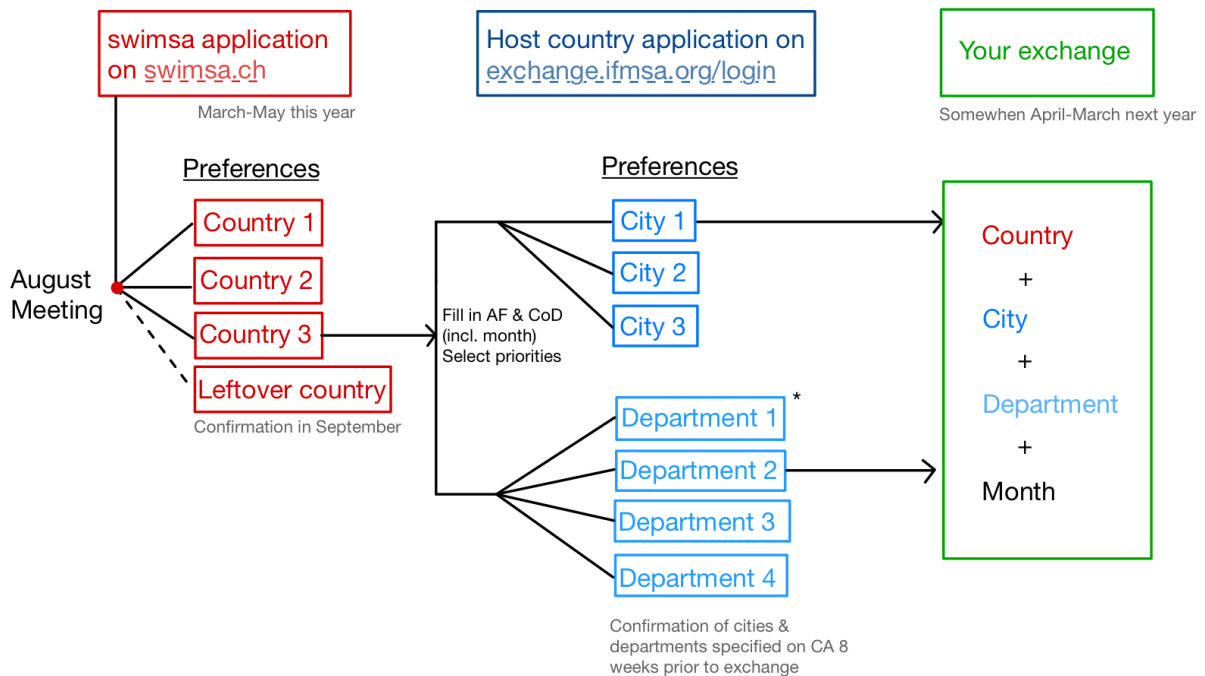


Example of Max Musters Exchange Process

The list of Abbreviations and Communication Guidelines are at the end of the document!

This document will follow Max Muster through his application for an Exchange with swimsa until the start of his Exchange. At first, we will have a look at the workflow of a regular application:



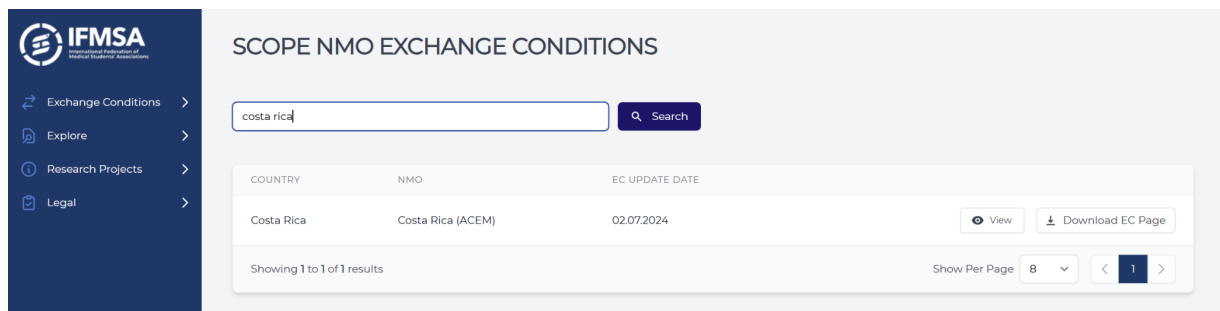
*Research project, in case of SCORE

NOTE: Application period in year XX is for an Exchange between April XX+1 and March XX+2
Example: Applying in April 25 is for a 1-month Exchange somewhen in the period of April 26-March27

Preliminary Steps

Max Muster wants to go on an Exchange. Among others, Max is interested in Costa Rica.

