

PolarConnect

Connecting students and the public to the excitement of polar science in real-time!

PolarConnect, developed and administered by ARCUS, is a distance-learning environment that virtually transports students and the public to unique and remote polar locations.

PolarConnect, uses an online webinar platform, that enables live audio web-conferencing, online presentations, polling, and private and public text chat. The overwhelming success of the program is attributed to simple technology, the ability to be adapted to different field and classroom environments, and the opportunity for students to interact directly with the teachers and researchers in exotic locations. Be it a satellite phone connection or high speed internet, reporting from isolated locations like an ice field in Greenland or a penguin rookery in Antarctica, teachers and researchers have the opportunity to capture students' and the public's imagination with the excitement and adventure of science.



Each PolarConnect event is announced in advance through various E-Mail lists and website postings, including the ARCUS Polar Education List (<http://www.arcus.org/Education/educationlist/index.html>). Any organization, individual, or age group can participate in PolarConnect and follow the PolarTREC expeditions. There is no cost associated with participating in these events – participation and all software materials are FREE if you have the basic equipment needed!

Join PolarConnect from your school or community!

Connecting your classroom, school, or other community group to researchers, teachers, and other professionals conducting exciting polar research is easy to do with PolarConnect. Each PolarConnect event has an audio and visual component. The following instructions will help you, or others wanting to connect to your PolarTREC expedition, prepare, set-up, and connect with the PolarConnect real-time events.

Supplies Needed:

- Computer and high speed internet connection
- LCD projector and screen (if screening event for a large group)
- Phone with speaker phone capabilities (or regular phone and a microphone) or
- Voiceover IP (Ability to talk through your computer using computer microphone and speakers)

Step 1: Register for the *PolarConnect* Event

Online registration for each event is available at: <http://www.polartrec.com/polar-connect/register>

On the *PolarConnect* registration page, select the event you would like to register for in the pull down menu and fill in the registration webform. The information you provide is very important, because it helps us prepare for the event, gives the PolarTREC teacher and research team a sense of how many participants are on the call, and provides ARCUS with very important statistical participation data. Registration also enables you to receive instructions, updates, and the agenda.

Step 2: Connect to the event using the online platform Adobe Connect

Well before the *PolarConnect* event, make sure that the computer you will be using is properly configured. You may need to ask permissions to access the webinar platform from your system administrator.

Before you begin connecting:

- a.) You will need POP-UPS enabled.
- b.) Your computer will need to accept cookies.
- c.) You will **not** need Quicktime for the live event.

Access your PolarConnect Event:

1. Go to: <https://arcus.adobeconnect.com/PolarConnect/>

2. Enter your name and click on “Enter Room”.
You will then be connected to the *PolarConnect* event room.



3. If this is the first time you are using Adobe Connect, a screen with a series of “Tips for Using Adobe Connect” will appear on your screen. To exit these, check the box in the lower left corner which says “Don’t show this again” and then click on the X in the upper right hand corner to get rid of the tips.

***Don’t be fooled - even though the first “tip” is about Joining the Audio Conference, you need to move out of the Tips in order to connect to the audio portion of the webinar.*

4. After you exit the Tips screen, you will be given 3 options to join the audio portion of the program. **Our preference is “Using the microphone” (Voice over IP).**

Here are the 3 options you will see:

Option 1. The “Dial-Out” [Receive a call from the meeting] is **not** an option for PolarConnect events. Please select “Using the Microphone” or “Dial-In” using the toll-free number.

Option 2. “Dial-In” to the audio conference via phone.

If your internet connection is unreliable, you can call into the presentation using a phone. To choose this option, select “Dial-In” and click “Join” to be connected.

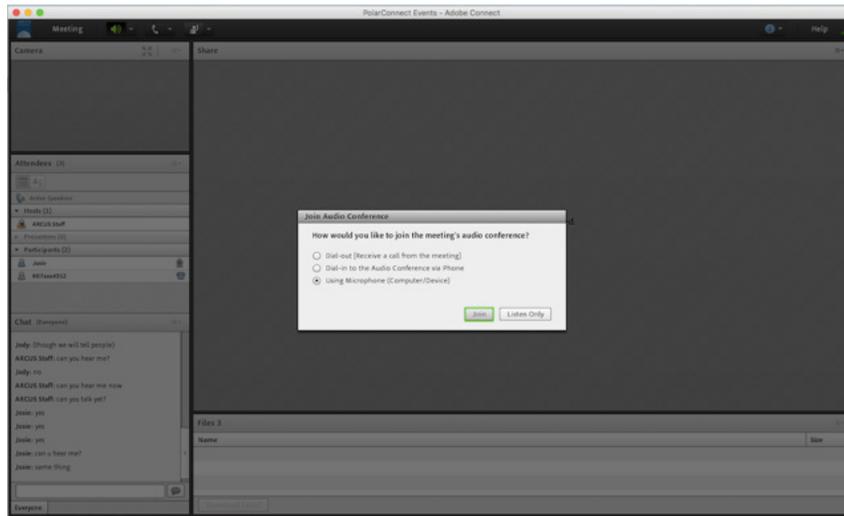
- a. At the specified time, U.S. and Canadian participants dial: 1-800-766 1337.
- b. When prompted, enter the participant code 54366779, followed by the pound (#) sign. This will connect you directly to the conference call.

