

Writing International Dark Sky Places Annual Reports



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As a condition of the continued accreditation of [International Dark Sky Places](#) (IDSPs), IDA asks that each Place submit a report on activities related to dark skies. This condition is set forth in the Program Guidelines for each of the International Dark Sky Place certification categories.

The Annual Reports are important to the relationship between IDA and our International Dark Sky Places. It's an opportunity to check in each year and let us know about events and progress toward improving nighttime conditions, as well as whether there are any problems or ways in which IDA can help. In turn, we mine the Annual Reports for information and success stories we can share with our membership and the world through our communications and social media. The reports serve in place of periodic re-accreditation in order to minimize the impact on staff, volunteers, and resources of the International Dark Sky Places.

Update as of August 4, 2022

Starting in 2022, the timing and format of submitting an IDSP Annual Report will be updated. For starters, the deadline for submitting an Annual Report will be pushed back from October 1 to January 1, 2023. This means that all certified IDSPs, including those certified throughout all of 2021, will be required to submit an Annual

Report by this date. For any IDSP certified in 2022, their first Annual Report will be due January 1, 2024.

Additionally, we are moving to an online, standardized format for submitting the report. Each report will have the same list of questions, with specific prompts for the various certification types. The online form will allow you to upload photos and files as well so you may share and show IDA all of the wonderful dark-sky efforts you have completed throughout the year.

Download the [Questions Document](#) to prepare the information that is required to submit the 2021-2022 Annual Report. You may also click on this [video link](#) to watch the recorded “IDSP Annual Report Overview” presentation by IDA’s Director of Conservation, Ashley Wilson, on July 27, 2022. Additionally, you may also review the [Transcript of the IDSP Annual Report Overview](#) to follow along with the video. The link to submit the annual report will be available on this page after November 1, 2022.

A few important things to note when using the Questions Document and submitting the online form:

- Some questions are category-specific (Community, Park, Sanctuary, Reserve, Urban Night Sky Place). If no category is specified in the question, it is applicable to all Places. Any question with a red asterisk (*) is required and you must provide information in order to submit the form.
- Individual questions are separated by breaks in between the text. You may use the Questions Document to save your answers however you would like so that you may copy and paste them into the online form. However, it is important to note that answers will only be accepted when you submit the online form.
- When preparing your report, please answer each question as they apply to this reporting period (October 2021 – December 2022). Follow the directions for each item. Some questions are multiple choice, some allow for longer text, and some questions require uploaded information. You will be given an opportunity to provide additional information at the end of the form.

The form is broken down into sections to guide your answers (Night Sky Monitoring, Lighting Compliance, Outreach, Education, & Media, Partnerships, Success in Light Pollution Control, Leadership, & Future Threats, Change in Ownership/Size/Access, and Other Information). As you gather information for your site for the rest of this year, it would be ideal to be mindful of these questions so that it will be easier for you to prepare and submit your answers.

Meeting the Annual Report Requirements and Maintaining the Certification in Good Standing

Relating to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are anticipating this will be another year that will require social distancing and continuing safe practices to maintain the health of ourselves and our communities. While we have been flexible with meeting the requirements of the Annual Reports during the past two years, IDA will expect to see full reports meeting all requirements for 2022.

To maintain their status in good standing and follow through with their commitment, our IDSPs have devised numerous ways to meet the commitments of monitoring night sky quality and hosting outreach events during this time. For assistance with monitoring night sky quality, make sure to review this [guide](#) and check out this [video](#) from some of our advocates if you are interested in setting up a permanently installed device. For outreach events, look for some helpful social-distancing-friendly ideas in this [blog post](#) summarizing events from 2021. As a reminder, outreach events can be virtual as long as they engage with the audience. This may be an educational video streamed over social media, a presentation to a local community about how to identify and conduct a dark-sky friendly lighting retrofit, or perhaps holding an in-person event with a set number of visitors and requiring pre-registration to attend.

Additionally, it is the responsibility of each IDSP to keep a consistent line of communication with IDA Staff. If an IDSP has a new point of contact, it is their responsibility to reach out to IDA with the updated contact information. IDA respects our mutual relationship and will help you during this time as much as you need, including providing email reminders with the new Annual Report deadline and a brief list of the requirements required. However, if your site does not report night sky quality or outreach events for 2022, your IDSP will receive a suspended status, and reinstating it will be at the discretion of IDA staff and the Dark Sky Places Committee based on an agreement of future dedication.

As an International Dark Sky Place, you are at the forefront of the dark-sky movement, further pushing the boundaries of the best lighting practices and encouraging people of all ages and backgrounds to look up and be in awe of the stars above. Without your continued persistence to educate, inspire, and monitor this resource, IDA would not be able to continue to advocate and protect dark skies across the globe. We depend on you to maintain your long-term commitment to dark skies and uphold the renowned title of this Program and this movement.

Additional Resources

For examples of past annual reports, see the individual pages for International Dark Sky Places on the IDA website and look under “Documents”.