1. To understand how the swimsa exchange program works and if it suits him, Max reads the section "How IFMSA Exchanges work" on the homepage (<https://swimsa.ch/exchanges/overview/>)
2. He also has a look at the world map on the homepage (<https://swimsa.ch/exchanges/scope/> > countries) to see which countries swimsa is able to make a contract with.
3. Then Max reads the **Exchange Conditions (EC)** of the countries he is interested in. They provide important country specific information and requirements and can be found on <https://exchange.ifmsa.org/exchange-conditions/scope>.



COUNTRY	NMO	EC UPDATE DATE
Costa Rica	Costa Rica (ACEM)	02.07.2024

Most importantly, Max checks the following facts:

- Required languages
 - Required level of studies
 - Available cities and months
 - Available departments/projects
 - other specific requirements
 - visa and insurances needed
 - documents needed (Card of Documents), e.g. medical exams, vaccinations etc.
 - etc.
 - general remarks
4. Max also has a look at the **Experience reports** (<https://swimsa.ch/exchanges/scope/> > Experience reports) of previous Swiss Outgoings and the **Explore pages** (<https://exchange.ifmsa.org/explore-pages/national>) of the his countries of interest to get a feeling if they suit his expectations. Both can give valuable insight into the individual country's exchange program, health care system, culture and social program.

The same preliminary steps apply for a SCORE exchange. The according conditions and pages can be found on the corresponding SCORE websites.

swimsa Application: March-May this year

In March, the swimsa application for exchanges opens here:

<https://swimsa.ch/exchanges/enrollment/>

Max registers himself. Besides general information he has to enter his top 3 country choices that he would like to go to and answer some questions for the internal point system.

Based on the applications of all the interested students, the NEO-Out goes to the August Meeting (AM) of the International Federation of Medical Students Associations (IFMSA) to negotiate contracts with the desired countries. There is no guarantee that all the contracts can be signed to accommodate all the applicants' preferences - so there is a chance for Max not getting one of his top 3 countries. Depending on the sending capacity and the amount of applications this year, it is also possible that Max won't get a spot at all. For the spot distribution as well as the country negotiation, the preferences of students with higher points will be prioritized.

Confirmation: September

With a high amount of points, thanks to Max' extracurricular engagements, Max receives positive feedback on his application via email and even gets the confirmation for his 1st Priority country: Costa Rica. He now needs to sign the contract between swimsa and him, as well as pay the fee for his exchange. Both the signed contract and the proof of payment need to be returned to the NEO-Out via email to confirm his acceptance of the Exchange spot.

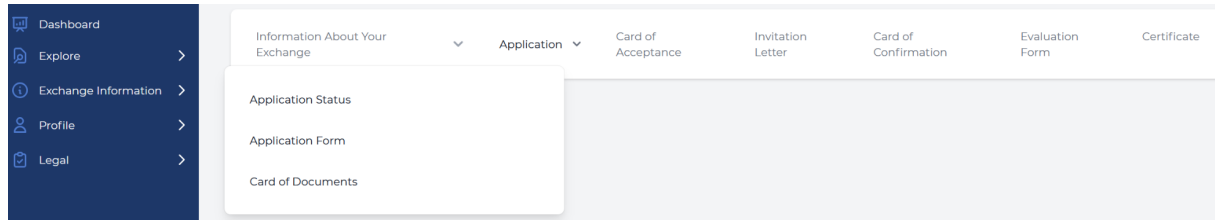
In case Max wouldn't have gotten a spot in one of his preferred countries, he would have the opportunity to sign up for one of the leftover spots/countries in October.

