

OVERSEAS MANAGER EXCHANGE PROGRAMME 2015/16

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IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE FOLLOWING OVERSEAS PARTNER ORGANISATIONS:



PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The SOLGM Overseas Manager Exchange Programme is one of a range of SOLGM initiatives that provide leadership and development opportunities specifically tailored to the local government environment. The Programme is designed to provide local government managers an opportunity to focus on their management development and career in Local Government through a short exchange with a partner manager in another country.

The 2015/16 Programme offers three exchanges (United States, British Columbia¹ and Australia). Each exchange involves a hosted visit to the destination country and hosting a reciprocal visitor from that country during the time period of the 2015 SOLGM Annual Summit (9-11 November 2015).

The exchange visit to the overseas host country is timed around the Annual Conference of the host association.

Applicants to the Overseas Manager Exchange Programme 2015/16 that are shortlisted for an Exchange will be required to purchase one ticket to the [SOLGM Gala Dinner](#).

SCHEDULE OF THE 2015 OVERSEAS MANAGER EXCHANGE

UNITED STATES

ICMA Annual Conference, Seattle/King Country Washington 27-30th September 2015.

Applicants for the ICMA US Exchange in 2015/16 will undertake their exchange during the 2015 period and host an exchange member at the SOLGM Annual Summit in 2015.

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AUSTRALIA, NEW SOUTH WALES

LG Professionals NSW 'LG Innovations' Conference in Sydney, 9th and 10th Sept, 2015

Applicants for the LG Professionals NSW Exchange in 2015/16 will undertake their exchange during the 2015 period and host an exchange member at the SOLGM Annual Summit in 2015.

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BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

Applicants for the LGMA British Columbia Exchange in 2015/16 will undertake their exchange during the 2016 period and host an exchange member at the SOLGM Annual Summit in 2015.

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UNITED KINGDOM

We are actively working with our UK partner SOLACE to re-launch this opportunity for 2016.

..... will providing this as an option but we recommend that applicants include other Exchanges in their list of preferences when applying.

WHAT IS INVOLVED IN THE PROGRAMME?

The Exchange visits are typically a fortnight in duration and are usually scheduled around the SOLGM Annual Summit and the annual conference of the overseas partner organisation to allow both managers to attend these annual meetings.

The host manager and their partner manager work out a programme of visits and events that would meet the interests of the guest. The normal expectation is that apart from the period of conference attendance, the guest manager is hosted by their overseas partner and their family on a "home stay" basis.

BENEFITS OF THE OVERSEAS MANAGER EXCHANGE PROGRAMME

Many SOLGM members have benefited from the programme and through this professional, personal and cultural experience, most have gone back to their local authorities inspired and armed with a better perspective and increased knowledge of local government.

The exchange programme is an opportunity to further develop your leadership and management capability and career in Local Government. Some of the key benefits are:

- An opportunity to discuss and share ideas with local government officers from overseas on issues concerning local authorities and identify how they are being addressed
- Identification of 'good practices' from your host authority (this should be one of your key objectives for a successful programme outcome)
- Increased level of awareness about and understanding of your own local government issues
- Networking and establishing long-lasting relationships

You may be surprised how similar the challenges that we face here in New Zealand are to those faced by our overseas colleagues and their local authorities.

TESTIMONIAL FROM A PREVIOUS PROGRAMME AWARDEE

The exchange program provides valuable opportunities for learning and for sharing knowledge and experience across international boundaries.

Sheryl Poulsen

Finance Manager for Kaikoura District Council.

Overseas Manager Exchange: City of Revelstoke, British Columbia 2014

"... Local governments in NZ and British Columbia are just similar enough for the exchange experience to be highly relevant, and just different enough for there to be plenty of opportunities for learning and to think outside the square. In reality I was able to discuss many of the issues in great detail with the managers I met who were very open to sharing and taking me into their confidence. But best of all, I have formed what I hope to be a lasting friendship with my exchange partner and his wife, and we all thoroughly enjoyed the exchange experience, both during their time in New Zealand and our turn in British Columbia. This really was the trip of a lifetime."

APPLYING FOR AN OVERSEAS MANAGER EXCHANGE AWARD

Eligibility

- **Full SOLGM Members** are eligible to apply for all the exchanges (United States, Canada or New South Wales Australia)
- **Associate SOLGM Members** are eligible to apply for the New South Wales Australia exchanges.

Please note that SOLGM has a right to decline applications if members have not paid their membership subscription fees for 2015/16.

Consideration of Applications

The number of applicants for the Overseas Manager Exchange Awards usually exceeds the number of exchanges available. Not all applications will be successful, and sometimes it is not possible to award successful applicants their number one priority country of choice.

As part of the selection process, we aim to make compatible matches between the New Zealand manager and if known, the overseas exchange partner manager based on personal, professional and community interests, values and challenges.

While every effort is made to identify good pairings there is always some risk because reciprocal face to face interviews are not possible.

