

## **2026-2027 OVERSEAS MANAGER EXCHANGE PROGRAM**

### **Overview**

Through a two week exchange offered in partnership with the [Taituarā — Local Government Professionals Aotearoa New Zealand](#), this annual program is one of a range of LGMA initiatives designed to provide BC local government managers with an opportunity to focus on their management development and career in local government. By way of building new connections and exchanging ideas and best practices among professionals from different but complementary jurisdictions, the intent is to add value to the manager's existing organization and to their future local government performance and career development.

In keeping with the LGMA spirit of collegiality and support for the local government sector as a whole, knowledge-sharing is another important aspect of the program. Applicants will be considered on their ability to define their learning objectives, how they will transfer and share that learning on their return to British Columbia, and on how they define the support for their exchange partner.

The exchange involves a hosted visit to Aotearoa New Zealand, attendance at the Taituarā Conference, and the reciprocal hosting of an exchange partner in British Columbia. Exchange partners work together on a program of engagements and events to meet the interests of each partner.

### **Details**

#### *Eligibility*

The program is open to all managers from local governments in British Columbia who, at the time of travel to Aotearoa New Zealand, have been regular members of LGMA for two or more years. The LGMA has a right to decline applicants who have not paid their membership fees for 2026.

#### *Ambassadors*

Overseas exchange managers are ambassadors for their local government, British Columbia, and the LGMA. This implies a high level of responsibility. You should be willing to commit time to ensure that the overall exchange is well planned and a valuable learning experience for both exchange managers.

#### *Timing*

The exchange visits are typically two weeks in duration, timed around the annual conference of each host association to allow both managers to attend these events.

The successful LGMA manager will travel to Aotearoa New Zealand for two weeks in September 2026 to attend the Taituarā Annual Conference (*September 9-11, 2026 in Ngamotu New Plymouth*) and to visit local governments in that country. In return, they will host their exchange partner in British Columbia for two weeks to attend the 2027 LGMA Conference (*June 15-17, 2027 in Nanaimo*) and visit local governments in the BC host region.

Each manager and their exchange partner work out a program of visits and events that meet their learning objectives. LGMA and Taituarā will be available to support the partners in building a virtual relationship and preparing for their exchange.

## Exchange Manager Costs

### Costs of your overseas visit

LGMA will meet the cost of the following to a maximum total of \$5,000 CDN:

- return economy airfare for you from your home in BC to the host local government in Aotearoa New Zealand (international and domestic flights)
- costs of travel (which may or may not include flights, depending on distance) to the Taituarā Conference
- and, if required, incidental overnight accommodation directly associated with travel to the host local government or to the Taituarā conference (e.g. one night's hotel accommodation before the conference).

Taituarā will meet the cost of:

- your Taituarā conference registration and some meal costs related to your conference attendance. Your partner will receive conference-related information from Taituarā and assist in ensuring your registration and accommodation bookings are made.
- 9 nights of accommodation: 3 while at the Taituarā conference, 6 nights of other accommodation while in Aotearoa New Zealand for the exchange.

While it is acceptable for you to be accompanied by your spouse/partner, this will be at your own cost. It is suggested that you do not take your children on this overseas trip unless you have reached an explicit agreement about this with your exchange partner. Exchange activity is intensive and tiring at times.

When developing your itinerary, please be aware that any additional expenses outside of what is outlined will be your responsibility to cover. Please plan and budget your trip carefully.

