SOLGM Overseas Manager Exchange Programme

In conjunction with the following overseas partner organisations:

About the 2020 SOLGM Overseas Manager Exchange Programme

The SOLGM Overseas Manager Exchange Programme is designed to provide local government managers with 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 Exchange visits are typically a fortnight in duration and are usually scheduled around the SOLGM Annual Summit (being held in Christchurch on the 10-11 September 2020) and the annual conference of the overseas partner organisation to allow both managers to attend these annual events (detailed below).

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.

Some of the key benefits of an Overseas Manager Exchange 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

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

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.

2020/21 Overseas Manager Exchanges

UNITEDS STATES/TORONTO, CANADA

2020 ICMA Annual Conference, Toronto, Canada, 23–26 September 2020

Applicants for the ICMA United States Exchange in 2020 will undertake their exchange during the 2020 period in the United States and attend the ICMA Conference in Canada. They will host an exchange member at the 2020 SOLGM Annual Summit.

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BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

2021 Conference, Prince George, British Columbia, 15–17 June 2021

Applicants for the LGMA British Columbia Exchange in 2020/21 will undertake their exchange during the 2020/21 period and host an exchange member at the 2020 SOLGM Annual Summit.

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NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA

LG Professionals NSW Conference, Sydney, June 2021 (final dates to be confirmed)

Applicants for the LGPA (NSW) Australian Exchange in 2019/20 will undertake their exchange during the period of the 2021 Congress and host an exchange member at the 2020 SOLGM Annual Summit.

QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA

LGMA Combined Queensland/National Conference, 25-27 August 2020

Applicants for the LGMA Queensland Exchange in 2020 will undertake their exchange during the period of the 2020 Conference and host an exchange member at the 2020 SOLGM Annual Summit.

Eligibility

You must be a full SOLGM member. If you are not a current full member we will need to receive your application and payment for SOLGM membership no later than 31 January 2020. Information about how to become a SOLGM member can be found here. As the exchange also covers the 2020/21 financial year, exchange recipients are expected to renew their membership in that year.

The Exchanges will be presented at the 2020 SOLGM Gala Dinner being held in Wellington on 30 April 2020. There is no entry fee, but it is a condition of application that you purchase one ticket to the Gala Dinner. Tickets can be purchased at SOLGM.org.nz.

The judges' decision on Exchange recipients is final and no correspondence will be entered into.

How to apply

For applications to be considered we need to receive the following:

1. a completed and signed application as prescribed in this form.

2. an up-to-date copy of your CV.

3. a letter of application (1000 words max) setting out your local government experience, why you would be an appropriate person to receive this Exchange, and how receiving it would benefit your local authority. We encourage you to be precise about your exchange objectives and expectations, so it is easier to make sound matches. When completing your application, keep in mind that you are demonstrating your communication skills which will be taken into consideration when awarding the exchange.

4. a certificate from your employing council, and a signed personal agreement form (which can be found at the end of this document).

5. a completed registration for the Gala Dinner (see eligibility section above).

6. a photocopy of your passport showing expiry after December 2021.

In addition, it will help your application if you can:

7. demonstrate how your areas of interest can be of wider interest or application across the sector.

8. demonstrate how you will be a good ambassador for local government in New Zealand and will be a good host.

9. provide detail about your role and position within your authority, and how the exchange will assist your council.

10. outline the length of your tenure as a SOLGM member, and the extent to which you have a history of contribution to SOLGM activities or to 'sector good' activities across the local government sector.

The number of applicants for the Overseas Manager Exchanges 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 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.

Completed, signed and scanned entries **must be submitted by email** to info@solgm.org.nz **by 5pm on 21 February 2020** with 2020 Overseas Manager Exchange in the subject line.

