

25th WSJ

Surrey Scouts Participant Selection

How Surrey Scouts intends to choose Scouts to attend the 25th World Scout Jamboree (WSJ) in South Korea in August 2023

The next World Scout Jamboree takes place in August 2023 in South Korea. Scouts aged 14-18 at the time of the event will be eligible to attend (qualifying DoB 22nd July 2005 – 31st July 2009) and, as in previous years, Surrey Scouts will need to run a process to select young people to attend as a member of the County Unit(s). The challenges of the last year prompted us to further review our participant selection process, and we have decided on a different selection process.

Why did we decide to change our WSJ selection process?

Our experience is that there has been higher demand for WSJ places from young people in the County than the number of spaces available. This, and a situation where the number of international Scout experiences that have not been able to take place in the last 12 months and will not be taking place in 2021 due to Covid, means we again anticipate a high demand from Surrey's Scouts for WSJ places.

We have become aware that our current process of WSJ selection has not resulted in fully inclusive units, particularly resulting in an age bias. Inclusivity is one of the major pillars of The Scouts' Skills for Life Strategy and we are being challenged by the UK WSJ Contingent Team to think about how we can be more inclusive of all eligible Scouts.

Building on this, emerging Scouts' good practice is not to hold selection events, but rather to select potential participants for opportunities through a structured but random ballot process from those Scouts who apply. For example, UK Headquarters selected the Moot Contingent by a similar process and Surrey Scouts used a random ballot process for the European Jamboree.

Our new WSJ selection process

Surrey will therefore choose Scouts to attend the WSJ by a new, simpler, process;

- 1) **Publicity:** Initially, the Surrey International Team, working with Districts and Leaders, will publicise the WSJ opportunity to Scouts eligible to take part in the WSJ. Alongside the WSJ, the International Team will also publicise and raise awareness of as many other international Scout offerings as possible.
- 2) **Information event:** All eligible Scouts who are interested in attending the WSJ will be invited to a WSJ information event. At this meeting, the International Team will share information again on as many other international Scout opportunities as possible.
- 3) **Application form:** Scouts who attend the information event will be invited to submit an application form for the WSJ. The application form will help each Scout think about whether the WSJ is the right



experience for them. The form will not be used to withdraw Scouts from the applicant pool, except in exceptional circumstances. If this were to be the case the Scouts concerned would be contacted.

- 4) **Random selection:** Surrey WSJ participants will be drawn from the applicant pool using a ballot. Within each District the ballot will fill the agreed number of District places, as allocated in line with the census. This way every Scout from a District in the application pool will have an equal chance of being selected as every other Scout from that District in the application pool.

Following the random selection, those applicants offered a place will begin their preparation programme with their WSJ Unit. 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. This will also be an opportunity to recognise the individual needs of each Scout, to ensure the WSJ is the right international opportunity for each, and to offer support where necessary. Participants will then go on to complete their preparations, raise the necessary funds, and attend the WSJ. Units will be supported as usual by District Teams, the Surrey International Team and the Contingent Support Team of the UK Contingent.

Why have we decided to use this process?

We are using a ballot to choose participants because:

- **Equal opportunities and greater inclusivity:** We want the WSJ opportunity to be equally available to all eligible Scouts. We hope a ballot will have greater reach, resulting in Scouts applying from Groups that have not previously had applicants;
- **Fairness:** We expect this new process will be perceived to be equitable; by applicants, their parents and others;
- **Greater confidence:** We believe a ballot will allow applicants to feel more confident making applications. Where they previously may have struggled to express themselves at a selection event or worried about this part of the process, they will now be able to enter knowing they will not be assessed at a selection event;
- **Avoid disheartening unsuccessful applicants:** Some previous young people who were not successful in obtaining a WSJ place at a selection event have reported that they were left feeling as if they were lesser Scouts;
- **Successful precedents:** A random selection process was used successfully to choose Surrey's European Jamboree participants and has been used successfully by Scouts UK HQ to choose the Moot participants, and previously by other Scout Counties to choose WSJ participants;
- **COVID-19:** An approach based on information events, if necessary by Zoom, and a random selection is Covid secure at all Scouts readiness levels, particularly if another wave of infection were to hit the UK;
- **Valuing all international experiences equally:** By re-contextualising the WSJ as one international option of many, we will expand the impact on young people 'considering the WSJ experience'. We will heighten the profile of international trips generally, making them available to many more young people who decide that the WSJ is not for them, but another trip which they hadn't been aware of or considered might be. We hope that those who are not successful in gaining a place with the WSJ will not see another trip as a mere consolation prize but as a valid experience. This principle of valuing all international experiences more equally will support and be supported by Surrey's overall approach to our Programme pillar of work.