Other factors likely to be considered in awarding exchanges are:

- The length of tenure of applicants as SOLGM members
- The extent to which applicants have a history of contribution to SOLGM activities or to "industry good" activities across the local government sector
- The role and position of applicants within their local authority
- The extent to which applicants' areas of interest can be of wide interest or application across the sector

We encourage you to be precise about your trip objectives and expectations, so it is easier to make sound matches.

How to Apply

Complete the application form [HERE](#)

Each application requires sign-off from the Mayor, Chairman or Chief Executive of your local authority to certify that the application is being submitted with the full knowledge and approval of the Council and if the applicant is selected no objection will be offered to absence from duty for the period of the Overseas Manager Exchange. The form of this certificate is provided at the end of this document.

Closing date for applications is 5pm Tuesday the 31st March 2015.

ABOUT THE EXCHANGES

So that applicants are aware of what is involved in participating in Overseas Manager Exchange Programme the following information provides further details.

Ambassadors for New Zealand

Overseas Manager Exchange Awardees are ambassadors for their local authority, SOLGM, local government and New Zealand. This implies a high level of responsibility. They should be willing to commit time to exchange preparation and execution as well as time visiting another country. It is important that the overall exchange be well planned to ensure a valuable learning experience for both exchange managers.

Reporting on the Exchange Experience

The awardee is required to submit three blogs to SOLGM during the Overseas Manager Exchange:

Blog 1-Initial Impressions

Your first blog must describe your initial impressions of your host authority and local government context.

Blog 2-Identify and Describe a Current Issue

Your second blog must identify and of one issue currently facing your host council or local authority and steps they are taking to address that issue

Blog 3-Highlight 'Good Practice'

For your final blog you are required to highlight an example of a 'good practice' that could be utilised either within your local authority or within a New Zealand context

Notes about your Blogs:

- Blogs must not exceed 300 words and should be submitted electronically in word format to Jeanette.bullen@solgm.co.nz
- Blogs should be accompanied by an appropriate photograph/s
- Your blogs may be informal but must be readable and spell-checked prior to submitting
- SOLGM may utilise editorial discretion prior to publishing your blogs
- Blogs must be submitted during your exchange tenure (while they are still fresh in your mind)
- The content of your blog may be used for promotional purposes by SOLGM

In addition to your Blog you may be required to:

- Give a presentation on you Overseas Manager Exchange experience at the SOLGM Annual Summit or to your local SOLGM Branch. You may include any appropriate content from your blogs and must outline how you intend to integrate your learning from the Overseas Exchange over the next 12-18 month period
- You may also be required to submit a separate report to your council – please check with them prior to departure

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

The Awardee is expected to work with their overseas partner to develop the itinerary for the exchange and to identify their travel needs and then liaise with SOLGM, as bookings will be made by SOLGM's travel agent. It is best that you get in touch with your overseas partner manager as soon as they are known to develop your full programme.

Although not a Overseas Manager Exchange Programme condition, while it is acceptable for you to be accompanied by your spouse or partner it is suggested that exchange managers do not take their children overseas during their exchange, unless they have reached an explicit agreement about this with their overseas exchange partner. Exchange activity is intensive and tiring at times and it may not be convenient or possible for the host manager to accommodate children in such circumstances. It may also reduce the possibility of a satisfactory matching.

EXCHANGE MANAGER COSTS

Costs of your Overseas Visit

SOLGM, with the kind assistance of our Sponsors, will meet the cost of:

- a return economy airfare for you and your spouse/partner from your home in New Zealand to the hosting local authority; and
- costs of travel (which may or may not be flights) to the Conference location in the country of the exchange. This includes any incidental overnight accommodation associated with that travel.

We recommend that you liaise with your host who is likely to be able to make appropriate recommendations about the domestic portion of your travel, which will then be booked by the SOLGM travel agent in association with your international bookings.

SOLGM's overseas partner organisations will meet registration and accommodation costs, and some meal costs, related to your attendance at their Conference. For the New South Wales exchange, registration and accommodation costs for a spouse/partner are not covered. You will be home hosted with your exchange partner and their family.

Costs of Your Guest's Visit to New Zealand

SOLGM meets the costs of your guest's SOLGM Annual Summit registration, accommodation and meals for the duration of the conference. Note this does not include transport, liquor, laundry or telephone charges. SOLGM will provide information to you ahead of the Summit to ensure that registration and accommodation bookings are made. You should register your visitors for the SOLGM Annual Summit and book accommodation.

Other Costs

Expenses not explicitly mentioned above are the exchange manager's own responsibility.

IF YOU ARE AWARDED THE EXCHANGE

Advice and Initial Contact

If you are awarded an exchange, SOLGM will provide you with information about your overseas partner manager and contact details. We always endeavour to provide you with your overseas partner manager details immediately, however our partner organisations may have different timelines for processing their own applications, thus there may be a delay while they finalise their decisions.

Once you and your overseas partner manager have been in contact with one another the detailed organisation of your respective visits becomes your own joint responsibility.