Judging Criteria

Judging Criteria	Points Weighting (Out of 10)
The extent to which applicants' areas of interest can be of wide interest or application across the sector and internationally, and the level of curiosity they display.	4
Degree to which the applicant displays requirements to be a good ambassador for local government in New Zealand and SOLGM's international partners (i.e. to be culturally appropriate) and to be a good host.	3
History of contribution to SOLGM activities or 'sector good' activities across the local government sector.	1
Length of SOLGM membership.	1
Demonstrates communication skills in written submission and orally – able to produce BLOG.	1

2020 SOLGM Overseas Manager Exchange Programme

Participating in an Exchange

The following information is available so that you are aware of what is involved in participating in the Overseas Manager Exchange Programme.

Ambassadors for New Zealand

Overseas Manager Exchange recipients are ambassadors for their local authority, SOLGM, local government and New Zealand. This implies a high level of responsibility. You 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.

Travel Arrangements

You are expected to work with your overseas partner to develop the itinerary for the exchange and to identify travel needs. It is best that you get in touch with your overseas partner manager as soon as they are known to develop your full programme. We recommend that you ask your overseas partner manager for recommendations about the domestic portion of your travel.

Although not an Overseas Manager Exchange Programme condition, while it is acceptable for you to be accompanied by your spouse/partner at Summit and VIP dinners, this will be at your own cost. It is suggested that you do not take their children overseas during their exchange, unless you have reached an explicit agreement about this with your 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.

Flight Booking Process

1. SOLGM will book all your flights on your behalf.

2. Any additional costs incurred by a partner travelling with the recipient will be covered by the awardee.

3. As soon as possible, let SOLGM know your international and domestic travel needs for the exchange as well as any additional personal travel that you may like to add on.

4. SOLGM will then send you a draft itinerary and advise you how much your personal travel additions and you spouse/partner's travel will cost you (basic flights for your spouse/partner are included in the USA exchange only). As prices may rise sharply if not secured promptly, you will have four business hours to respond.

5. SOLGM will then book your travel through our travel agency and invoice you for your personal/spouse travel additions.

6. If you need to make any changes, contact SOLGM. SOLGM will invoice you for the cost of any changes.

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 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 (e.g. one night's hotel accommodation before the conference if you can't fly in the day of the conference).

SOLGM's overseas partner organisations will meet registration and accommodation costs (in some cases including registration for your spouse/partner) and some meal costs, related to your attendance at their conference. Any additional expenses incurred over and above those described will be at your own cost. Your overseas partner will need to book your overseas conference for you.

You will be home-stay hosted with your exchange partner and their family.

When developing your itinerary, please be aware that costs, outside of what is outlined above, will fall to you to cover. Please carefully plan and budget your trip.

Cost	Covered
Flights to the overseas local authority	Yes
Travel to the overseas conference and conference accommodation	Yes
Your own ticket to the SOLGM Annual Summit and associated travel and accommodation	No
Accommodation while visiting the overseas local authority or authorities	No, home-stay is offered which you'll reciprocate
Personal travel	No
Spouse/partner costs	Generally, no
Other costs	No

Costs of your Exchange partners' visit to New Zealand

SOLGM will meet the cost of your guest's SOLGM Annual Summit registration, accommodation and meals for the duration of the Summit. SOLGM will also meet the cost of SOLGM Annual Summit registration for your guest's spouse/partner. 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 ensure your visitor registers for the SOLGM Annual Summit and books accommodation through the Summit registration webpage (once registrations open).

Other Costs

Again, expenses not explicitly mentioned above are the exchange manager's own responsibility.

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

- Share 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.
- 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. 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's 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.
- 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 Senior Advisor, Communications and Membership – amy.waugh@solgm.org.nz who will share it with 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/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 culture of the place you are visiting as well as the current management and issues of the community you will visit.

It is also often useful to prepare some resources (such as PowerPoint 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 exchange manager you have two specific obligations:

- The first is to open you home to the visiting exchange manager (and their spouse/partner) during the period of the exchange (other than the Annual Summit). This enables them to experience the local culture by staying in your residence (or part of the time in the residences of your friends or colleagues in other locations). The reverse arrangements apply when you go abroad at the time of the annual conference of the partner association.
- The second obligation 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 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 manager's flight should be at the arrival of the international flight and, if applicable, 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.

