2027

NEW ZEALAND

DEVELOPMENT TOUR

Whangārei
NEW ZEALAND

6th – 13th January 2027

GENERAL INFORMATION

The 2027 New Zealand Development Tour is an exciting opportunity for athletes from Little Athletics Victoria (LAVic) in the Under 14 and Under 15 age groups. Selected athletes will spend 7 days touring with the LAVic team and will compete at the 2027 North Island "Colgate Games" in Whangārei.

This year is the 4th year Little Athletics Victoria have been able to offer this Development Tour to our Athletes, building on feedback from each previous trip. Parents have spoken very highly about the trip and the benefits, personal development and growth within their athletes. We are very proud that 3 of our athletes from our initial tour (2024) were recently selected in the Australian Under 18 team to compete at the 2026 Oceania Athletics Championships.

In another an exciting development, 12 additional athletes from Little Athletics South Australia will be joining the Victorian team for this trip.

Athletes of all skill levels are encouraged to apply as this tour provides a developmental opportunity for all athletes, regardless of their skill level.

This document provides you with details about the tour, from competition and training information to the team composition and the costs to attend.

Details of how to nominate are listed at the end of this document. If you wish to be considered for selection, simply complete the online nomination form **before 11am on Monday 31st August 2026**.

TEAM COMPOSITION

A team of up to 36 athletes will be selected for the tour. All athletes will need to be registered financial members with LAVic for the 2026-27 season prior to departure.

Ideally, the 36 athletes will be spread evenly across the 2 age groups (U14 & U15) with 18 from each age group and an even split of 18 Boys and 18 Girls. Where insufficient nominations are received in any of the above age groups and/or genders, then additional positions may be made available in other age groups/genders.

The team will be accompanied by an experienced Management/Coaching Team of 6 adults (minimum of 2 of each gender) who will be responsible for the Team for the duration of the trip.

Selection of the Team is at the discretion of LAVic, and all selection decisions are final. The following selection criteria will be used as a guide by LAVic when selecting the team:

- Athletes that have displayed exemplary behaviour at Centre, Region and State Competitions.
- Commitment to Little Athletics.
- Longevity of service and involvement in Little Athletics.

Winning/Placing at LAVic sanctioned events or being selected as a member of the LAVic State (ALAC) Team or previous tours does not guarantee selection in the Team.

Parents of **Multi-Class athletes** interested in attending, should contact Brett Johnstone (brett.johnstone@lavic.com.au) prior to lodging an application to discuss the suitability of this trip for their child as the Colgate Games do offer Multi-Class events but with very limited events/attendance.

TOUR ITINERARY

The following is a basic itinerary for the tour …

Wed 6th January	Depart Melbourne for Auckland. Drive to Whangārei.
Thurs 7th January	Training and activities in Whangārei.
Fri 8th January	Competition – Day 1.
Sat 9th January	Competition – Day 2.
Sun 10th January	Competition – Day 3.
Mon 11th January	Recovery and morning activities in Whangārei. Drive to Auckland. Evening activity in Auckland.
Tues 12th January	Activities in Auckland.
Wed 13th January	Shopping (DFO) & Return to Melbourne.

PARENTAL/FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Parents/Family are more than welcome to book the same flights as the team, attend the Games as spectators and sit with the team during the event. Younger siblings (7yo and older) can enter events under their LAVic Centre if they would like to participate too. LAVic will organise a dinner for the Tuesday night that family are also welcome to attend. For the remainder of the trip, it is "team only".

COMPETITION & TRAINING DETAILS

The Team will be competing in the North Island Colgate Games, which is run by Athletics New Zealand. These Games are the largest on the New Zealand Children's Athletics calendar with several hundred athletes competing. The competition will be held over three days in Whangārei, from Friday 8th to Sunday 10th January 2027.

The competition is conducted under full World Athletics Rules, not Little Athletics modified Rules. A complete list of events and specifications is included further in this document.

As well as individual events, each age group can participate in two team relays – 4 x 100m (male and female) and a mixed gender Medley Relay (5 athletes - 100m, 100m, 200m, 400m, 800m). All athletes will be given an opportunity and are encouraged to compete in at least one relay event.

Athletes are expected to compete in all events they have been nominated for (maximum 5 individual events + 1 or 2 relays per athlete) unless they are injured or ill. Note that the initial event nominations are not binding and all athletes will be able to modify their preferred events prior to the final submission of entries.

The team will have a light training session on the Thursday before the competition and a recovery session on the Monday after competition. All athletes are expected to participate in these sessions.

COSTS

The final cost per athlete is yet to be determined as we are awaiting final quotes but is expected to be approximately **$3,500 per athlete plus Uniform costs** which will cover the following:

- Return airfares from Melbourne to Auckland
- All ground transportation costs in New Zealand
- Travel Insurance
- 7 nights' Accommodation
- All meals for the duration of the trip
- Competition Entry Fees
- All tours/activities on the trip
- 2 x LAVic Tour t-shirts per athlete
- Souvenir event t-shirt
- LAVic Backpack & Cap

UNIFORM:

- All athletes will be supplied with a list of required uniform items.
- **The maximum cost of the required uniform items will be $210.**
- Athletes will be required to purchase Uniform items from the LAVic online shop.
- Any athlete that already has LAVic State Uniform items (from ALAC or a previous tour etc) will be able to re-use those items.

NOT INCLUDED IN TOUR COST ABOVE:

- Colgate Games printed event program (can be pre-ordered).
- Personal spending money.

Successful applicants will be advised by Friday 11th September and a $1,000 deposit will then be required by Friday 25th September to confirm their place.

Note that the tour will depart from and return to Melbourne airport and travel to and from Melbourne airport is the responsibility of the family and is not included in the cost of the tour.

