

Submitted Abstract

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| First Author First Name Last Name | Kathrin (1,2) Naegeli |
| Submitting Author First Name Last Name | Kathrin Naegeli |
| Correspondence | kathrin.naegeli@geo.uzh.ch |
| Co-Authors >> E-Mails will be not listed | Nicholson, Lindsey (3); Team Europe, Inspiring Girls Expeditions (4) |
| Organisations | 1: Girls on Ice Switzerland, Switzerland 2: Remote Sensing Laboratories, University of Zurich 3: Department of Atmospheric and Cryospheric Sciences, University of Innsbruck 4: Inspiring Girls Expeditions, www.inspiringgirls.org |
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Abstract

Girls on Ice Switzerland and Austria run tuition-free wilderness science expeditions for young women from diverse backgrounds. The glacier expeditions interweave science (e.g. glaciology, geomorphology, environmental aspects), art and mountaineering. Girls on Ice does not only intend to transfer scientific knowledge, but also aims to teach a general understanding of the scientific process, a mediation of nature experiences and an enhanced self-confidence and self-evaluation. A combination of inquiry-based teaching, experiential learning, and the tangibility of climate change science in the alpine environment provide a unique teaching environment. This particular framework allows to communicate science to non- and potential not-yet-peers, to facilitate insights into the scientific work through hands-on experiences, and to enhance the participants' general interest in science.

Here, we present our organisation and philosophy, and shed light on challenges of organising and leading glacier expeditions for young women in the age 15-17 years. While there is a strong classical safety aspect in the organisation and execution of such an expedition, team culture and mental health is highly important and is taken care of in the training of our instructors and are taken up in our core elements of the expeditions. We conclude on the importance of life-long learning and discussion concerning this topic to successfully run such unique programmes for young women.