Host country application on the IFMSA-Exchanges-Portal/Database: October - November

After the NEO-Out receives the signed contract and the transaction confirmation, a login on the IFMSA database is created for Max. The login and further instructions are sent to Max by email and can also be found on the swimsa website (<https://swimsa.ch/exchanges/documents/> > Database instructions)

On the database, Max needs to fill two e-forms to complete his application to his assigned hosting country:

- **The Application Form (AF):** including his personal data, his preferred cities, preferred department and the exchange month during which he wishes to go
- **The Card of Documents (CoD):** where he needs to upload all the required documents



Application Form (AF)

In the application form (AF) Max provides his personal data and states his desired exchange month. Furthermore, he has to enter his top 3 choices of Local committees (LC), as well as his top 4 choices of departments. In the AF, Max could also leave notes to the NEO-In of Costa Rica for specific wishes. (e.g. if he would like to be placed with his friend Mara, who also got a spot in Costa Rica)

Card of Documents (CoD)

A list of the required documents for the CoD can be found in the EC. For most countries, you need to upload documents like a CV, a picture, motivational letters for your desired departments, proof of enrollment, your student record, language certificates, vaccination cards and the signed SCOPE Terms and Conditions. Sometimes country-specific documents, like e.g. a social media consent form need to be signed.

Exchange Organisation (by the hosting country)

Once Max has filled out the AF and CoD and notified the NEO-Out about it, all the information is forwarded to Costa Rica. With all the documents and his preferences provided, Costa Rica's NEO-In and their LEOs will now start to organize an internship, accommodation and all the logistics for Max' exchange in Costa Rica. To give Max the exchange experience of his dreams, they will try to fulfill as many of his wishes and preferences as possible - however, Max also needs to keep in mind that he might not get all of his first choices, due to circumstances out of everyone's control.

Pre-departure Training (PdT): November/December + March

Before sending his AF + CoD, as well as while waiting for his Card of Acceptance (CA), Max will need to attend 2 separate Pre-departure Trainings (PdT). Attending both is mandatory for him to be able to go on his exchange. The first one (PdT 1/2) will be in November/December and explain all the steps "from now to his exchange". The second one (PdT 2/2) will happen in March and cover important information on the exchange experience itself. For both trainings, the NEO-Out will fix dates and communicate them accordingly to all the outgoing students. The PdT is also an opportunity to ask the NEO-Out any questions.

Card of Acceptance (CA): around 8 weeks prior to the Exchange

After Costa Rica has settled everything for his exchange, Max will receive his Card of Acceptance (CA). In the CA Max will be informed about his assigned city/LC, hospital, department, accommodation, confirmed start and end of his exchange, his personal local Contact Person (CP) and potential further information. The CA should arrive around 8 weeks prior to the desired exchange month - as soon as it arrives, the NEO-Out will inform Max by email and he will find the CA on his account in the database.

Once Max has received his CA, he can book his transportation to the hosting country. Moreover, Max is allowed to and should immediately get in touch with his CP (by email, Whatsapp...).

Card of Confirmation (CC): latest 4 weeks prior to the Exchange

In order to confirm to Costa Rica that he will be attending his exchange, Max will need to fill out the Card of Confirmation (CC) on the database. With the CC he also provided his hosting country with information about arrival details, emergency and insurance contacts.

The CC must be sent at the latest 4 weeks before the start of the exchange. If not done so, the hosting country will assume that Max might not come after all and worst case cancel his exchange.

Exchange

Max arrives in San José, Costa Rica. Upon agreement with his CP a few weeks ago, he is picked up by his CP, accompanied to the accommodation and introduced to his internship tutor the following day.

In most countries, there is an Upon Arrival Training (UAT), where the hosting NMO informs their incomings about local and general rules, gives advice to navigate safely in the exchange country and provides tips and tricks for day-to-day life. In some NMOs the UAT will be online before arrival, in others the UAT will be held on site upon arrival.

