

Travel tracking app Polarsteps raises a new €900,000 investment

Industry leaders back Amsterdam-based startup's growth plan

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SUMMARY

Polarsteps, the travel tracking platform, announced today that it has raised a new €900,000 in seed funding from some of the Netherlands' most successful internet entrepreneurs. In just two years' time, the startup has rapidly gained traction amongst travelers. The new funding round is used to hire engineers and further develop its product.

Polarsteps, the travel tracking platform, announced today that it has raised €900,000 in seed funding from some of the Netherlands' most successful internet entrepreneurs. In just two years' time, the startup has rapidly gained traction amongst travelers. The Amsterdam based startup plans to use the new backing to hire engineers and further develop its product.

The concept of **Polarsteps** is simple: schedule your upcoming trips and the app will do its magic. It checks your location from time to time, and plots the results on a colorful map where your family and friends can follow your adventures in realtime. As you approve suggested 'steps' and add photos, the travel log populates itself. The app also offers a wide range of statistics, such as trip duration, countries visited and distance traveled. When your trip is finished, an instant photo album can be generated with the push of a button.

“Just before heading off to a transatlantic sailing trip I created a small app that enabled me - through the use of a satellite phone - to track and share my route with friends and family at home”, says co-founder **Niek Bokkers**. “During the trip the concept went viral among fellow travelers, who loved the approach of telling their travel story on a stunning map and sharing it real-time with their loved ones at home. We decided to further develop it into an app for all travelers that helps them to automatically track and share their adventures in an easy and beautiful way.”

Polarsteps has been in stealth mode since 2015 and raised a €500,000 funding round in March 2016, which allowed the founders to quit their jobs and start working on the platform full-time. “Since we launched on Android last summer, we've been growing at a tremendous rate. It's amazing to see how people from all around the world are using Polarsteps to share their passion and wanderlust”, says co-founder and CEO **Koen Droste**. “Our community now counts over 200,000 travelers, who have used our app in 184 countries. We're excited to have been featured by bloggers, journalists and

industry experts from all around the world, including a mentioning by Apple in their 2017 WWDC Keynote."

Whereas the app is currently mainly geared towards tracking your current trips, Polarsteps also wants to change how travelers discover, dream and plan their next vacation. "We believe that the current online travel experience is utterly broken", says Droste. "Did you know the average traveler visits over 40 websites before booking a trip? We want to fix this by combining travel planning, tracking and remembering into one unified experience."

The new investors of Polarsteps include some of the most successful entrepreneurs of the Dutch internet industry, such as Nalden (founder WeTransfer), Chris Ouwinga (founder Unit4), Janneke Niessen (founder Improve Digital), Heleen Dura - van Oord (founder DQ&A), Patrick Kerssemakers (founder FonQ), Laurens Groenendijk and Martijn Rozendaal (founders Just-Eat and Treatwell), Robert Gaal (founder Wakoop, Karma) and Herman Kienhuis (River Venture Partners).

"We are exceedingly pleased to have found investors that not only believe in our vision and product, but also recognise our potential," stressed Droste. "At the forefront of our search was identifying partners that could, through their reach and experience, help us with our growth plans. Their expert knowledge and network are valuable and helpful and we're grateful for their backing and support."

Polarsteps for Android and iPhone can be downloaded at www.polarsteps.com/app.



RELEVANT LINKS

 **Polarsteps website**
<https://www.polarsteps.com>

 **Download the app (Android & iPhone)**
<http://www.polarsteps.com/app>

 **Travel Books Promo Video**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iAK8wSWXnw>

 **Polarsteps App Promo Video**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3eAhLrswGpl>

Amsterdam to Cape Town by Bike (example trip)

