



# **Lions Clubs International**

## **MD 201 Youth Exchange**

### **Guidelines for Clubs Nominating Youth for Exchange**

#### **PROCEDURES FOR CLUBS**

Once a Club decides to participate in nominating a youth for MD Youth Exchange, it needs to start planning early.

There are a number of steps that have to be taken once the decision has been made. They are:

- Finding candidates
- Establishing their eligibility
- Selection
- Processing of documentation.

#### **FINDING CANDIDATES**

Young people can be sought through Lions Clubs members, Youth of the Year entrants, Leo Club members, Universities, Educational, Business, Professional, Youth and Sporting Groups. A letter with the MD 201 Youth Exchange brochure is sent to all secondary schools across Australia in the early part of each year. Announcements can be placed in press, radio and television. Costs associated with finding candidates can be paid from the Club's Activity or Community Service Account. The Club's Youth of the Year Entrants are ideal candidates.

#### **ELIGIBILITY**

The prime requisites are that the applicants must be a minimum of 16 years of age and not over 21 years on the day of departure. Some native language skills are necessary for France and Japan. **Please Note: Age restrictions do apply for some programmes.**

Applicants must have at least average academic ability and be of good character and reputation. Physically disabled youth are eligible providing suitable host families are available.

Sons and daughters of both Lions and non-Lions are entitled to participate in the Lions Youth Exchange Program unless otherwise stated by a Host Country or District. The fact that an applicant is a son or daughter of a Lion should not prejudice the judgment of the Youth Exchange Committee in any way. It is also urged that Lions Clubs assist youth whose parents could not afford an exchange.

#### **SELECTION OF APPLICANTS**

The selection of applicants is most important. Host Clubs and families have been lost to the Youth Exchange Program because of poor selection by Nominating Clubs.

On receipt of completed application forms from the youth, the Club Youth Exchange Chairman or Committee should conduct interviews. It is most important that the interview is carried out in the **applicant's home with the parents or guardian present, wherever possible**. A Youth Exchange Guideline titled "Guidelines for Club Interview of Prospective Youth Exchanges" should be read in conjunction with this document.

At the commencement of the interview, the parents should be told how the Youth Exchange Program operates, the cost involved and the conditions of payment.

The parents, together with the youth should be advised that, due to limited numbers accepted by some Countries and Districts, there is **no guarantee** that the youth will participate even though the Lions Club has accepted him or her.

During the interview, an assessment should be made of the applicant's attitude. (This aspect is most important) The youth should have the ability to communicate with parents and other people and to express himself or herself clearly. **IF PROBLEMS DO OCCUR, IT IS GENERALLY ATTITUDE THE MAIN CULPRIT. BETTER THE APPLICANT IS REJECTED UP FRONT THAN TO BE ACCEPTED AND THEN CAUSE EVERYONE GRIEF.**

It is preferable that he or she should be involved in the Community through such activities as Church, youth, sporting or hobby groups.

Finally, the youth should be briefed on what is expected of him or her by the Nominating Club and Lions Clubs International. This should be re-stated during the instructional session. This includes attendance at a number of Lions/Lioness meetings and attendance at the **COMPULSORY** District seminar.

## **PROCESSING OF DOCUMENTATION**

Once the applicant has been accepted by the Club, four original copies of the Youth Exchange Application & Indemnity form, with passport size photographs of the applicant on all four copies, and a cheque for \$500 made payable to "**MD 201 Council**" should be sent to the District Youth Exchange Chairman prior to the closing date of 30<sup>th</sup> June.

## **NOMINATING CLUB'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

A club's responsibilities do not cease once a Youth Exchange applicant has been accepted. Participants should be invited to attend a meeting and encouraged to speak. This gives the members of the Club an opportunity to meet and hear their Youth Exchange participant.

The Club should take an instructional program for the youth. This can be carried out with an individual youth, or as a group seminar if the club has a number of participants, or as a group in conjunction with another Club.

At this Seminar, participants will be informed of the obligations and responsibilities and the purpose of Lions Youth Exchange. They should be informed of the background of Lionism and information relating to their Nominating Club. Details as to the age of the Club, number of members, past and present activities and any other relevant information should be given. If it is possible, invite one or two youth who participated in previous exchanges as guest speakers, as they can pass on a great deal of relevant information based on their own experiences. Finally the Club should invite the youth and his or her parents to a Club dinner. At this time the youth should be presented with Club bannerettes and trading pins, and any other items the Nominating Club may wish to present to the Host Club. It is recommended that the Club President should present the Club's exchangees letters of greeting to present to their Host Clubs and Host City Mayors.

It is also mandatory for all Youth Exchangees to attend a District Orientation Seminar conducted by the District Youth Exchange Chairman with assistance from a member or members of the MD 201 Youth Exchange Committee. This seminar covers all aspects of travel, airline tickets, Customs and Immigration regulations, luggage restrictions, Youth Exchange uniform, Chaperones duties, insurance and the million and one other things a Youth Exchangee needs to know prior to leaving our shores. At a minimum, the Club Youth Exchange Chairperson should attend this seminar with the Applicant.

**A separate document outlining responsibilities for each party involved in the Exchange Program has been developed and is available from your District Chairperson.**

The more information that can be imparted to a Lions Youth Exchangee the better. If the Lions Youth Exchange Program has one recurrent criticism of Australian youth from Host Families and Clubs overseas it is that they do not know enough about their Nominating Club, Lions and Australia.

Remember the Youth Exchangee nominated by your Lions Club will be judged overseas by his or her general attitude and knowledge of Australia and Australiana, Lionism and good manners.

Whether that judgment is good or bad largely rests on the shoulders of the Nominating Lions Club and on how well it has attended to its responsibilities towards the participating youth.

**Youth Exchange. Try It. You'll Like It!!**

**[www.lionsclubs.org.au/ye](http://www.lionsclubs.org.au/ye)**