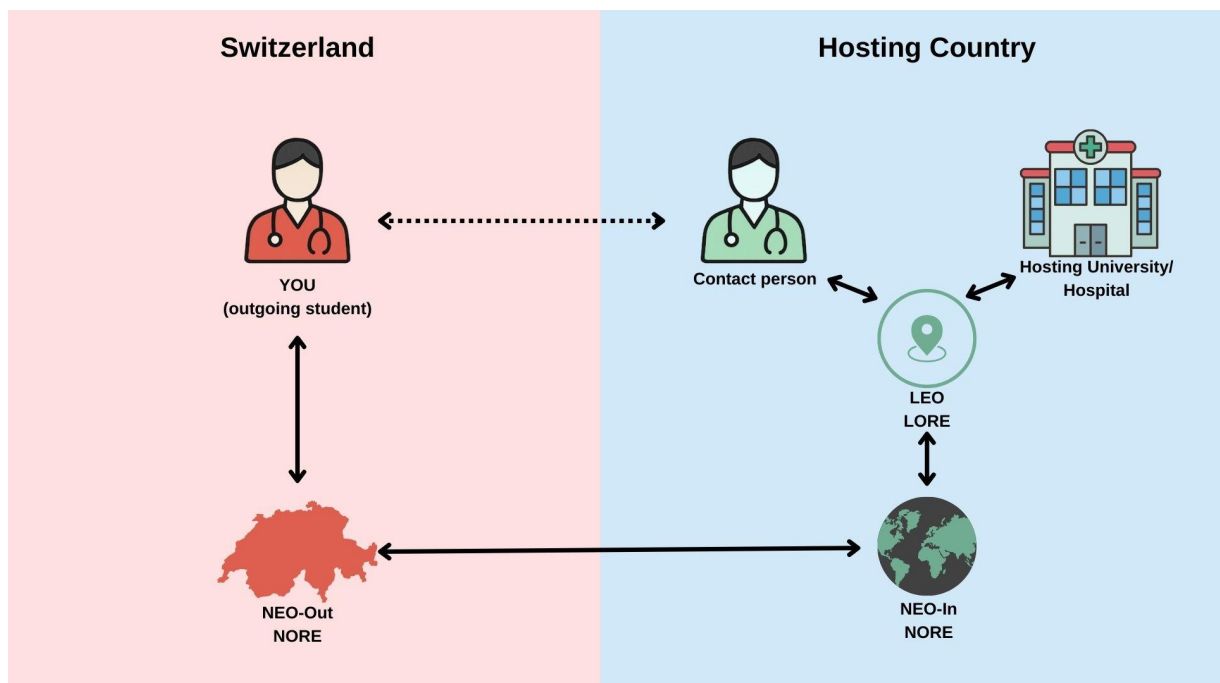
Depending on the country and the month, a National Social Program (NSP) is offered, where all the incoming students are pooled and do some fun activities together. Some countries even offer Education Activities (EA) like sonography or suturing courses. At the least, smaller social activities will be organized by the local medical students, to learn about the culture and spend time together.

Evaluation Forms (Pre- & Post-EF)

Before the exchange starts Max needs to fill in the pre-EF, when coming back a corresponding post-EF - designed to assess the impact and evaluate the whole exchange. Filling out both of them is required in order to access his online exchange certificate, as well as quality for any fee reimbursements after his exchange. Reimbursements can be acquired through writing an experience report on his exchange and/or travelling without a plane (green fee).

Appendix

General Communication Guidelines



The outgoing student is only allowed to contact the NEO-Out of their own country (neo.out@swimsa.ch). Once they received the Card of Acceptance (CA) and got assigned a local CP, they are also encouraged to directly be in contact with their CP of their hosting country.

Never should the outgoing student contact any Exchange Officer (NEO-In, NEO-Out, LEO) or the hospital/university from their hosting country directly, unless they are explicitly asked to do so by their own (Swiss) NEO-Out! In case they are being contacted by one of those parties, it is ultimately necessary to keep the NEO-Out in the loop.

The communication guidelines exist to protect all the students, who are voluntarily working hard in their free time to make these exchanges happen, from being flooded with requests and to avoid chaos caused by ineffective and unclear communication chains. Respecting these rules allows for standardized procedures, which are essential in a global and effective organization.

The most important abbreviations

AF:	Application Form	ECs:	Exchange Conditions
CoD:	Card of Documents	PdT:	Pre-departure Training
CA:	Card of Acceptance	UAT:	Upon Arrival Training
CC:	Card of Confirmation	EA:	Educational Activity
EF:	Evaluation Form	NSP:	National Social Program
		IL:	Invitation Letter

IFMSA: International Federation of Medical Students Associations

NMO: National Member Organization
 sending NMO: the NMO where you come from
 hosting NMO: the NMO, responsible for organizing and hosting you

LC: Local Committee

SCOPE: Standing Committee on Professional Exchange

SCORE: Standing Committee on Research Exchange

CP: Contact Person

LEO: Local Exchange Officer

LORE: Local Officer on Research Exchange

NEO: National Exchange Officer

NORE: National Officer on Research Exchange

GA: General Assembly
 MM: March Meeting = IFMSA General Assembly in March
 AM: August Meeting = IFMSA General Assembly in August