

ROTARY AUSTRALIA-NEW ZEALAND STUDENT EXCHANGE

WHAT IS IT?

RANZSE is a student exchange programme between Australian and New Zealand Rotary Districts held from early April to late September.

WHO?

High School students aged between 13 ½ and 16 years in Australia and New Zealand, who are good average students with a wide range of interests, who have a sound general knowledge, a responsible attitude, of good character and have the ability to mix well. The programme is controlled by the same stringent rules that govern the Rotary International long-term exchange programme.

What does the programme offer?

The exchange consists of matching a student from New Zealand with a student from Australia. The students spend 24 weeks together, 12 weeks with each of their families. In 2015, the students from Australia will host first.

Each student will normally attend the same school as their match and undertake a full range of school activities and study at their host school, but also keep up with their home school's work while away.

The purpose of the exchange is to foster understanding and experience of a different culture, and establish goodwill between young people of the two countries. Feedback from parents and schools is usually very positive, and highlights benefits to the students in the way of noticeable personal development and growth, increased confidence and maturity, as well as a greater sense of responsibility and ability to budget.

Both students experience a 7-day "Safari" in their host country where they are challenged to extend their boundaries and often work outside their comfort zone. For Australian students in New Zealand, Safari is a mixture of challenging physical activities such as climbing, tramping, skiing, rope work and water based activities, blended however with, team building activities and cultural activities. In Australia, the NZ students tend to tour an area of Australia together (by bus, escorted by Rotarians), visiting notable sights, having adventures (jet boating, etc.), and bonding and team building activities in the evening.

The result is normally that the students return more confident and motivated, having enjoyed a huge experience living in another country and culture. There is also the enjoyment of providing their Australian "twin" with a New Zealand experience, and usually forming life long friendships.

HOW: - The application process

Information about the programme, and "Expression of Interest" forms are sent from the district committee each April/May to all High Schools and Rotary Clubs in New Zealand. High schools may "advertise" in the school by way of notice boards, school newsletters and assembly addresses. Deans and individual teachers play an important part in identifying potential applicants. Rotarian champions of the programme may be aware of possible candidates as well.

Upon receipt of EOI forms by the District committee, a full application document is sent to the student provided they meet the age criteria AND have the support of their school and parents. Rotary clubs in the students' areas are contacted and asked if they are interested in participating in the programme.

Once completed applications forms are received by the RANZSE Chair, participating clubs are given the details of the applicant and requested to conduct a Club interview of the applicant. The Club conducts the interview, and returns the interview form to the district committee with their decision on whether they wish to support the application. The RANZSE District committee interviews applicants approved by the clubs.

After district interviews, a meeting is held in late October with the combined District Chairs from participating Australian and New Zealand Districts. A matching process takes place in which the students are matched with compatible students from the other country. In the past when there have been more candidates from one country than the other, "one-way" exchanges may be set up.

GENERAL:

This programme differs from the long term International Youth Exchange programme in terms of age of participants, duration of the exchange and the nature of the exchange. In this exchange, Rotary is acting as a facilitator for families to experience a one on one exchange. Rotary assumes responsibility for the exchange, vetting of families and provision of mentors for exchange students. The well being of each student is paramount. A close liaison is maintained between the Rotary District Chairs, mentors, students and families during the course of the exchange.

COSTS

Families: - Total costs which include travel, insurance, Safari, bonding weekends, and spending money average out as between \$4000-\$4500 per student. We urge families to budget for \$4500 to cover most costs although in some instances individual personal expenses should be considered.

ROTARY CLUBS RESPONSIBILITIES:

Once a club has agreed to sponsor a student, they contribute financially for the cost of RANZSE uniform and gear, and appoint a Rotarian to work as an independent mentor with the incoming student, and the host family. They also have a liaison with their Australian counterpart where necessary.

This is a rewarding programme for students, families and Rotary alike.

ANY QUESTIONS?

Please Contact:

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