



Media release  
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## Applications open to visit Selwyn's Sister Cities

As part of a Sister Cities friendship relationship, trips to Toraja in Indonesia and Akitakata and Yubetsu in Japan are being planned for July and September.

Selwyn District Council and the Malvern Community Board are welcoming applications from anyone interested in joining the tour groups.

Chairperson of the Selwyn Sister Cities committee, Allison Rosanowski, says the trips help to strengthen the relationship between New Zealanders and the people of Japan and Indonesia.

"Selwyn participants will get the chance to experience another culture in a different way than a normal traveller would. They will have the opportunity to stay in a Japanese home, and visit rural Indonesian villages."

Selwyn was the first council in New Zealand to establish a sister city relationship with Indonesia. Toraja is a Christian coffee growing area in the highlands that has been supported for ten years by a group of Canterbury farmers. North Toraja has a population of around 215,000 and is a popular tourist destination. This trip will take place in July.

The trip to Japan is in late September and the tour group will have the chance to visit local farms, Hiroshima Peace Park, Miyajima Island and Tokyo, as well as experiencing Japanese life and culture.

The group will join the Darfield High School delegation in Akitakata. Travellers also have to opportunity to join them in Tokyo. After Tokyo, the adult group may travel independently to Yubetsu and visit an agricultural and fishing area in northern Hokkaido.

Both trips are at the travellers' expense however some homestay accommodation will be provided in Japan.

Applications by active, fit adults who live or work in the Selwyn district will be considered by the Sister Cities Committee and Council staff. Tentative itineraries will be available soon. Applications close on 20 April for the Toraja visit, and 2 May for the Japan tip. Application forms can be obtained from Bernadette Ryan on 347 2830 or email [bernadette.ryan@selwyn.govt.nz](mailto:bernadette.ryan@selwyn.govt.nz).

Photo attached: *Rural Toraja, Indonesia. Photo credit Axel Drainville.*

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