Note: International participants wishing to join via phone, contact PolarTREC staff at info@polartrec.com at least 24 hours before the event. In your email, specify what country you will be calling from and we will get back to you with a call-in number.

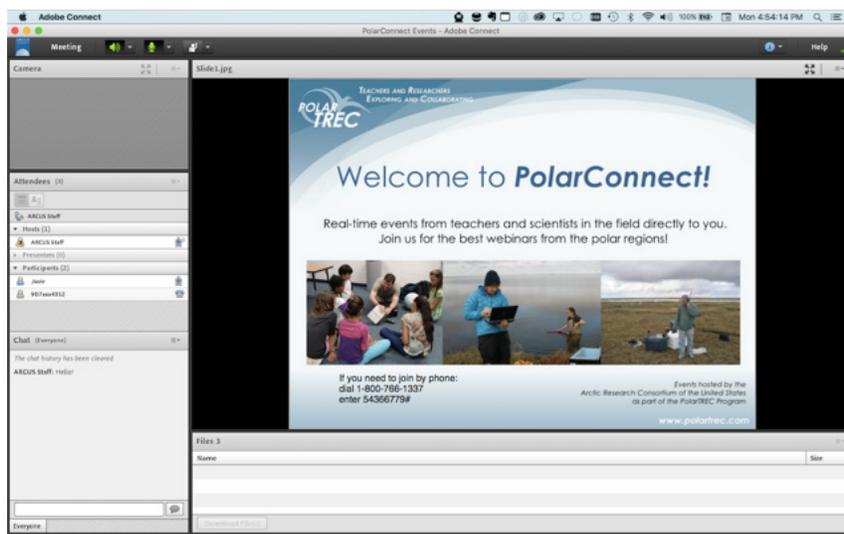
Option 3 (Preferred). “Using Microphone (Computer/Device)”

If you have a good internet connection, the best option is to join by Voice over IP (VOIP). This option has you talk through your computer using your computer microphone and speakers.

To choose this option, select Audio Option 3 and click “Join” to be connected.



5. Once you join the presentation, you will see a PolarConnect welcome slide on the main screen and your name will be listed in the participants panel on the left side of the screen.



Important!

- When you first enter the *PolarConnect* event room, you will be muted until the Host unmutes everyone. In general, we will not be sharing video webcams.
- If you are joining by phone, please mute your phone during the presentation. Even the smallest background noise can cause a distraction on a conference call. To mute your phone, press *6. To unmute, press *6 again.
- In addition, if you are using the telephone, you will need to mute the sound on your computer. Not doing this will result in an echoing sound and/or feedback during the conference.

6. During the presentation, your Host will share information about how to navigate the event room. Information on the various features is included on the last page of this document entitled, "Getting to Know Adobe Connect."

Need help before or during the webinar?

Contact ARCUS at: 907-474-1600 or E-Mail: info@polartrec.com

Common Questions and Answers:

Q: What should I do if I'm having trouble joining the webinar?

A: If you are having trouble joining a webinar try the following:

1. Enter the webinar as a Guest user by entering in your First and Last Name in the Guest field.
2. Click the Help link on the webinar Login page. This takes you to the "Test Meeting Connection" Adobe Connect page where you can verify that your computer meets all necessary requirements. If you do not pass the test you will be given instructions for what you need to do.
3. Make sure popup blocking software is not blocking your meeting window.
4. You may be using a proxy server. To resolve this in Internet Explorer, select Tools > Internet Options > Advanced tab. Then enable the setting Use HTTP 1.1 through proxy connections. After doing this, clear your cookies, close all browser windows and attempt to re-enter the webinar.

Q: I cannot hear any audio. What should I do?

A: If you are having trouble with the audio, try the following:

1. Verify that your computer speakers are on and your computer's volume is at an audible level.
2. Check to see if the webinar host has provided teleconference information. If this is the case, you need to dial in via telephone to hear meeting audio.

Q: What should I do when I have been granted rights to speak, but no one can hear me?

A: If you are having trouble sharing your voice try the following tasks:

1. Make sure your computer microphone is not muted.
2. Run through the Audio Setup Wizard. To do this, select Meeting > Audio Setup Wizard. The wizard guides you through five steps in which your computer is tuned for optimal VOIP.
3. You may have elected to deny the Flash Player access to your computer's microphone. To verify this, right click in the meeting window and choose Settings to view your Flash Player settings. In the dialog box, choose Allow.

Q: I'm having trouble seeing the slides or the host screen. What should I do?

A: If you are having trouble seeing the host's screen, try the following:

1. Click the Full Screen button on the top of the event window.
2. View the full resolution by using the options menu in the top right hand corner of the event window to select Change View > Zoom In.

Q: Can I mute my phone?

A: Yes! If you are using the phone for the conference call audio, press * 6 to mute/* 6 to unmute. If you are using VOIP, you will always be muted unless the Host has unmuted you.

Q: I was unable to attend all or part of the webinar. Is there an archive?

A: Yes! All *PolarConnect* events are recorded and archived. Archived events are available at www.polartrec.com shortly after the event. The link to the archive will be sent to all registered participants.

NOTE: You will need to have Quicktime to view the archive.

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Getting to Know Adobe Connect

Slides will be shown here

Exit presentation

Mute your speakers

Raise your hand

List of all participants

Follow the chat conversation

Find out more about the presentation here

Chat with everyone here