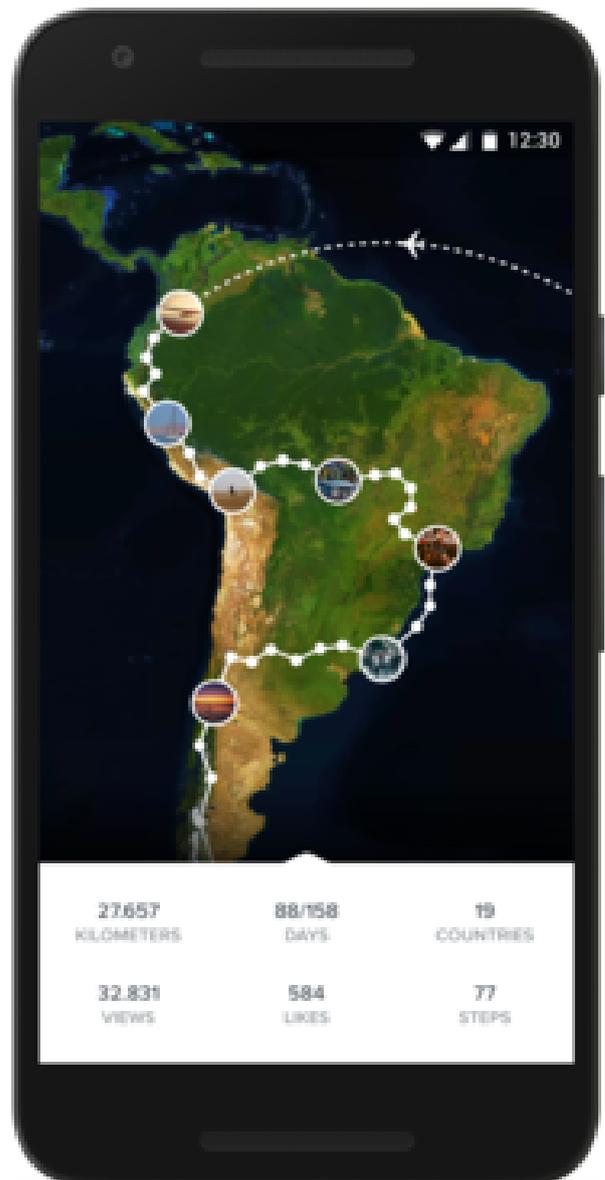
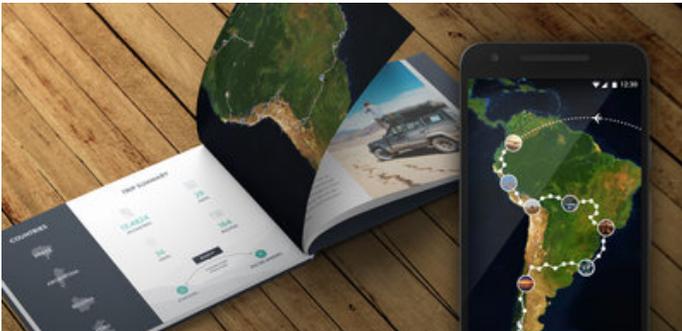
<https://www.polarsteps.com/niek/615-amsterdam-to-cape-town-by-bike>

