

25WSJ Participant Selection Surrey Scouts Ballot Procedure

The purpose of this document is to set out precisely how the selection ballot for Surrey participants to the 25th World Scout Jamboree (WSJ) will be managed, including the rationale for key design choices.

For further information on why we decided to use a random ballot, please refer to [this document](#).

Key choices and rationale

Places have been allocated to Districts based on the number of applicants according to the most recent census.

Whilst we are aware that if a District had proportionately more or less applicants than another District that this will proportionately change the odds of selection for an applicant in that District, we believe this is necessary to give Districts certainty over the number of participants they have and to avoid any unintended biases from a completely open ballot (for example, more applicants and therefore selected participants from wealthier areas).

Reserve lists will be maintained by the International Team for each District, but not disclosed publicly.

Occasionally, participants need to drop out of their WSJ Unit as a result of personal circumstances or because they decide the experience is not right for them. This is rare and hard to predict; in our experience some Surrey Units have had no dropouts and others have had one or two over the ~18months lead-up to the Jamboree.

The ballot for each District will result in an ordered list of all applicants, thereby providing a reserve list of applicants after the initial places have been filled. The order of applicants within the reserve list will be maintained by the International Team but not disclosed to applicants, Districts or the WSJ Unit Leaders. If a participant drops out a place will be offered to the next applicant on the reserve list from the same District.

This approach avoids 'getting the hopes up' of the unsuccessful applicants. An alternative approach is to select more than 36 participants for each Unit in anticipation of dropouts; however, as above it is hard to predict how many will dropout and could result in further disappointment in future for the 'extra' participants. It would also mean that the replacement may not be from the same District.

Other than the set District allocations, there will be no targets for other attributes or adjustments made to the result of the ballot.

One aim of moving to a random ballot is to ensure equal opportunities and greater inclusivity, by removing any unintended biases that other selection methods may have introduced. Any targets for other attributes (e.g. age, gender) would mean the odds of selection for all applicants within a District were no longer equal.

This extends to other attributes such as the Group or Explorer Unit that an applicant belongs to. We are aware that it is possible that disproportionately more participants will be selected from one Group/Unit; this could happen with any open and unbiased selection process and is not a feature specific to random ballots. Any attempt to control for this would move away from the principle of equal opportunity for all applicants and would risk reducing confidence in the selection procedure.

Applications will not be screened pre or post ballot.

The application questions will be designed to help an applicant decide whether the 25WSJ is the right experience for them and ensure they think about whether they can make the commitment required. However, there will be no screening or scoring of applications as this would introduce a degree of subjectivity and risks reducing inclusivity, which is a core aim of this selection approach.

For the European Jamboree we ran a very similar procedure but did intend to screen clearly inappropriate applicants. In practice this was found to be extremely difficult and subjective, and all applicants were taken forward to the ballot.



Ballot procedure

Observers	There will be a minimum of three observers present at the ballot, in person or virtually using screen-sharing. This is expected to include the County Leader responsible for the WSJ, Assistant County Commissioner (International) and the County Commissioner (or their nominee). All observers will immediately receive an electronic copy of the ballot results which will be held until the conclusion of the WSJ.
Data cleansing	The database of applications will be checked for any obvious errors, duplicate applications or ineligible DOBs.
Random number	Each applicant will be assigned a precise random number using the =RAND() function in Excel and these numbers will be locked by copy-pasting as values.
Ranking	<p>Within each District, applicants will be ranked from lowest to highest random number and assigned a corresponding ranking.</p> <p><i>For example, if a District has 35 applicants each applicant would be assigned a ranking from 1, 2, 3, ..., 35.</i></p>
Places allocated	<p>Within each District, places will be allocated in order of the ranking. Further applicants will form a reserve list (which remains ordered by the same ranking).</p> <p><i>For example, if the same District as above had 7 places, then applicants ranked 1, 2, ... 7 would be allocated places. Applicants 8, 9, ..., 35 would form the reserve list. If a participant subsequently dropped out, applicant 8 would be the first to be offered the place, then applicant 9 and so on.</i></p>
Participants confirmed with Districts	The list of selected applicants would be shared with the relevant District to check and confirm any issues (e.g. not a member of a Group in that District, incorrect DOB).
Participants notified of places	<p>Selected participants will be issued a welcome letter offering them a place and asked to hold the date of the first training weekend.</p> <p>To accept their place, they will need to return an Acceptance Form by the deadline. This form will be clear that an offer of a place may be withdrawn at the discretion of Surrey Scouts, for example due to incorrect information on the application form, non-payment of fees due to their District, attendance, and the outcome of the two-way review process.</p>
Participants allocated into Units	<p>The International Team will allocate participants between the two Units manually, aiming to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure a similar distribution of age and gender.• Spread Districts evenly between the Units, subject to ensuring a minimum of two participants from each District per Unit.• The parents of any siblings will be contacted to discuss the pros/cons of separating them between Units or keeping them in the same Unit, reaching a mutual decision. <p>For any applicants with special needs, an assessment and care plan should be led by the Unit leadership team, with support from the County Special Needs Advisor and International Team.</p>
Two-way review point	After the first three or four preparation events, there will be a two-way review process. This review will be for participants to re-confirm that they wish to attend the WSJ and for the International Team to confirm the offer of a WSJ place to each Scout. Where relevant this should include a review of the special needs care plan.