



INTERNATIONAL
PROFESSIONAL
EXCHANGE
PROGRAM
2016- 2017

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....2

LOGISTICS..... 3

SELECTION CRITERIA3

SELECTION PROCESS4

ABOUT THE EXCHANGES.....4

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS 5

EXCHANGE PROFESSIONAL COSTS.....5

IF YOU ARE AWARDED THE EXCHANGE.....6

PLANNING EXCHANGE PROGRAMS7

HOW TO APPLY8

CONTACT US8

INTRODUCTION

The affiliate agreement between LG Professionals Australia and the International Country/City Management Association (ICMA) provides that the two organisations identify applicants from respective members to participate in the International Professional Exchange Program.

The program is designed to provide local government professionals, and members of LG Professionals Australia, an opportunity to focus on their professional development and career in Local Government through a short exchange with a partner local government practitioner in America and their Council.

OVERVIEW

LG Professionals Australia's International Professional Exchange Program's objective is to facilitate a two-way exchange between LG Professionals Australia and ICMA members hosted by respective local governments and attendance at the ICMA and LG Professionals Australia annual conference.

It is aimed at upcoming local government leaders throughout Australia who wish to enhance their career and participate in international development projects for their own personal and professional development as well as senior managers who wish to benefit from an exchange of ideas. As such, LG Professionals Australia will seek to target a broad range of local government professionals who will qualify to have access to the exchange program.

The Exchange visits will be scheduled around the annual conference of ICMA taking place from September 25-28, 2016 in Kansas City/Jackson County, Missouri and LG Professionals Australia National Congress taking place in May 2017. The exchange partners will attend both these annual events. The host and their partner will work together to develop their exchange program to meet the interests of the guests.

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT MANAGERS

- Cultural engagement and exchange - opportunity to share work and life experience;
- 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;
- Forming a relationship with international professionals and seeing trust develop and communication expand. They will be armed with a better perspective and increased knowledge of local government after the exchange; and
- Opportunity to meet emerging leaders and help each other to take practical steps towards the achievement of better productive community governance; and
- Benefitting from a two-way learning experience.

LOGISTICS

Participants in an exchange will spend two weeks in the locality of the host manager and attend the host association's annual conference. Participants will learn about management and service delivery practices in their exchange partner's country through experiencing the day-to-day professional and after-work activities of the host.

Participants will stay at their hosts' residences in order to experience local culture and to minimize expenses. Host managers are responsible for the lodging of their exchange counterparts during the hometown portion of the exchange. Partners are welcome and children may go on the exchanges if agreed to by the hosts.

Host associations provide complimentary meeting registration, hotel accommodations, and meals for participants and partners during the annual meeting portion of the exchange.

SELECTION CRITERIA

- Candidate must be an Australian citizen, currently living and working in Australia;
- Candidate has been a member for a minimum of six months of LG Professionals Australia/ Local Government Managers Australia;
- Willingness to participate in LG Professionals Australia National or State based forums to share learnings from the exchange experience;
- Selection is based on professional experience and interests with personal objectives for participating in professional exchange;
- Able to provide an article, photos and brief report upon returning from exchange visit;
- Able to obtain the relevant visa;
- Able to host exchange candidate for a duration of two weeks in his/her home;
- Have relevant experience in and commitment to a career in the public sector in home country;
- Have demonstrated leadership and collaborative skills;
- Have approval from his/her current employer to take a leave of absence for 2 weeks; and
- Able to adapt to new environment surroundings and challenges;

SPECIFICS REGARDING ELIGIBILITY ARE BELOW:

- Ideal candidates will be between the ages of 25 and 40 at the time of application but subject to negotiation;
- Candidates who were participants of LG Professionals Australia National's Congress, Management Challenge and mentors of LG Professionals Australia International Mentoring Program will be encouraged to apply.

SELECTION PROCESS:

Stage	Activity	Timeline
Stage 1: Application Gathering	LG Professionals Australia State offices to distribute program information and application to members.	14 th July 2016
Stage 2: Applicants Shortlisting	All applications received LG Professionals Australia.	29 th July 2016
Stage 3: Shortlisting Applicants release	Shortlisted applicants will be notified through email	1 st Week August 2016
Stage 4: Interview for Shortlisted applicants	LG Professionals Australia will interview shortlisted candidates.	1 st Week August 2016
Stage 5: Approval by LG Professionals Australia	The finalist will be decided by LG Professionals Australia in consultation with the International Committee	2 nd Week August 2016
Stage 6: Placement of selected participants	After receiving approval from LG Professionals Australia and State Federation partners will announce the final selection results to participants. Also, the placement in USA will also be announced by ICMA.	TBC

ABOUT THE EXCHANGES

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

AMBASSADORS FOR AUSTRALIA

International Professional Exchange Awardees are ambassadors for their local government and community, LG Professionals Australia, local government and Australia. 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 professional exchange be well planned to ensure a valuable learning experience for both exchange managers. They should also be prepared to share their experience at a state based event.

