

Polar Guide: Antarctica app launch – your questions answered

It's been just over two weeks since we launched the IAATO Polar Guide: Antarctica app and we have been thrilled with the response. Please keep your feedback coming so we can continue to build and improve on this fantastic new resource.

Below are some of the most frequently asked questions we have had over the last fortnight. If you have a question that hasn't been answered below, tweet us @iaato_org using the hashtag #IAATOapp and we will come back to you.

Thank you for your enthusiasm and encouragement with this project, we are proud to be utilising digital technology in this way to continue our mission to advocate and promote the practice of safe and environmentally responsible private-sector travel to the Antarctic.

How do I update the app?

To update the app press 'Sync' at any time. The app will only sync automatically if you are connected to wifi and it's been more than a day since your last sync. The strength of your wifi will affect download and sync speeds – so allow more time in Ushuaia.

Can I use the app without internet connection?

Yes! You can. Once the app is downloaded and synced, you can access all the data within it – no signal necessary.

Can I download the app while in Antarctica?

You can certainly try, but we recommend you download and/or sync the app before heading south. The app wasn't designed to be downloaded while on the vessels due to different bandwidths used by different operators, but once downloaded can be used without wifi.

Can visitors to Antarctica use the app or is it just for polar field guides?

Visitors can absolutely use the app. It's got a wealth of information from landing sites and wildlife to regulations and advice for the Antarctic voyager. Just download it before you head off on your travels!

How often do you plan to update the app and what frequency should we look to update the app using the sync function?

During the season (November to March) we plan to add as few documents as possible to the app to avoid the constant need to update and sync – which we know would be problematic on board many of the vessels. After this season 2017/18, we'll take on all the great feedback we've had and look at updates and larger data additions.

Is there anything on the app that allows me to contribute to research?

Yes! There is a 'supporting Antarctic science' section on the app to help you do exactly that and it's an area we'll be looking to develop over time too. If that's not enough for you to sink your teeth into, check out the Science News and Support Initiatives section on www.iaato.org.