We strongly recommend that you make immediate contact with your overseas exchange partner and suggest an early telephone call as a basis for establishing personal contact rather than merely an exchange of emails.

If this initial contact suggests that there may be serious compatibility issues please contact SOLGM immediately.

Planning Exchange Programmes

Advance planning and attention to detail is necessary to fully maximise the overseas exchange experience.

You and your overseas partner manager will be expected to develop a programme that will cater to your respective learning needs and objectives for the exchange visit.

Tips on how to develop your exchange programme

- Exchange as much background information as possible about your own local authorities and their issues.
- Be frank and honest with each other about what you are and are not interested in seeing and learning about.
- The experience of previous exchange managers is that successful programmes are best developed in an iterative manner.
- We expect that meeting the learning objectives of your partner will usually involve visits to local authorities other than just your own. Visits are often arranged with other local authorities within your own region, and sometimes also with local authorities in the vicinity of the SOLGM Annual Summit venue (in 2015 the Summit is being held 9 – 11 November in Palmerston North). Colleagues from your SOLGM Branch are often willing to assist in this. It is a good idea to ensure that the people your guest will meet during such visits are well briefed about your visitor and their areas of interest so best use can be made of the available time.
- The exchange programme will include attendance at the host organisation's Annual Conference. Past experiences tell us that exchanges generally work best where visitors have had the opportunity to spend some time with their host before the Conference. This gives them the opportunity to gain more understanding of the country, its local government system and the issues likely to be discussed at the Conference.
- Programmes usually include the opportunity for your guest to meet with your Mayor or Chairperson, members of your council, staff, media, other local authorities, community groups and any appropriate community organisations etc.

- You are encouraged to arrange for media publicity or photographs through organising interviews relating to activities in the exchange programme. In publicity activities, the name of the sponsor should be mentioned. Copies of such publicity should be provided to SOLGM's Manager, Marketing and Communications - Jeanette Bullen jeanette.bullen@solgm.org.nz at SOLGM and the relevant sponsor.
- Finally it is important not to have too many activities for your visitor. Make sure you provide leisure time breaks, and keep time flexible should other last minute opportunities arise. In addition it is generally a good idea to also develop a separate programme for your visitor's spouse or partner. They will often have interests other than local authority management.
- Some exchange managers have found it helpful to discuss exchanges with others who have already undertaken an exchange. SOLGM can provide contact information.

Other Preparation

Before departing for the overseas leg of your exchange, you should make an effort to understand the current management and issues of the community you will visit.

It is also often useful to prepare some resources (such as power point presentations, photographs, fact sheets or other information) that you can use to explain the New Zealand situation and the issues faced by your own local authority to people you will meet.

Hosting Your Guest

As the host of your overseas visitor you have two specific obligations:

- The first is to host the visiting exchange manager (and spouse/partner) during the period of the exchange (other than the Annual Summit). This enables them to experience the local culture by staying in the host's residence (or part of the time in the residences of friends or colleagues in other locations). The reverse arrangements apply when the New Zealand exchange manager goes abroad, at the time of the annual conference of the partner association.
- The second is to attend SOLGM's Annual Summit along with your visitor.

Once dates for the visit are agreed upon, you should avoid booking out of town appointments and give maximum attention to your exchange partner at the SOLGM Annual Summit and in your community.

When Your Guest Arrives

You should meet your overseas exchange partner upon their arrival in New Zealand if at all possible or if you cannot do this personally you should arrange for someone else to do it on your behalf. This is the case whether your guest is coming directly to your community or going to the SOLGM Annual Summit first.

The meeting of the overseas exchange managers flight should be both at the arrival of the international flight and at the airport serving your community. If the arrival of the international flight is some distance from your community, you should make arrangements for a SOLGM colleague in that location to meet your guest on your behalf.

CONTACT US

Should you have any questions or require further information about the Overseas Manager Exchange Programme please contact:

Natalie Stevens – Manager, Learning and Development

E: natalie.stevens@solgm.govt.nz

DDI: 04 978 1272

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SOLGM would like to thank the generosity and support of the sponsors of the SOLGM Overseas Manager Exchange Programme

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FOR SPONSORING THE CANADA AND AUSTRALIA EXCHANGES



CIVIC ASSURANCE

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OUR PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

The 2014/2015 Overseas Manager Exchange Programme is delivered to you in conjunction with our partner organisations:



2015/16 SOLGM OVERSEAS MANAGER EXCHANGE PROGRAMME
CERTIFICATE OF EMPLOYING COUNCIL

Please complete and upload this certificate when applying.

I hereby certify that _____

is making this application with the full knowledge and approval of their employing Council and if selected no objection will be offered to absence from duty for the period of the 2015/16 Overseas Manager Exchange.

In addition to leave with pay the Council offers the following support additional to that being provided by SOLGM (please detail):

Name of Council _____

Signed _____ **Date** ____/____/____

Mayor / Chairperson / Chief Executive