinator and climbing instructor

Field team

SANDY WILLIAMS
Climbing animator and routesetter

SAMWILLIE TULLAUGAK
Climbing animator and routesetter

DANIEL SAMISACK
Climbing animator and routesetter

DUAMI ACULIAK
Routesetter and apprentice animator

FAITH ELISAPIE OKITUK
Apprentice animator

Volunteer and motivator

ALIX RHULMANN



Our Community Impacts

Improving Physical and Mental Health

Rock climbing is a physically demanding activity that promotes overall health and well-being. By providing access to climbing facilities and equipment, Inukrock encourages community members to engage in regular physical activity, which can reduce the risk of chronic diseases and improve overall fitness levels. Additionally, climbing has been shown to have positive effects on mental health, including reducing stress and anxiety, enhancing mood, and improving self-esteem and confidence.

Fostering Community Engagement and Social Solidarity

Inukrock's activities bring community members together, fostering a sense of belonging and social cohesion. Through organized group outings, events, and training, individuals can connect with one another, build relationships, and support each other in their climbing endeavors. This sense of community solidarity contributes to overall social well-being and creates a supportive environment for individuals to pursue their goals and aspirations.

Promoting Equity and Inclusion

Inukrock prioritizes inclusivity and accessibility, ensuring that all community members, regardless of age, gender, or background, can participate in climbing activities. By offering free access to equipment, training, and events, Inukrock removes financial barriers that may prevent individuals from engaging in recreational activities. Additionally, the organization actively reaches out to youth and families, including those facing socio-economic challenges, to ensure that everyone has the chance to benefit from the positive impacts of climbing.

Empowering Youth Leadership

Inukrock empowers youth to take on leadership roles within the organization, providing them with opportunities for personal growth, skill development, and meaningful engagement in their communities. By involving young leaders in decision-making processes, organizing training, and supporting their development as climbing animators and instructors, Inukrock promotes equity by amplifying the voices and contributions of youth within the community.

The Numbers behind our Impact

INDOOR ACTIVITIES AT THE REC CENTER

99

activities

Highlights
Completed
gym upgrades

3

Disco-climbing
parties

Highlights
Regular route
setting



A weeklong
climbing
competition!

OUTDOOR CLIMBING ACTIVITIES

18

outings

season opening
event with

56

participants

Highlights
A boat trip
to boulder island

LEADERSHIP CAMP AND TRAININGS

8

participants to our
Climbing Leadership Camp
in the Laurentian area

3

3 youth leaders
completed their indoor
lead climbing training
and certifications

3

youth leaders participated
in routesetting
training sessions
with a professional

NEW PROGRAMS LAUNCHED

Girls-only
indoor climbing
sessions

Training sessions
for community
climbers

Under

12

indoor climbing
sessions

¹ Martín-Talavera, L., Gavín-Chocano, Ó., Sanz-Jungk, G., Melera, D., Adsuar, J. C., Palacios Cartagena, R. P., Galán Arroyo, C., Mendoza Muñoz, M., & Martos Martínez A. (2023). Self-concept and self-esteem, determinants of greater life satisfaction in mountain and climbing technicians and athletes. *European Journal of Investigation in Health, Psychology and Education*, 13(7):1188-1201.

² Güreer, H., Aksunar, F., Gäreretoglu, Arslan, S., Aksunar S., Güllü, M., Eken, Ö., Kurtoglu, A., Uku, M., Alotaibi, M. H., & Elkholi, S. M. (2024). Evaluating the impact of rock climbing on mental health and emotional well-being in adolescents. *Frontiers, in Psychology*, 15, Article 1426654.

Our Yearly Highlights

Wearing a Piece of Art

In April, we finally presented the piece of art that has now become our logo. Maggie Napartuk, a multidisciplinary artist born and raised in Nunavik, is the dedicated and talented artist behind the drawing. The whole team was engaged within this exciting process.

The Inukshuk drawn on the logo is a meaningful symbol for youth which represents in Inuktitut “in the likeness of a human being”. These outstanding stone markers serve for different purposes, such as a guide for travellers and a place for reverence. Indeed, the logo, inspired by the actual inukshuk based in Salluit, which you may also see on the cover of this report, was climbed, in the past, by one of the youth climbing animators, Danieli Samisack. This inspiring and beautiful piece of art is a key reminder for Inukrock of all the resilience it needs to achieve our dream and goals.

