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IAATO Antarctic Ambassador Expedition Program

Attachments:

atcm46_att142.e.pdf: Example pages from the Antarctic Ambassador Expedition Program
Presentation

atcm46_att143.e.pdf: The Antarctic Ambassador Expedition Challenge

IAATO Antarctic Ambassador Expedition Program

Information Paper Submitted by (IAATO)

Summary

Education and outreach have been a cornerstone of IAATO since its inception in 1991, both through targeted learning and training opportunities for field staff, and in the communication of Antarctic Treaty System and IAATO information to would-be Antarctic visitors.

It is IAATO's belief that expeditions with responsible and robust environmental practices at their core create among visitors a greater understanding of Antarctica's value to global science and how environmental changes to the region can impact us all. This ethos became the foundation of the Antarctic Ambassadors concept. Further information on the background to Antarctic Ambassadors is available in ATCM XLV (2023) IP054 *IAATO Education, Outreach and Ambassadorship*.

IAATO's formal definition of an Antarctic Ambassador is someone who:

- Loves and respects the region;
- Educates others by sharing their Antarctic experiences;
- Advocates for Antarctica when opportunities arise, and;
- Protects Antarctica by making positive changes at home.

The LEAP acronym is designed to empower everyone to leap into action as ambassadors, using their knowledge and enthusiasm in support of Antarctica.

In 2023, IAATO's Antarctic Ambassadorship Committee (AAC), evolved from IAATO's Education and Outreach Working Group, established in 2015. This Committee, consisting of IAATO Operators and Associate members, has a remit to develop the Antarctic Ambassador concept.

At the start of the 2023-24 Antarctic season, the AAC released a suite of materials to help polar field staff continue to create Antarctic Ambassadors. These formed the Antarctic Ambassador Expedition Program Foundation Pack, which is reviewed in this paper.

Background to creation of program materials

Building on previous resources outlined in ATCM XLV (2023) IP054 *IAATO Education, Outreach and Ambassadorship*, IAATO's Antarctic Ambassadorship Committee began developing the Antarctic Ambassador Expedition Program foundation pack in 2023 with the following objectives:

- To create ready-to-use program materials which can be reviewed, easily interpreted, and delivered by polar field staff to their guests.
- Flexibility within the materials to enable IAATO Operators to adjust the program for specific settings, i.e., lectures, re-caps.
- Consistency of message across the membership about the Antarctic Ambassador concept and its aims.

The resulting materials were given a soft launch at the start of the 2023-24 Antarctic season, enabling field staff to test the materials and provide feedback and ideas to broaden the program in 2024-25. These materials are as follows:

Program Presentation

The Antarctic Ambassador Expedition Program presentation provides a selection of slides, some of which are editable, from which field staff can pick and choose depending on whether they are sharing with guests as a standalone lecture or part of an evening re-cap.

The slides cover the Antarctic Ambassador definition, real-world profiles of Antarctic Ambassadors to create relatable examples of ambassadorship activities for guests, suggestions for guests on continuing their ambassadorship at home and signposting for further resources on the IAATO website, and to the ambassador social media community.

Notes for each slide are included within the presentation. There is also a document containing the notes which can be used for translation purposes.

Expedition Challenge

The expedition challenge is a smaller version of the 24-task Ambassadorship Challenge (released by IAATO in 2021) and seeks to engage guests in six small acts of ambassadorship during their time with IAATO Operators. Examples include attending educational lectures, making mindful meal choices, and turning off lights in their accommodation when not in use. In addition, there are three challenges for guests to complete at home including signing up to the [Ambassadorship World Map](#) and inspiring others by posting about their acts of ambassadorship on Antarctic Ambassadors social pages.

By joining IAATO's online Antarctic Ambassador community, guests returning home will also be able to access new tasks and challenges such as taking part in at-home citizen science projects, picking up trash at beaches and parks and choosing to cycle or walk on short journeys rather than using a car.

Certificate of Antarctic Ambassadorship

The certificate of Antarctic Ambassadorship is designed to recognize those who have taken part in the Expedition Challenge.

These materials, as well as a webinar introducing the program and available resources, 'Your Questions Answered' reference sheet, and Program Presentation notes, were made available to IAATO Members and Field Staff through a dedicated Antarctic Ambassador Resources page on IAATO's website.

The IAATO Antarctic Ambassadorship Committee will be developing further tools for the 2024-25 season to build the capacity of polar field staff and guests, create additional opportunities to participate and evolve the post-expedition community.