<i>Cost</i>	<i>Covered by LGMA</i>	<i>Covered by Taituarā</i>
Flight to the NZ local authority	Yes – to a maximum total of \$5,000 CDN	
Travel to the Taituarā conference		
Taituarā Conference accommodation		Yes – 3 nights
Exchange accommodation (other than conference)		Yes – 6 nights
Your LGMA conference registration and associated travel/accommodation	No	No
Personal travel	No	No
Spouse / partner costs	No	No
Other costs	No	No

### Costs of your exchange partner's visit to BC

<i>Cost</i>	<i>Covered by LGMA</i>	<i>Covered by Taituarā</i>
Flight to the BC local government		Yes
Travel to the LGMA conference		Yes
LGMA Conference accommodation	Yes – 4 nights	
Exchange accommodation (other than LGMA conference)	Yes – 5 nights to a maximum of \$1,300 CAD	
NZ manager's LGMA conference registration	Yes	
Personal travel	No	No

Spouse / partner costs	No	No
Other costs	No	No

Note that the costs above exclude airport transfers, local transport, liquor, laundry, meals beyond those offered as part of conference attendance, or other costs. It is understood that expenses not explicitly mentioned are the exchange managers' own responsibility.

LGMA will provide information to you ahead of the 2027 LGMA Annual Conference. Once registration opens, you should ensure your exchange partner registers for the conference; LGMA will book your partner's conference accommodation directly. As host manager, you (or your organization) will cover your own LGMA conference registration along with related travel and accommodation costs.

## **If you are selected as the successful applicant**

### **Initial contact**

If you are selected as the successful applicant, LGMA will provide you with contact information and an e-introduction to your exchange partner, and we strongly recommend that you make immediate contact to begin developing your program and travel itinerary. Once you and your partner have been in contact, the detailed organization of your respective visits becomes your own joint responsibility. We suggest an early video call as a good basis for establishing personal contact rather than merely exchanging emails.

Though every effort is made by LGMA and Taituarā to select appropriate candidates, if this initial contact suggests that there may be serious compatibility issues, please contact the LGMA immediately.

### **Travel arrangements and insurance**

You are expected to work with your partner to develop the itinerary for the exchange and identify travel needs. Each exchange partner will make their own flight and travel arrangements, working in close cooperation with the host for recommendations that may be needed on the domestic portion of travel.

As part of their hosting duties, your partner will normally introduce you to local authorities within their region and assume related local transport costs (such as gas or parking). Additional travel costs may be avoided by arranging visits to the local authorities in the vicinity of the Taituarā conference.

*Note: If during program planning it is suggested that visits to local authorities further afield would be in keeping with learning objectives, the BC Manager is to discuss this with LGMA prior to making arrangements.*

Any costs incurred by your spouse/partner travelling with you will be your responsibility.

It is highly recommended that you secure medical insurance as well as travel insurance/trip protection at your own cost. LGMA assumes no responsibility for medical expenses, lost baggage, cancelled or delayed flights, or other interruptions you may encounter as a result of your travels through this program.

### **Flight booking process and payment arrangements**

At least two competitive quotes for airfare should be obtained and submitted to LGMA *before travel is booked*. You will be initially responsible for all costs and then claim the portion of expenditure that is eligible for subsidy from LGMA to a maximum of \$5,000 CDN.

The payment arrangements are:

- 60% of costs payable at the commencement of the manager exchange and
- 40% (the balance) payable upon your return to BC following your visit to Aotearoa New Zealand, receipt of invoices, and approval of your report on the exchange.

### **Pre-trip planning tips**

Advance planning and attention to detail is necessary to fully maximize the overseas exchange experience. You and your partner will be expected to develop a program that will cater to your respective learning needs and objectives.

Some exchange managers have found it helpful to discuss exchanges with past program participants. Past participants are noted on the [LGMA website](#) and LGMA can also provide contact information. Tips on how to develop your exchange program:

- Connect virtually with your partner and share as much background information as possible about your local government system and own organization (i.e. major projects, accomplishments, and issues).
- Be frank and honest with each other about what you are and aren't interested in seeing and learning about. The experience of previous exchange managers is that successful programs are best developed in an iterative manner.
- Exchanges generally work best where both partners have been able to spend some time with each other before attending the local host organization's conference. This gives them the opportunity to gain more understanding of the country, its local government system, and the issues likely to be discussed at the conference.
- We expect that meeting the learning objectives of your partner will involve visits to local governments other than your own. Engagements and visits are often arranged with other organizations within your region, and sometimes also with local governments in the region of the LGMA Annual Conference. Colleagues from your LGMA Chapter are often willing to assist with this. It is a good idea to ensure that the contacts your partner will meet are well briefed about your partner and their areas of interest so best use can be made of the available time.
- Programs usually include the opportunity for your partner to meet with your Mayor/Chairperson, members of your Council/Board, staff, media, other local or First Nation governments, and/or relevant community organizations.
- Finally, it is important not to have too many activities scheduled for your visitor. When they visit in person, make sure you allow for leisure time and stay flexible should other last-minute opportunities arise.