A Tidy Gear Room

In spring, the municipality of Inukjuak provided us with a container to store all our climbing equipment. This was essential for the busy season ahead, as it allowed us to store our new gear acquired to maximize the accessibility of our activities for everyone.

Completing the Long-Awaited Gym Upgrades

In June, we finally completed the gym upgrades at the REC Centre’s indoor climbing wall—something we had long dreamed of! These upgrades were crucial to enhance both safety and accessibility for the entire community. The space was transformed into a bouldering area, eliminating the need for ropes thanks to high-quality mattresses and shorter walls.

By converting the space into a bouldering area, we were able to increase the rotation speed between climbers, improving accessibility. However, ropes can still be used when necessary, particularly for teaching purposes during the outdoor season.

Perhaps the most exciting part of this project was the visit of Pierre-Olivier Veilleux, the head routesetter from Rose Bloc Escalade, a renowned climbing gym in Longueuil. He assisted our team with the gym upgrades and, most importantly, helped bring the same level of quality to our routes as those found in the best climbing gyms in the South. With our new climbing holds, the potential was finally realized! To celebrate the successful completion of the upgrades, we held our first disco climbing party as a launch event.

Regular climbing schedules and more themed events, like disco nights, have energized the local climbing scene. However, by fall 2023, it became clear that our growing community would soon need a much larger space to accommodate everyone.





Training of our Youth Team

This year, through ongoing training, we successfully renewed the rock-climbing animator certification for our three youth staff members who had earned their certification from the Quebec Climbing Federation (FQME) in the summer of 2022. Additionally, we hired two more youth staff to assist with our growing indoor activities as apprentice animators.

One of the standout training achievements of the year was the team's progress in routesetting. Routesetting is the art of designing climbing routes on a wall by placing climbing holds in a deliberate pattern that creates a challenging, rewarding, and fluid experience for climbers. It's a dynamic process that benefits from teamwork, with rounds of trial and improvement.

Pierre-Olivier Veilleux, head routesetter at Rose Bloc Escalade, played a key role in helping the team develop their skills. After providing initial training in March 2023, he came to Inukjuak for 10 days during the gym upgrades to offer continuous support. Furthermore, the team participated in an additional full-day training session at Rose Bloc Escalade in November 2023.

The results of this continuous training were impressive, leading to significant improvements in the quality of routes at our indoor gym. With Samwillie Tullaugak and Danieli Samisack taking the lead, the team ensured regular route rotations, bringing a refreshing variety to the climbing experience.

A Climbing Leadership Camp

Between July 9th and 16th, Inukjuak activities took a break to host, for the first time, a Climbing Leadership Camp in the Laurentian area, with eight participants from Inukjuak. Held at La Montagne d'Argent, the camp proved to be a transformative experience, emphasizing teamwork dynamics while also developing climbing and leadership skills. In an unexpected twist, participants had to cope with extreme heat and rapidly pack up camp due to a hurricane alert! It was during these unplanned moments that the true spirit of the week's bonding experience became apparent.

Throughout the week, participants demonstrated strong leadership, both in climbing sessions and camp responsibilities, but more importantly, they actively supported one another. After the camp, many shared how the experience helped them overcome personal challenges and develop a deeper appreciation for life.

You can read about this special week in the Nunatsiaq News article titled: [**"Fear of heights is not a thing for Inukjuak climbers"**](#)

Overall, the camp has created a supportive environment, with youth eager for continued opportunities to grow as leaders in their community. The skills and connections gained will have a lasting impact, empowering the participants for years to come.





A Vision Workshop

In November 2023, we held our first vision workshop in Montreal. Our administration team, our president and 2 of our youth animators participated in 2 days of workshops during which we also developed our 2024-25 action plan. To support us in achieving our goals, we reached out to external consultants with experience working with Nunavik community organizations. This workshop marked the first crucial step in the creation of a multi-year strategic plan.

