

CISV Victoria: Understanding the International Travel Program Selection Process

The CISV Victoria travel program application process is called the “Selection Process”. Given that we have finite travel opportunities for our youth, we offer this document as insight on how the chapter selects applicants, common misconceptions about selection, and how to improve the chances of attending a CISV program.

We welcome all youth, age 10 and above, to participate in our local Junior Branch (JB) activities and our ‘unique to Victoria’ Village Program. CISV travelling program opportunities are limited to the number of invitations we receive from the National CISV Board. The invitations are chosen from a pool received from the International CISV board. CISV Victoria does our best to choose invitations that best fit our membership demographics, interests, and timing (summer/winter) preferences.

Every fall, we survey our membership to determine how many participants are anticipating applying to the selection process. Sometimes, despite these efforts, we are unable to acquire the programs we want due to a lack of available programs at a national level. CISV Canada receives program opportunities based on our previous hosting of programs. Program destinations are generally determined mid- November. The number of delegate spots available for each program is limited. In most cases, the gender must be specific also (i.e. CISV Village delegations are comprised of 2 boys and 2 girls).

SELECTION COMMITTEE:

Our delegation members are selected through an application-based process. If CISV Victoria has more than one destination available for the applicant, preferences will be asked, however the destination location cannot be guaranteed. Applications are reviewed by a selection committee. The selection of our delegates is based on the applications that were submitted (due early December), an informal interview with a few members of the committee (conducted mid Dec - early January) and our general knowledge of the candidate as a result of interactions during group CISV activities. For village, decisions on delegates are made after a selection camp in late January. Some criteria that that committee considers are:

1. Ability to work well with peers.
2. Ability to work well with adults,
3. Listening Skills,
4. Participation,
5. Interest in CISV.

In the rare instance in which red flags are raised (for example, due to behavioral concerns), private discussions will take place with the parent(s) of the youth.

Once the delegates have been selected, they will be notified by email or telephone (mid-January). If there are not enough participants to fill a delegation, CISV Victoria will be canvassed to find potential additional delegates. Sometimes we have more delegates than opportunities, sometimes it’s the other way around. Each year it’s a surprise!

CISV PROGRAMS

CISV has a variety of programs, each with their age-specific goal. All programs share the common goals of building global friendships and learning about the educational areas of diversity, conflict and resolution, human rights and sustainable development.

Village (Age: 11y;- Delegation of 4)

- Goal is to learn about each other’s lives and how to communicate, cooperate and live together.
- Additional criteria for this age group are; the child’s maturity, openness to new experiences and people, and ability to be away from family for the duration of the program.

Youth Meeting (Age: 12- 16y, depending on the specifics of the specific invitation; Delegation of 6)

- Goal is to explore a theme relating to an educational goal and reflect on how delegates can apply what they have gained from their experience, such as knowledge of the theme along with planning and communication skills, within their own community.
- Criteria is similar to Village.

Youth Meeting Individual (Age: 16--18y)

- Program is similar to Seminar, however selection is done through invitations to chapters.

Step Up (Age 12--15y, Delegation of 4)

- The goal is to encourage the youth to take a leading role in planning and organizing activities. The participants use CISV's peace education to provide a theme around which the activities are planned, with the goal that this will help them become active global citizens going forward.
- Since this is a leadership program, our Selection Committee is looking for applicants who demonstrate potential to grow in a leadership role.
- As this is an age where many teens are testing their boundaries, Step Up requires youth who demonstrate maturity and good judgment. As with the other programs, the delegation mix is also considered.

Junior Counselor (Age: 16--17y, Individual)

- This is a highly competitive program due to the relatively few positions available.
- The goal of being a Junior Counselor is to enhance the Village experience for the participants and to grow their own leadership through being an integral part of the Village program leader team.
- The applicant, who travels alone, must demonstrate leadership skills, ability to work with children, and demonstrate high maturity and good judgment. Being involved at the chapter level, having knowledge of CISV educational goals and genuine enthusiasm for CISV is a plus.
- There is a more in-depth interview process for this program.

Seminar (Age: 17--18y, Individual)

- This personally challenging, intensive program is coordinated by the participants. They develop their own agenda and explore global issues based on their own backgrounds and interests, through activities and in-depth discussions.
- Seminar Camp's group -living environment encourages them to collaborate, and to take a creative approach to problem -solving and resolving differences that can arise from healthy discussion.
- Selection is based on the applicant's maturity, good judgment, ability to contribute to and collaborate with the seminar camp "community" (will carry one's weight) and independent thinking.
- The applicant travels alone to this program.
- Delegates are required to apply to the local Seminar Camp Coordinator, as selection is determined on a national level for this program.

International People's Project: (Age: 19+y, Individual)

- IPPs are personally fulfilling, giving participants a chance to learn new skills and a new way of thinking while making lasting friendships.
- They are an opportunity to live and work as a part of a community, in an authentic cultural experience that will make a genuine difference.

SELECTION MYTHS

Sometimes they are misconceptions about how selection is made. Here are a few common myths.

1. You have to be extroverted/ have a super bubbly personality/be a top student/etc. to be selected.

Can you imagine 48 of the same type of person all together?! The key to a good delegation is balance. Diversity allows us to learn more about each other and from each other. There is a place for introspective book worms, logical techno kids, life -of -the party dancing fools and pie -in -the sky dreamers.

2. Children are chosen first if their parent is on the board or volunteers for/contributes to the chapter in a significant way.

The selection process for board member's youth is the same as any individual. We often have board member's youth apply, but there is no guarantee they will travel. To make things fair, members of the selection committee will be recused of any decisions involving their family.

3. JBers who are on JB exec are entitled to a Junior Counselor/Step Up/ Seminar spot.

While it is true that involvement and leadership in the JB and increased knowledge of CISV strengthen an application, selection is never guaranteed. Everyone has a fair shot. *Please note: JBers must compete the Junior Counselor in Training program in order to qualify to travel as a Junior Counselor.*

IMPROVING YOUR ODDS

So you really want to participate in a CISV program? That's awesome! Here's what you can do...

- Take the selection process seriously.
- Make sure you participate in the selection interview process
- Help the Chapter fill the delegation if there are vacancies

If you did not get selected, there may be future invitations that CISV Victoria may be asked to help fill. This could include a whole delegation or may be individual spots that other chapters need help filling.

DIDN'T GET IN YOUR CISV PROGRAM OF CHOICE? PERHAPS A LOCAL EXPERIENCE IS PERFECT FOR YOU...

Local mini-camps and JB events are a great way to get the CISV experience in smaller, more frequent doses, Many JBers never attend any international, multi-week program and get just as much out of CISV by attending meetings, activities and mini-camps! It's all fun and all good. You will still meet lots of new friends from all over. There are also national programs that can be just as much fun!

Last but not least, many thanks from CISV London for sharing their Selection Process document. We have plagiarized from it shameless (with their permission of course!)