### **Other preparation**

Before departing for Aotearoa New Zealand, you should make a special effort to understand the culture, history, as well as current management and issues of the community you will visit. Picking up a few phrases in te reo Māori might also prove helpful for showing respect and understanding cultural context.

To provide context on British Columbia and issues faced by your own local government to people you will meet, it is often useful to prepare some handy resources.

### **When your exchange partner arrives**

You should meet your visiting exchange partner upon their arrival in BC, whether coming directly to your community or going to the LGMA Annual Conference first. If you cannot do this personally, you should arrange for someone else to do it on your behalf.

You have two specific obligations:

1. Host your exchange partner (and spouse/partner if accompanying) during the period of the exchange other than the Annual Conference. Depending on their learning objectives, this

includes accompanying your partner to engagements and visits arranged within your organization, to other local governments within your region, and with local governments in the vicinity of the LGMA Annual Conference, if applicable.

2. Attend the LGMA's Annual Conference along with your exchange partner.

Once dates for the visit are agreed upon, you should avoid booking out-of-town appointments and give maximum attention to your exchange partner at the conference and while in your community.

### **Reporting on the experience**

Within 3 months of completion of the travel to Aotearoa New Zealand you must submit a report on the exchange to LGMA. Notes about your report:

- Your report may be informal but must be readable and edited prior to submitting.
- It must be accompanied by appropriate photos illustrating your experiences and submitted as separate jpg or png files (i.e. photos may be embedded into your report but must also be supplied separately).
- Content must focus on the substantive management policies, technical and community lessons for potential application to BC local governments that were observed during the exchange visit. In addition, you must discuss how you intend to integrate learning from the exchange into your own work or that of your community over the next 12 months.
- Once the report is approved, it may be published through LGMA communication channels and may be used for promotional purposes by LGMA.
- A general template for the report format is appended as a guide.

In addition to your report, you *may* be asked to:

- Prepare an article for the LGMA *Exchange* magazine on your visit to Aotearoa New Zealand and on the experience of hosting your exchange partner.
- Give a presentation on your experience at an LGMA event. You may include any appropriate content from your report and discuss how any learning has been applied or how you will integrate your learning from the exchange in your work. LGMA will give reasonable notice in respect to this requirement and cover any required travel costs.
- You may also be required to submit a separate report to your Council/Board – please check with them directly.

### **How To Apply**

Selection of the exchange recipient will be made by the LGMA Board of Directors. Applicants are encouraged to be as specific as possible with regards to their learning objectives/areas of interest and in identifying opportunities for sharing knowledge gained from the program. Scoring criteria are appended.

For applications to be considered we need to receive:

- a completed [application form](#)
- a completed and signed [Certificate of Employing Local Government](#)
- an up-to-date CV/resume
- information on your local government
- a personal statement

Applications must be submitted by **Friday, April 17, 2026**.

**In addition to the application form, please provide:**

**A completed and signed Certificate of Employing Local Government**

**An up-to-date CV/resume that includes the following information:**

Education, professional qualifications, roles and offices held, previous employment, previous opportunities to study, and any volunteer involvement with LGMA BC or an LGMA Chapter.

**Additional local government information:**

- A summary of the socio-economic structure of your community
- A brief outline of any particular issues facing your local government (or specific department)
- A current staff organizational chart

**A personal statement outlining :**

- the specific issues/areas of professional interest you would like to pursue as part of this program
- your key learning objectives
- what you see as the benefits of taking part in this exchange in the context of BC local government
- how this exchange will support your professional/leadership development as well as your local government organization
- how you will share the knowledge gained from this exchange with other LGMA members and their organizations
- what specific supports your local government will provide to your exchange partner irrespective of their learning objectives/specific issues

**Applicant Personal Agreement**

I agree that the LGMA Board of Directors's decision on the selected manager is final.