Our First Climbing Competition

In March 2024, we wrapped up a year of growth with our first climbing competition. Over five days, participants earned tokens as points through various challenges. There was a diversity of ways to accumulate points such as climbing to the top of a route, reaching a difficult “zone” on a route, or by participating in push-up and plank contests.

The competition emphasized participation over performance. Our routesetting team worked tirelessly to set 19 different routes throughout the week. By the end of the event, the wall had been climbed 1,173 times, and participants collectively completed 365 push-ups, held planks for a total of 28 minutes and 30 seconds, and spent 42 minutes and 37 seconds hanging! You can read about the climbing competition in the Nunatsiaq News article: [“Inukrock reaches new heights with climbing competition”](#)



Our Outreach

Promotional Items

Inukrock sees promotional items as an effective way to engage our youth members, collaborators, partners, and staff. These items help raise awareness of the organization and foster a sense of pride. With our logo finalized, we created stickers, shirts, and hoodies to proudly distribute and wear.

Social Media

Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube have been invaluable tools since Inukrock's inception, helping us keep community members and youth participants informed. With over 500 followers on Facebook, we're able to share exciting content with our audience. Here's a sneak peek of our 2023-2024 Youth Leadership Summer Camp recap on YouTube:

Watch here

Inukrock also took part in the "Be the Spark" online campaign organized by the Qarjuit Youth Council. This campaign provided a wonderful opportunity to share our inspiring story and highlight the youth leaders who made it all possible.

[Follow this link to watch the "Lagoon Cliff Sparks" video.](#)

Advertising and public relations

In 2023, our activities began attracting attention from neighboring villages across the region, sparking interest in our approach. Some villages reached out to us, marking the first steps toward expanding Inukrock's regional impact—an ambition shared by our youth staff. Additionally, local and regional partners helped promote key moments of our projects in regional newspapers, such as Nunatsiaq News.



Financial review

Contributions 2023-2024

Provincial Government

Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social services (Public Health)	92 975 \$
Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social services (PSOC)	74 620 \$
Kativik Regional Government (Esuma)	29 751 \$
Private	
Makivik Corporation (Ungaluk)	32 699 \$
Canadian Roots Exchange	17 500 \$
Qarjuit	10 000 \$
Other personal and corporate donations	7 969 \$
Other revenues	
Interest and rebates	457 \$
Deferred contributions – Amounts amortized to income	2 500 \$
TOTAL	268,471 \$

Operating Expenses 2023-2024

Related to Climbing activities	
Salaries and benefits	60 850 \$
Climbing supplies	11 057 \$
Accommodation costs	18 752 \$
Shipping costs	2 468 \$
Travelling expenses	37 699 \$
Meal	3 385 \$
Training	2 192 \$
Subcontractor	15 861 \$
Rental fees	2 487 \$
SUBTOTAL	157,751 \$

Related to management and administration

Salaries and benefits	37 945 \$
Office supplies	3 065 \$
Management fees	15 844 \$
Professional fees	6 737 \$
Insurance	400 \$
Advertising and promotion	9 469 \$
Bank charges	35 \$
Depreciation of fixed assets	5 921 \$
SUBTOTAL	79,416 \$
Excess of revenues over expenses	34,304 \$

What's done and what's next



Our journey brings us back to September

Overall, 2023-2024 was a year of skills development, leadership training, and increased engagement within the climbing community. The introduction of new programs, successful events, and ongoing outdoor and indoor activities strengthened the program and its impact in the community of Inukjuak but also catch some regional attention.

In 2024-2025, Inukrock plans to expand its reach and build on the successes of the past year. We will prioritize the ongoing training of our youth staff while also recruiting new youth leaders to broaden climbing opportunities throughout Nunavik.

More specifically, we are excited to announce the expansion of our summer activities to reach a second community...

Ivujuvik!

A Special Thanks

to our Precious Partners

Our Funders



Our Partners



Our Collaborators



Brodeur Tremblay CPA, Bookkeeping
Emmi Nagashima Nagels, Consultant
Maggie Napartuk, Multidisciplinary artist
Pierre-Olivier Veilleux, Routesetter

Christine Crépin, Video production
Jules Laurent-Allard, Consultant
Jean-Bruno Chartrand, Consultant

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