



Challenges Worldwide ICS

Guide to Smashing your Selection Day

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Meet the Team!

Amelia

Assessment Coordinator

"Selection days are always really great ways to meet other like-minded folk from a wide-range of backgrounds and find out more about the Challenges programme. I'm always surprised at the end of the day when volunteers say how much they enjoyed it. It's enjoyable and good fun even though you're being assessed!"



Bríd

Programme Officer

I was in your shoes not that long ago when I was being assessed as a Challenges Worldwide volunteer! It's easy to be nervous beforehand, but everyone is genuinely on your side. The selectors are trying to find good examples to select you as a volunteer – all you have to do is speak up to give yourself a chance!"



The Selectors

On the day, there will also be a team of trained selectors who'll be watching your every move. We usually have enough spaces on placement for everyone invited to the selection day, so don't worry, the selectors aren't trying to catch you out. Our selectors are teams of people who take time out of their schedules for selection days to help us select the best people to go away with Challenges Worldwide.



What are we looking for?

The selectors are looking for positive evidence of the 7 dimensions outlined below and the tasks are designed to give you a chance to demonstrate them.

You're not in competition with one another but order to show us what we're looking for you do have to speak up (you don't need to be the loudest person in the room) just do your best to get fully involved in the day.

Show us your personality, and give yourself a chance to excel!

1

POSITIVE AND REALISTIC COMMITMENT

A positive approach to working as a volunteer based on realistic expectations and an understanding of the realities of the Challenges ICS programme.

Just show us what you know about Challenges, ICS and living in a major city in Ghana, Rwanda or Uganda.

Not sure of what that entails? Head over to section 4 on "[Why you should be excited](#)" which has links to some of our blogs and will help you work out what to expect!

2

COMMITMENT TO LEARNING

You're open and committed to personal development, discovery learning and have the humility to share and help others do so.

Are you keen to embrace new cultures and gain new understandings or ideas about the world we live in? Think of a time where you've helped others to broaden their horizons or develop their skills.

3

PRACTICAL PROBLEM SOLVING ABILITY

The ability to solve practical problems using the available resources with an inventive and positive approach to making necessary decisions.

What's your group decision making like and how do you deal with pressure? Show us your creativity and your problem solving on the day and try to keep cheerful even if things don't go as expected.

4

FLEXIBILITY AND ADAPTABILITY

A balanced approach to dealing with new, unexpected and sometimes challenging situations.

Think of some examples where you've had to change your plans, maybe in a new job role or when travelling to new cultures. How do you react to change? When have you responded to the unexpected?

5

SELF ASSURANCE

Good humoured and comfortable in new situations and able to recognise and express your own needs.

Smile, speak up and say what you think. Try to think about your strengths and where you would like to improve and what you can contribute to the ICS programme with Challenges Worldwide.

6

WORKING WITH OTHERS

Able to develop working relationships and negotiate with others in seeking solutions.

How do you get on with the other candidates and how would you handle any disagreements that might arise? Are you listening to what others are saying?

7

SENSITIVITY TO THE NEEDS OF OTHERS

A sensitive and mature approach when dealing with interpersonal relationships, a diplomatic response to cultural differences and a non-judgemental attitude to different beliefs, behaviours and values.

How do you make treat people from different backgrounds or make them feel comfortable? Do you know how to speak to people different from yourself? Have you ever supported a family member or friends through a sensitive time?

What to expect from the day

Throughout the day there is a mix of assessed and non-assessed activities. You will have an opportunity to learn more about Challenges and the work we do in sub-Saharan Africa. We'll also give you some top-tips on fundraising and you'll be able to ask any of those burning questions you have about Challenges Worldwide.

Group Practical Task

A hands-on activity that requires you to work as part of a team to solve a challenge. Make sure you're giving your opinion, working well with the other candidates and adapting good naturedly to any unexpected changes!

Discussion Activities

We will provide you with some scenarios and situations that have taken place on placement and you will talk about what you might do in that situation. Use what you already know about Challenges to make some good suggestions, be yourself and make sure everyone gets a chance to speak!

One to One Interview

This consists of a 35 minute informal chat with our selectors and it's the part that people tend to worry the most about. Just make sure you speak up, and smile and you'll be absolutely fine.

- Show your enthusiasm, and your research about Challenges Worldwide
- No matter how shaky you feel inside, try to speak with a strong, clear voice
- Make sure you make eye contact with your interviewer
- Think of some examples and organise them with the STAR method – situation, task, action, result. Read more about that [here](#).

What's in it for me?

As well as having your travel, vaccinations, accommodation and living expenses in-country covered, Challenges also offers the unique opportunity to complete a CMI qualification in Professional Consulting using the experience you'll get on placement.



Throughout your placement you will complete two modules: Staging a Consultancy Intervention and the Client Relationship. Upon your return, you have the option to formalise your learning by doing assessments in these modules (at a hugely discounted rate) with our strategic partner the Chartered Management Institute to get a Certificate in Professional Consulting. You can even top up your learning to a diploma using the same discount!



The Placement

The Challenges Worldwide ICS programme focusses on developing growth within small to medium enterprises (SMEs) in Sub-Saharan Africa. By focussing on helping urban businesses to grow, we are allowing individuals, families and communities up and down the supply chain to become prosperous.

Prosperity isn't just about counting wealth, it's about accessing all of the benefits that wealth brings: access to safe drinking water; food security; a good education; fair and equal job opportunities; decent health care and protection from the effects of climate change.

It's important to understand that our placements are not the traditional volunteering placement; we work in major cities and seek to work with local people to help accelerate the growth of businesses. The cities we work in are already thriving commercial cities – have a read of [this blog](#) by a past volunteer and Team Leader Rosie Coleman on what Ghana can teach the UK about innovation and entrepreneurship.

Find out more at challengesworldwide.com/ics

But what do you actually do on your ICS placement? How does this translate in to the day to day?

In the course of a 10-12 week programme you will work in a team of UK and In-Country volunteers as Business Support Associates. You will work within a business in Ghana, Rwanda or Uganda, with your local counterpart to help to encourage growth through staging a short consultancy intervention in your business.

Don't be worried – you'll be supported all the way by:

1. Accredited learning sessions from the Chartered Management Institute (CMI)
2. Team leaders who will review your work
3. The in-country staff
4. Pre Placement Training events before departure in Edinburgh
5. Specific business sessions on arrival in country.

And not everyone comes from a business background

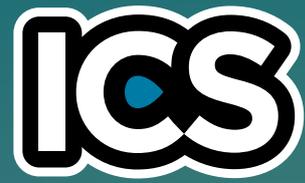
All you need is a willingness to learn and a good attitude! Tara and Lynna, both volunteers in Uganda wrote about their In-Country Orientation week and the training they received. Have a read of it [here](#).



 Challenges Worldwide operations

 Challenges Worldwide ICS operations





Now that you're a selection day pro all that's left to do is make sure you've confirmed your attendance at one of our selection days in Edinburgh or London.

Contact Bríd at ics@challengesworldwide.com to confirm your attendance.