
This document concerns the decisions and arrangements necessary to produce an Inbound Camp up to the selection of the students.

As a Camps Organiser you make up your own arrangements to suit yourself. The template [C\(I\)15A - Checklist for Building an Inbound Camp](#), which may be [downloaded from here](#), has been compiled to cover all the details appearing on the invitations which are sent out across Europe. Once you have completed every section you will have addressed all the issues which are needed for you to run a Camp.

You can see how others have dealt with this event by reading [C\(I\)15B: Completed Checklist from Past District Camps](#).

How you and the team handle it is up to you but it is important that you should state your 'rules' clearly and unambiguously so that they are well understood and do not leave room for misinterpretation – literally!

It is good practice and of great assistance for you to keep in touch with the Multidistrict Inbound Camps Coordinator during the planning of your Camp. It will also be much appreciated if you would kindly complete a copy of [C\(I\)15A](#) and submit it for entry to the Manual so that others can benefit from your experience.

Many of the items on the list speak for themselves but a few merit particular attention:

Frequency of Camp

This is probably not a decision that you make until you have seen how the first one turns out but many camps take place annually while others are held biennially. It is up to your district and often turns on how the Camp will be funded.

The Theme for the Camp

This is the choice of the organising committee and will depend as much as anything upon the amenities and locations available. Even so, it is advisable to consult our Multidistrict Inbound Camps Coordinator who has an overview of all the camps in GB & Ireland and so is in a position to guide new Camp organisers away from choosing activities which replicate what is already happening elsewhere in the country.

The Age Range of your Students

Whatever you choose make sure that you spell it out in the invitation – it will save you a great deal of time sifting out those who you do not want.

Before choosing a particular age group for your Camp think very carefully about mixing students above and below 18. A mix will immediately tie your hands when it comes to accommodation and will be divisive when it comes to social activities and the freedom which young adults might expect. Arranging for DBS screening for all the adults involved in running the Camp is frankly enough to cope with without importing additional hurdles to overcome.

Acceptance Policy

This needs to be made clear on the invitation. Your criteria could be that you need to an absolutely complete (fully signed) application form and in addition if there is a fee that this shall first be paid in full. Meanwhile a provisional place might be secured by a partially completed form with a photograph of the student.

This will be referred to again in [C\(I\)5; Managing an Inbound Camp](#).

Selection

Expect, but resist, email applications directly from parents in countries where the name and contact details of the Camps Organiser (you) have not been disguised on the Invitation. They are trying to short circuit the system. Camps Organisers do not support the direct approach as they try hard to deal fairly with their students who have applied through the proper channels. Just politely send them back to whoever gave them your camp details.

You can expect a quick response to your invitation so you need to have worked out beforehand who you are going to accept: age, gender balance and the number of student per country are the key issues – you may have stated these on the invitation. You may not have thought of having a mix of countries from a fairly wide geographical spread. Resist the thought that you will not fill the camp unless you immediately accept any students whom you are offered by overseas colleagues. You do not need to state or justify your selection policy to anyone but you will get into trouble if you do not have one or are inconsistent.

If you are completely new to Camps selection, be it outbound or inbound, it helps to know how selectors work.

Most Camp organisers require to see an application form for a 'real student' before accepting them - or they may 'pencil them in', but only for a day or so. Some will respond that there is a place available at the moment but that they cannot guarantee that it will be there by the time someone produces a candidate. Do not be afraid to say this and do not let yourself be pressured. Very few hand out a place on the basis of 'please keep me a place while I find someone'. Many take a short while to balance the genders and you need to decide how flexible you are going to be about the age range that you have declared on the invitation, although there is usually sufficient demand from the desired age group for this not to be an issue. Those district which take a long time to decide who they will take are not very popular as the students' alternative opportunities are frozen while this happens.

Do ask if any 'extras' would like to be on a reserve list when you have reached your quota. RIBI is a very popular destination but students do drop out for one reason or another and you may find that you can take them on after all. Note while you are doing this that you are still taking one student per country (the norm for camps up to about 15 in number) or whatever your chosen pattern is.

Be sure to look at the end of the RI Youth Exchange Officers' Directory to see which countries are entirely organised as multidistricts. Those which are will be represented by their Multidistrict Camps Coordinator and if you are looking for one student per nation, as most are, this is particularly helpful. Problem can arise when countries consist of several completely operationally separate districts or where in several cases there are just one or two districts 'going it alone' alongside a large multidistrict. How to be fair to all involves care and diplomacy and probably requires a camp next year to balance things up.

The Cost of the Camp

The whole programme needs to be in place and costed before the Invitation goes out because of the need to decide if you will charge the students a fee. For many years very few Camps charged students, except when involving activities requiring special equipment or insurance. Now it is more common for students to pay towards the cost of activities but Rotary hospitality is universally provided free of charge to the students by the Club(s) or District(s) involved.

Do not be deflected by people who say that there should be no fee because this is Rotary service. There is plenty of Rotary service involved in running a camp without even considering money and even students these days expect to pay their way.

The students themselves pay for their return air fare to the destination, for insurance, visa where necessary and inoculations, where necessary. In addition they bring pocket money. This is true for all Youth Exchange programmes around the world.

Cancellation Policy

If you are charging fees for your Camp be sure to state your cancellation policy very clearly on the invitation and advise the parents to take out cancellation insurance.

Closing Date for Applications

Arguably the most meaningless piece of information on the invitation is the Closing Date for Applications as most camps will be full a long time before this. There are often a few withdrawals and replacements before the date so it is unwise to make an announcement as soon as your camp is complete, as some others do. It is easier to apologise profusely in the face of one off random requests that you can't fulfil than having to circulate the message that you have a vacancy. Usually near the end of March one of the Camp organisers will circulate an email where everyone is encouraged to say where the spaces are and exactly who they want to fill it. This is the best time to indicate your situation. It is not the time to change your criteria but there are some lucky last minute placements.

Up to that point you may still be communicating with overseas Camps Coordinators but they often hand over the parents and leave them to deal with you.

See [C\(I\)5: Managing an Inbound Camp](#) for more information on this subject.

Distributing the Invitation

Most of the camps in which our students participate derive from invitations received by our own Outbound Camps Coordinator via the Swiss Mailing list which is distributed to all countries in Europe and to a few others which run their own camps. Whether you use this list or compile one of your own is your choice but with so much random generosity shown to our students there is a case for urging more districts to take part and use the Swiss list to show similar hospitality and give more countries a chance to send students here for a camp.

The optimum time for sending out the invitation is arguably late January/early February. Some countries take a long time to circulate their applicants so unless you make special arrangements you might not get, for example, a Swedish student on your Camp.

You are advised to attach the RIBI Camps & Tours application form with the Invitation (downloadable from [C\(I\)15C](#)) and request that the applicants use it. Most will do so and this makes it easier for dealing with the Guarantee form. There are a few different forms around which are best avoided.