

The association is a joint LO and TCO entity for the purposes of international trade union co-operation to promote the building and strengthening of independent, democratic trade unions throughout the world.

The perspective of equal opportunities between the sexes will be especially considered. The activities are carried out through LO, TCO and their respective affiliated organisations.



Guidelines for International Exchange of young Trade Union Activists

International exchange means encounters between young people from different countries, different cultures and different environments. International exchange gives young people the opportunity to share each other's lives and everyday experiences and to interchange ideas.

LO-TCO Secretariats funds international exchange of young trade unionists in Sweden and developing countries. One or more Swedish trade union members get together with one or more members of a trade union in a developing country for a period of at least two weeks in both countries.

The exchange programme

The exchange programme includes developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Planning, implementation and evaluation of exchange is a joint responsibility; a problem or an issue is identified and the groups collaborate in solving the problem or discussing the issue.

International exchange should be a vital aspect of the Swedish trade union's international and youth activities, as part of a joint development project or as part of the trade union's informative activities on international issues.

Who can apply?

Funds are available for Swedish Trade unions affiliated to LO and TCO. For Trade Unions affiliated to LO the age limits for participants are 18-30 years and for trade Unions affiliated to TCO the age limits are 18-35 years. Similar age-limits apply to union representatives in developing countries.

After exchange

After the final exchange visit, an informative project is organised in Sweden. This may involve an exhibition, an article in the union journal, participation in seminars, etc. Informative projects are designed by Swedish union members themselves, but must have the union's approval.

Funding

A union applies for funds for each pair of exchange students, that is, one Swedish trade union member and one member of the union in the developing country. The amount conceded corresponds to the officially established "basic amount" (42 800 SEK in 2009), regardless of the country visited. Funding is expected to cover travel costs and part of the cost of board and lodging during the stay in either country.

How do you apply?

Application must be made by the Swedish union concerned and submitted to the LO-TCO Secretariat. Applications can be accepted at any time during the year. Application forms can be found on our web page (www.lotcobistand.org) or requested by e-mail at info@lotcobistand.org. Your application should give a clear description of the programme, objectives and purpose of the exchange, which should cover at least two weeks in Sweden and two weeks in the developing country. Proposed post-exchange informative activities should also be detailed.

Other conditions

The overall objective of the international exchange should coincide with the objectives of the Swedish trade union movement's development co-operation: to develop and strengthen independent trade unions.

The exchange (both visits and the report) must be carried out within twelve (12) months.

Informative activities in Sweden must be carried out within six (6) months after the final visit.