Reporting on the Exchange

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

Blog post 1: Initial Impressions

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

Blog post 2: Identify and Describe a Current Issue

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

Blog post 3: Highlight 'Good Practice'

For your final blog post, 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 blog posts:

- Blog posts must not exceed 300 words and should be submitted electronically in a Word document to SOLGM's Senior Advisor, Communications and Membership – amy.waugh@solgm.org.nz
- Blog posts must be accompanied by appropriate photographs illustrating your experiences and supplied as separate jpeg files (not embedded into a document).
- Your blog posts may be informal but must be readable and edited prior to submitting.
- SOLGM may utilise editorial discretion prior to publishing your blog posts.
- Blog posts must be submitted during your exchange tenure (while they are still fresh in your mind). Your final blog post is to be sent to SOLGM no later than a fortnight after you have returned to New Zealand.
- The content of your blog posts may be published through one of SOLGM's communication channels and may be used for promotional purposes by SOLGM.

In addition to your blog posts 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 blog posts and must outline how you intend to integrate your learning from the Overseas Exchange over the next 12-18-month period. SOLGM will endeavor to give reasonable notice in respect to this requirement and will cover any required travel costs.
- You may also be required to submit a separate report to your Council – please check with them prior to departure.

For any further information please contact: Eilidh Siller - Advisor, Workforce Leadership
Eilidh.Siller@solgm.org.nz 04 978 1273

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Application Form

Please refer to the **How to apply** and **Judging Criteria** sections above for information on completing this form.

Name	
Position	
Council	
Email Address	
Emergency contact name	
Emergency contact mobile number	
I wish to apply for the following exchanges (we recommend you pick more than one option indicating your preference from first to fourth	☐ United States ☐ British Columbia, Canada ☐ New South Wales, Australia ☐ Queensland, Australia
Information for exchange matching	About my council (max 250 words)
	Geographic size of my local authority (square kilometres)
	Population of my local authority
	Number of FTEs who work at my council
Personal Citation (If your application is accepted, your citation will be used in media releases and materials. Please provide 70 words approx. for this purpose)	

Application Checklist	□ I am a full SOLGM member and I will renew my membership in 2020/21. □ I am a not full SOLGM member, but my application for membership is attached and payment completed. □ I have attached a completed and signed application form. □ I have attached an up-to-date CV. □ I have attached a written submission (1000 words max). □ I have attached signed certificate from my employing council, and a signed personal agreement form (found at the end of this document). □ I have attached completed registration for the Gala Dinner. □ I have attached a photocopy of my passport showing expiry after December 2021.

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Certificate of Employing Council

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 time the applicant has to participate in the 2020/21 Overseas Manager Exchange.

In addition to leave-with-pay, the Council will offer the following support, in addition to that being offered by SOLGM:

Name of council	
Name of authorised person	
Signed (Chief Executive or nominee)	
Date	

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Personal Agreement

- In the normal course of events, I expect to have at least three years of local government service ahead of me.
- I agree that the decision of the selection panel is final.
- If shortlisted, I agree to purchase a ticket for and attend the Gala Dinner.
- If awarded, I agree to comply with the 'Participating in an Exchange' conditions provided for SOLGM's Overseas Manager Exchange Programme, including the following:
    - I agree to host my exchange partner and their spouse/partner and be hosted by my exchange partner and their family on a 'home-stay' basis.
    - I agree to arrange appropriate visas or visa waivers for my awarded exchange country if applicable
    - I understand that it is solely up to me and my exchange partner to create itineraries for each other that may include regional visits.
    - I agree to purchase a ticket for myself to attend SOLGM's Annual Summit in Christchurch on 10 – 11 September 2020, with my exchange partner, and attend the annual conference of my overseas partner's organisation.
    - I agree to represent New Zealand's local government sector appropriately overseas.
    - I agree to write three blog posts for SOLGM to publish.
    - I agree to present at SOLGM events if asked.

I understand that SOLGM/it's sponsors/my overseas partner's organisation will only meet some of the costs of my exchange.

Applicant Name	
Applicant Signature	
Date	