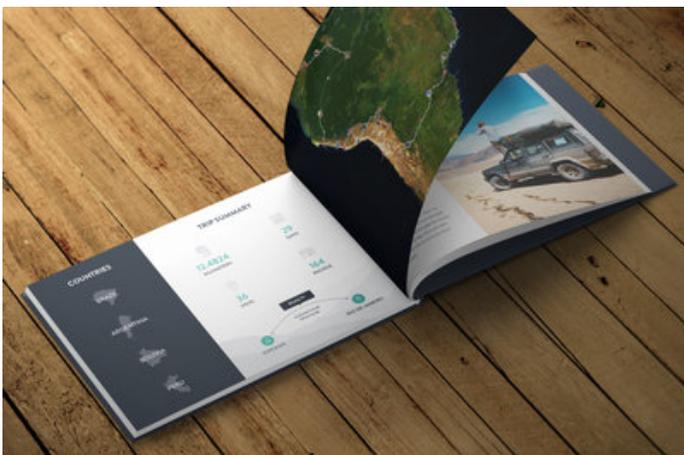
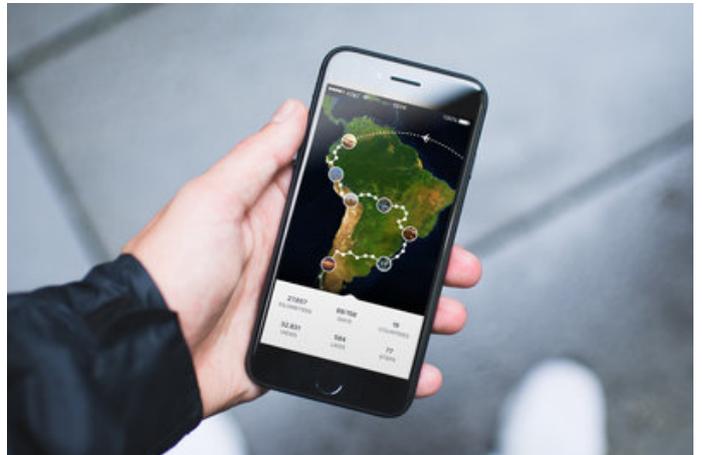
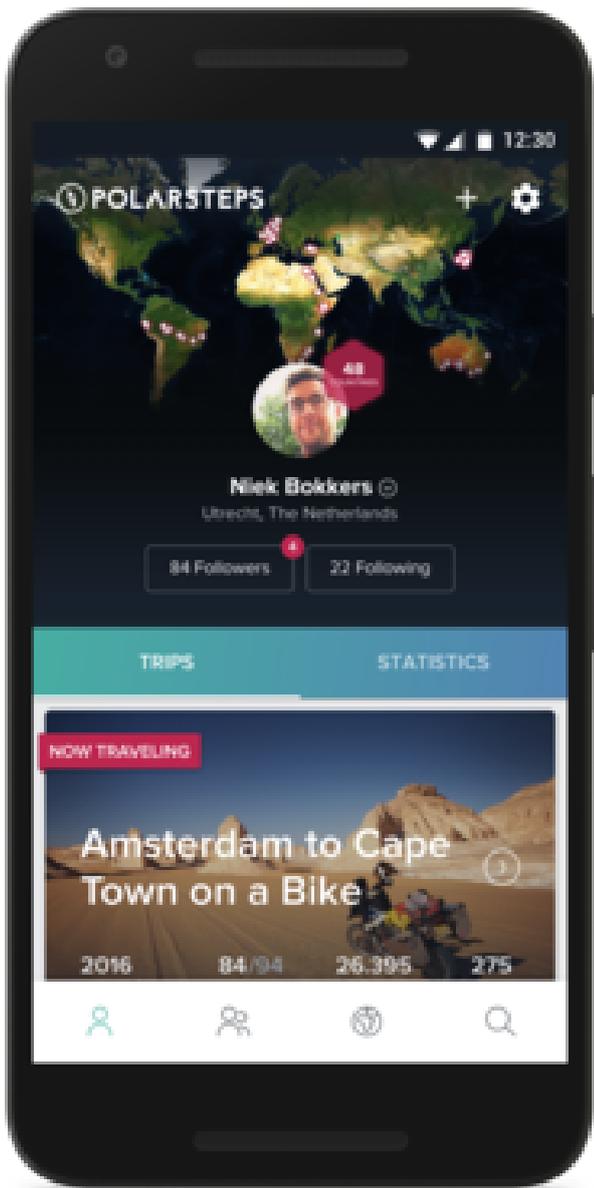
QUOTES

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— Koen Droste, co-founder and CEO

IMAGES





 **POLARSTEPS**

 POLARSTEPS

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ABOUT POLARSTEPS

About the company

Polarsteps is created by a bunch of enthusiastic adventurers with a passion for travel, design and coding. The Amsterdam-based startup aims to built the place to go to for travelers that want to plan, track and remember their trips.

The first prototype of Polarsteps was invented when co-founder **Niek Bokkers** wrote a small app on a Transatlantic sailing trip that shared trip updates with his family via a satellite phone. His trip went viral among fellow travelers, who loved the concept of an automatic travel tracker. A next prototype for the app was tested on an epic motorcycle road trip from **Amsterdam to Cape Town**.

Based on those experiences, the first public beta of Polarsteps was launched in 2015. Following rapid traction amongst travellers, in March 2016 the company raised a **€500.000 investment**. This investment was used to further develop Polarsteps into a cross-platform experience. As of August 2016, Polarsteps is available on iPhone, Android and through the website at www.polarsteps.com.

About the app

Polarsteps automatically tracks your route and places you've visited while you are travelling. Just carry your phone in your pocket or bag. Once connected to the internet, the app seamlessly transfers travel routes, key locations and photos to your personal Polarsteps page, where your route is plotted on a colorful world map that can be shared realtime with friends and family. When your trip is finished, a beautiful instant photo album can be generated with the push of a button.

Travelers can use Polarsteps on iPhone, Android and through the website at www.polarsteps.com.



polarstepsnewsroom