



Recommendations on Inviting Internationals to Your Council or Camp

With the increased interest in hosting international Scouts and leaders at local council camps and High Adventure Bases, the International Department would like to provide some helpful recommendations to consider. If, after reviewing these recommendations, you still have outstanding questions or concerns, please contact the International Department at international@scouting.org or 972-580-2403.

The exception to these recommendations is if you are interested in bringing Chinese youth (mainland China) to your camp. The [International Ambassador Program](#) is the only international educational travel program approved by the BSA's national headquarters to provide Chinese youth a Scouting experience in the United States. If you have an interest in any of your summer camp programs being advertised in and marketed to consumers in China, please contact [Michael Hall](#) at 704-588-4260 x369, who serves as the BSA's point of contact with our licensed Chinese representative.

✓ **Official Invitations**

When inviting international Scouts and leaders to your camp, you must determine whom you want to invite. Are you planning an international camporee or other large event or is your camp simply large enough to handle big crowds? Then, we suggest that you list your event or camp dates within the World Organization of the Scout Movement's (WOSM) [International Events List](#). This list is published and sent to all National Scout Organizations (NSOs) twice a year, in May and December, and is also viewable on WOSM's website, www.scout.org. To add an event to the list, fill in the [International Events form](#) and send it to the International Department to provide the World Scout Bureau with the relevant information and approval.

If you intend to be more selective with your invitations, send the International Department the list of specific groups or countries you would like to invite and your detailed invitation. Then, the International Department will officially send out your invitation.



✓ **Verifications**

The International Department will work with your event organizer to verify that the international Scouts and leaders interested in attending your event or camp are registered and approved by their own NSO to attend your event. This may seem like an unnecessary step in your event planning, but it can be crucial to your event's success. At a previous large-council event, only $\frac{3}{4}$ of the international leaders and service team members that applied were approved by their NSO. Contact the International Department to verify the registration and approval of your international attendees.

✓ **Visa Assistance Letters**

Many times, the international Scouts and leaders invited to attend your event or camp require visa assistance letters to secure a visitors' visa to enter the United States. The International Department can provide your council or High Adventure Base with a visa assistance letter template and accompanying visa interview tips to provide to your approved attendees. These letters do not guarantee that the international Scouts and leaders will secure a visa, but provide proof to the U.S. Embassy that the event or camp invitation is genuine.

✓ **Medical Insurance**

It is highly recommended that you require proof of an accredited Travelers Insurance plan for each international Scout and leader attending. This is due to potential medical needs during their stay. The international Scouts and leaders will not be familiar with our medical system and do not come prepared for our high medical costs. This insurance will protect them and, subsequently, your council or High Adventure Base from having a surprise medical bill.

Regarding AHMR forms, be sure to clarify any immunizations that are required to attend your event or camp. Tetanus, for example, is required on the AHMR, but many internationals will not have this immunization, so will need to be made aware that this immunization must be received before arriving to the event or camp (barring religious or other immunization exemptions).

****Registering your international attendees within the BSA is not permitted and will not cover them under the Council Accident & Sickness Plan or Unit Accident Plan!****

✓ **Liability Insurance**

As international Scouts and leaders are considered non-Scout groups for insurance purposes, be sure to contact the BSA's Risk Management Department at (972) 580-2228 to discuss Local Council Non-Scout Group liability insurance or, for High Adventure Bases, Event Liability Insurance. This is important in the event the international Scouts or leaders cause an incident that results in a third-party making a claim against the international attendees or the local council/High Adventure Base.

****Registering your international attendees within the BSA is not permitted and will not cover them under the BSA's general liability policy!****

✓ **Home Hosting**

We want to encourage International Scouting relationships; however, it is important to note that home hosting is not considered to be an "official Scouting event." Home hosting can still occur, but it is done so with the home owners being fully aware that they are liable for any incidents that occur in their home and will not be covered by BSA insurance. For guidelines for hosting Scouts in private homes, please view the [memorandum](#) drafted by the BSA's General Counsel, which is found on the International Department's website, <https://www.scouting.org/international/information-sheets/>.