



## National Science Foundation

2415 Eisenhower Avenue, Suite W7100  
Alexandria, VA 22314



## The United States Antarctic Program

### Welcome to the U.S. Antarctic Program

The U.S. Antarctic Program Participant Guide was revised and updated for 2018-2020. The purpose of the Guide is to provide practical information about this NSF-managed program. You are strongly encouraged to read it in full, well before you deploy, to learn how to prepare for living and working in Antarctica. The Guide should be used as a reference, since it contains answers to many questions that may arise during deployment. It is available online at [www.usap.gov](http://www.usap.gov) at any time.

Ensuring the safety and health of all of its participants is a priority for the U.S. Antarctic Program (USAP). Harsh Antarctic conditions present numerous challenges to safety. Some are obvious, some not so obvious. Even routine tasks can be potentially hazardous. Medical care on "the Ice" is limited. Thus, all participants need to contribute to systematic risk assessment, hazard elimination or control, safe work practices, and the appropriate use of personal protective equipment to reduce the risk of injury and illness.

All USAP participants are subject to the OPP Code of Conduct (Appendix 1) and its standards for professional and safe conduct. Note in particular that intoxication of any kind in the harsh Antarctic environment can be particularly dangerous and will not be tolerated.

Additionally, the USAP is committed to providing a respectful work environment, free of any form of harassment.

As a USAP participant, you are also responsible for full compliance with measures to protect the Antarctic environment. Failure to meet these obligations may result in penalties under U.S. law.

Please pay close attention during your training on how to live and work safely in Antarctica. Do report unsafe conditions promptly, as outlined herein and posted on the Ice.

On behalf of the USAP leadership team, I wish you a productive and safe deployment.

*Kelly K. Falkner, Director*  
Office of Polar Programs  
National Science Foundation

This Participant Guide is the initial source of information for U.S. Antarctic Program (USAP) participants. It covers McMurdo, Palmer and South Pole stations, field camps, and the research vessels. The information will help you prepare for your Antarctic experience and point you toward other sources. Be sure to work closely with your point of contact (POC) for more detailed information and the particular requirements related to your objectives. The USAP website ([www.usap.gov](http://www.usap.gov)) will contain more current deployment information than this book. If you are reading this online, you can click on websites listed in this book and be taken to that site.

All USAP participants – including grantees, Antarctic Support Contract (ASC) employees, visitors and military – should use this handbook for general reference only. Authoritative guidance is provided in grant instruments, employment contracts, or other legally binding documents.