

## Student Exchange Program



### Overview

#### 1. Background

The Josef Landherr and Hermann Thumm Foundation was established in September 2000, with generous assistance from Mr Hermann Thumm, to commemorate the dedication and achievements of Mr Josef Landherr, the founder of the German Language School in Adelaide (which teaches German language and culture on a part-time basis on Saturday mornings.)

The Foundation's purpose is to assist the School for the German Language Inc. with financial aid and to facilitate an Australian-German student exchange program.

The Foundation currently operates a short-term cultural exchange program, principally for students from the German Language School. The Foundation may also sponsor students attending other schools that teach German, but with a lower level of financial support.

#### 2. Issues for Students from State Government Schools

Recent (2016) changes to the SA Government rules for student exchanges have made it impractical to continue the Foundation's Direct Exchange Program, described below, for students attending SA State Government Schools. The Government now requires exchange students from Germany to pay international student fees of several thousand dollars, even for a short-term cultural exchange such as that operated by the Foundation, unless there is a recognized school-to-school exchange program in place (which is quite impractical since our students attend multiple mainstream schools).

What the Foundation can offer to students who attend a mainstream Government school is to subsidise their airfares if their mainstream school operates an official school-to-school exchange program, which many of them do. Selection criteria for this variant program are the same as for the Direct Exchange Program, but the application process is different (some of the forms are not relevant). Interested applicants should contact the Foundation Secretary for guidance.

#### 3. Direct Exchange Program

An exchange program involving host families and schools in Alzenau, Germany, has been operating since 2004. The exchange program follows the guidelines established by the South Australian Department of Education and Child Development but, as explained above, is currently only available for students attending private schools in South Australia.

### **3.1 Outline of Direct Exchange Program**

The Adelaide students will stay in Germany for about 8 weeks during November/January of their Year 11 at the School. The German students will stay in Adelaide for approximately 10 weeks during June/August of their Year 10 or 11. Normally, the Adelaide students will travel to Germany first and then host an Alzenau student in the following year; however in some cases it may be preferable to reverse the order.

Students will be accommodated with a host family and will attend classes and other activities at the co-operating exchange school. The program is legally a family-to-family arrangement, with the host family being fully responsible for the exchanged students (i.e. “in loco parentis”).

For the selected students from the German Language School, the Foundation will purchase economy class airfares from Adelaide to Germany and return. For selected students from other schools the Foundation will normally subsidise 50% of the airfares. All other costs, including insurance and spending money, are the responsibility of the student’s parents. However, in exceptional circumstances, the Foundation may provide additional financial assistance to students who are economically disadvantaged. This will be at the sole discretion of the Foundation.

The Alzenau schools have more students eager to visit Australia than we are able to send to Germany. Thus, in some years, the Foundation may seek host families for a “one-way exchange”.

### **3.2 Host Families**

The families of successful applicants who travel to Germany in November are expected to host their German exchange student, normally in the following year but sometimes earlier in the same year.

However, as explained above, all families at the School are welcome to host a student from Germany, in a “one-way exchange”, which the Foundation will subsidise to the value of \$1,000.

In order to comply with State legislation, host families will need to undergo a Police Check.

### **3.3 Student Eligibility**

Preference will be given to students at the School for the German Language Inc. (normally in Years 10 and 11).

The students must have been continuously enrolled at the School for at least 2 years.

If there are no applicants satisfying the above conditions then the Foundation may, at its sole discretion, broaden the eligibility criteria (eg. students at other schools that teach German).

### **3.4 Application Process**

In the first term of the school year, eligible students and parents will be invited to present an expression of interest to participate in the exchange.

Interested students and parents will be provided with details of:

- the co-operating exchange school(s) in Germany
- host family requirements and responsibilities
- responsibilities of exchange student
- travel requirements (passport, health information etc)

The remainder of the application process depends on whether the proposed exchange will occur in the normal order or in the reverse order.

**(a) Normal Order** (travel to Germany in November then host in following year)

Formal applications will be invited later in the first term and the successful applicant(s) will be advised by the end of second term.

**(b) Reverse Order** (host in July/August then travel to Germany in November of same year)

Formal applications (for the following year) will be invited in third term and the successful applicant(s) will be advised before the end of the year.

#### **4. Selection Criteria**

The Foundation's criteria for selection will include a student's:

- written application
- school work performance and standards
- teacher's and principal's recommendation

The Foundation may also take into account a student's ability to benefit from the student exchange.

#### **5. Joining the Foundation**

Our Foundation is a not-for-profit organization that relies solely on volunteers, and we encourage exchange students and their families to help promote our program.

Family Membership of the Foundation currently costs \$20 per year and includes the cost of luncheons for our AGM and student functions.

We seek greater involvement by parents of exchange students to ensure the future of this valuable program.

#### **6. Further Information**

The Foundation website [www.jlht.org.au](http://www.jlht.org.au) contains more detailed information about the exchange program.

- (a) Dates for the Direct Exchange Program
- (b) Host Family Responsibilities
- (c) Student Responsibilities
- (d) Application Forms