In the normal course of events, I expect to have at least 3 years of local government service ahead of me.

If awarded, I agree to comply with the terms and conditions of the LGMA Overseas Exchange Manager Program including that:

- I agree to host my exchange partner.
- I understand that it is solely up to me and my exchange partner to create itineraries for each other that may include regional visits.
- I agree to purchase registration for myself to attend the 2027 LGMA Annual Conference with my exchange partner and attend the 2026 Taituarā Annual Conference.
- I agree to represent LGMA and BC's local government sector appropriately.
- I agree to write a report for LGMA to publish and, if asked, to present at an LGMA event or write an article for LGMA *Exchange* magazine.

I understand that LGMA and its partner Taituarā will only meet some of the costs of my exchange as specifically noted, and that I am responsible for any additional costs.

I agree, if required, to produce evidence of having purchased adequate medical and travel insurance before departure.

I agree to indemnify and hold harmless the LGMA and its officers, employees, directors, agents, volunteers and contractors from and against any claims, costs, losses, damages, actions, causes of action and expenses arising, directly or indirectly, from an error, omission, or negligent or willful act, or in any way related to participation in the LGMA Overseas Exchange Manager Program.

## Appendix 1. Suggested Format for Exchange Report

The table below sets out a suggested format for the report that is to be prepared within 3 months following your overseas visit. This is provided as a guide and is not intended to unduly constrain the effective presentation of information.

<b>Section</b>	<b>Guide to Content</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	General description - went where and when
<b>Executive Summary</b>	Key conclusions and observations
<b>Objectives</b>	Statement of the objectives for the exchange
<b>Conference</b>	Observations on the conference attended as part of the Exchange
<b>Places visited</b>	Description of the local authorities visited
<b>Report on exchange objectives</b>	Key lessons, observations etc. concerning each exchange objective
<b>Other lessons and observations</b>	Report on anything outside the exchange objectives that seems likely to be of use or interest to other local government managers in British Columbia
<b>Takeaways</b>	How you plan to integrate knowledge gained: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in your professional / leadership development</li> <li>• in your work in order to add value to your current or future local government employers</li> <li>• and to share more broadly to benefit local government colleagues further afield or the sector as a whole</li> </ul>
<b>Appendices</b>	Relevant supplementary material including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reports, documents, and other material obtained that is relevant to research objectives, or onconference or local authorities / districts visited.</li> <li>• References to additional sources of information that might be of interest to readers such as additional reports or material, websites, links, contacts etc.</li> </ul>

## Appendix 2. Applicant Scoring Criteria

Mandatory Criteria	Criteria Met	Criteria Not Met
CV / resume provided		
Certificate of Employing Local Government provided		
Additional local government info/organization chart provided		
Personal statement provided		
Regular member of LGMA for a minimum of 2 years prior to the commencement of the exchange		

Desirable Criteria	Available Points
Clearly identified issues of specific interest that will be pursued	20
Key learning objectives are clearly articulated	5
Benefits to the broader local government sector are clearly identified	20
Knowledge-transfer and presentation opportunities are clearly identified, realistic, and will benefit other LGMA member organizations	15
Likelihood that applicant will be able to provide a varied exchange experience for exchange partner ( <i>e.g., geographic location, regional issues of interest, visitation opportunities, etc.</i> )	10
Additional support indicated by applicant's local government	10
Applicant has been an active supporter of the local government sector through volunteerism with LGMA BC or an LGMA Chapter ( <i>i.e. as a presenter, committee member or through other volunteer involvement</i> )	10
<b>Total Points:</b>	<b>100</b>

### Bonus Points (up to 10):

Role and position of applicant and extent to which applicant's areas of interest can be of wide interest or application across the sector.