REPORTING ON THE EXCHANGE EXPERIENCE

The awardee is required to submit three blogs to LG Professionals Australia during the International Professional 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 an issue, or project, 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 an Australia context

NOTES ABOUT YOUR BLOGS:

- Blogs must not exceed 300 words and should be submitted electronically in word format to editor@lgprofessionalsaustralia.org.au;
- Blogs should be accompanied by an appropriate photograph/s;
- Your blogs may be informal but must be readable and spell-checked prior to submitting ;
- LG Professionals Australia 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); and
- The content of your blog may be used for promotional purposes by LG Professionals Australia.

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 LG Professionals Australia, as bookings will be made by LG Professionals Australia'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 program.

Although not an International Professional Exchange Program 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 PROFESSIONAL COSTS

COSTS OF YOUR OVERSEAS VISIT TO THE USA

LG Professionals Australia, will meet the cost of:

- a return economy airfare for exchange fellow from your home in Australia to the hosting local authority;
- costs of travel (which may or may not be flights) to the ICMA Conference location in the country of the exchange. This includes any incidental overnight accommodation associated with that travel;
- Modest per diem allowance while in the United States to cover food and incidentals; and
- Cost of the US Visa Waiver application;

ICMA will cover the cost of:

- attendance by Australian Exchange Fellows to the ICMA Annual Conference and four night accommodation while attending the Conference.

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 LG Professionals Australia travel agent in association with your international bookings.

LG Professionals Australia's overseas partner organisations will meet registration and accommodation costs, and some meal costs, related to your attendance at their Conference.

COSTS OF YOUR GUEST'S VISIT TO AUSTRALIA

LG Professionals Australia meets the costs of the reciprocal visit of the US Fellow to attend the LG Professionals Australia National Congress only by covering registration, including three nights' accommodation and meals for the duration of the conference. Note this does not include transport, liquor, and laundry or telephone charges. LG Professionals Australia will provide information to you ahead of the Conference to ensure that registration and accommodation bookings are made. You should register your visitors for the LG Professionals Australia National Congress and book accommodation.

OTHER COSTS

Expenses not explicitly mentioned above are the exchange fellow's own responsibility which includes travel insurance.

IF YOU ARE AWARDED THE EXCHANGE

ADVICE AND INITIAL CONTACT

If you are awarded an exchange, LG Professionals Australia 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 LG Professionals Australia immediately.

PLANNING EXCHANGE PROGRAMS

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 program that will cater to your respective learning needs and objectives for the exchange visit.

TIPS ON HOW TO DEVELOP YOUR EXCHANGE PROGRAM

- 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;
- 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 LG Professionals Australia's National Congress venue. Colleagues from your LG Professionals Australia 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 program 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, its local government system and the issues likely to be discussed at the Conference;
- Programs 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. Copies of such publicity should be provided to LG Professionals Australia's Public Affairs Advisor, Melissa Misuraca-marketing@lgprofessionalsaustralia.org.au
- 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 program 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. LG Professionals Australia 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 Australia 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 National Congress). This enables them to experience the local culture by staying in the host's residence. The reverse arrangements apply when the Australia exchange manager goes abroad, at the time of the annual conference of the partner association.
- The second is to attend LG Professionals Australia's National Congress 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 LG Professionals Australia's National Congress and in your community.

WHEN YOUR GUEST ARRIVES

You should meet your overseas exchange partner upon their arrival in Australia 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 LG Professionals Australia's National Congress first.

The meeting of the International exchange professionals 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 LG Professionals Australia colleague in that location to meet your guest on your behalf.

HOW TO APPLY

Complete the application form on our website.

Each application requires sign-off from the Mayor, Chief Executive/General Manager of your local council 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 Exchange Program.

Closing date for applications is 5pm AEST Friday the 29 July 2016.

CONTACT US

Should you have any questions or require further information about the Exchange Program please contact: **Samira Wadhavkar – Programs & Operations Manager**
E: operations@lgprofessionalsaustralia.org.au