PASSPORTS

All tour members are required to have a valid Australian passport with at least 6 months validity beyond the return date of the trip (i.e., not expiring before 14th July 2027). If you do not already have a passport, it is your responsibility to get one before departure. The costs of obtaining a passport are not included in the overall cost of the trip.

To apply for a passport, visit www.passports.gov.au or speak to your local Post Office. There can be lengthy delays in obtaining passports at times, so it is suggested that you start this process as soon as possible. It is worth noting that if you are applying for a new passport (not a renewal) then you will be required to provide an original birth certificate along with any supporting documents if you have changed your name at any stage.

If you have a passport that is another Nationality other than Australian, it is your responsibility to ensure that any Visa requirements are met and paid for prior to departure. If you are in this situation, please contact Brett Johnstone (brett.johnstone@lavic.com.au) to discuss.

TEAM MEETINGS

There will be one compulsory Team Meeting (venue TBC) on Sunday 18th October. The purpose of this meeting will be for the athletes to meet and get to know each other before going away and for families to be fully informed about the trip. It also provides athletes and parents an opportunity to meet your Team Managers before departure and for athletes to try on Uniform items for sizing.

We will also arrange online (Teams/Zoom etc) meetings as required to enable parents and athletes to ask any questions that they may have and send out regular updates via email.

COLGATE GAMES INFORMATION

Athletes may select up to five (5) individual events at the Colgate Games, which can be Track or Field or a combination of both. Once the final timetable is known, some changes may need to be made to athlete event selections to avoid clashes or overloading the athletes. Please note that the majority of track events have Heats and Finals (and in some instances, Semi-Finals).

LAVic will also be selecting athletes to form Relay Teams in the 4x100m and Mixed Medley Relays. All athletes will be given the opportunity to compete in at least one relay event.

Athletics New Zealand use the term "Grade" when describing their age groups. "Grade 14" is the equivalent to our Under 15 age group and "Grade 13" is the equivalent of our Under 14 age group. Events available for each Age Group are as follows:

Event	Under 14 / "Grade 13" (born 2013)	Under 15 / "Grade 14" (born 2012)
100m	√	√
200m	√	√
400m	√	√
800m	√	√
1500m	√	√
Hurdles	√ Girls 80m (76.2cm) / Boys 80m (76.2cm)	√ Girls 80m (76.2cm) / Boys 100m (83.8cm)
Race Walk	√ 1600m	√ 2000m
Long Jump	√	√
High Jump	√ (Starting Heights – Girls 120cm/Boys 125cm)	√ (Starting Heights – Girls 125cm/Boys 130cm)
Discus	√ Girls 1kg / Boys 1kg	√ Girls 1kg / Boys 1.25kg
Shot Put	√ Girls 3kg / Boys 4kg	√ Girls 3kg / Boys 4kg

TESTIMONIALS

The following quotes are a sample of some of the feedback received from our first 3 New Zealand Development Tours …

"I would just like to say that you should be extremely proud and humbled to lead such a wonderful team of people at LA Vic.

As a parent, I cannot speak highly enough of the Staff - Brett, Stu, Matt, Kim, Linda, Shev, that looked after the athletes that travelled to NZ for the inaugural Development Tour. Logistically to look after that number of kids and especially at that age well, they've just done the most amazing job. Furthermore, to do this during the first week of January, a time where many people are spending with their families and loved ones it just reinforces their passion and commitment to the athletes and the organisation.

To provide the kids with this opportunity is one thing but then to be looked after as well as they were and to see how happy they were it's just the greatest endorsement to continue with the program in the future.

I've already said thank you to the staff but as their leader, please pass this message on again!"

"I trust this email finds you both well. I wanted to take a moment to extend my sincere appreciation for the incredible experience my son X had during the LAVic New Zealand Development Tour.

The organisation of the tour was impeccable, and the choice of accompanying adults exceeded our expectations. I had the privilege of attending the three days of games and witnessed firsthand the outstanding support provided by the team managers. Their dedication to helping these young athletes become the best versions of themselves was truly commendable.

Throughout the tour, the athletes exhibited remarkable camaraderie, handling both success and disappointments with resilience. Their interactions with each other, the team managers, and even the New Zealand athletes and the public were a testament to the outstanding support system in place.

I want to express my gratitude for creating an environment where these young athletes could thrive and build meaningful connections. LAVic's efforts and those of the entire team did not go unnoticed, and I am truly grateful for the positive impact it had on my son's experience.

Thank you once again for this invaluable opportunity."

"We just wanted to take the time to thankyou both (and all the other volunteers) for the support & environment provided to X to experience her first international team sporting event.

We are very grateful for Little Aths providing this opportunity and grateful for the time & energy put in by all involved to make this happen.

Since returning home, X has thanked us numerous times and expressed how much she enjoyed the trip, the friendships made and the growth from a personal perspective - e.g. "Dad, I find it so much easier now to talk to new people".

Thanks again and will be recommending this trip to other families we come across when they ask about it."

"I would like to formally thank you, Kim and all of the selected team managers and athletes for what X tells me was "the best trip he has ever had!"

He is a quiet kid usually (even at home) but has not stopped coming out with stories from the week away. This trip was such a positive impact for him, actually getting know a lot of the older boys (whom he had only really heard of). One story in particular was how nice and friendly X is. X has always looked up to kids like X said he offered him support and tips before running his 200m heat, which X said definitely helped with his running and being more relaxed. He said and now I'm actually friends with him!

He said all the team managers helped and did so much for everyone, and they had so much fun.

My youngest son couldn't believe that X got to be on the Tour with the lady that does the commentary, ha ha !

I hope you are having a few days break after a busy week, and thank you for all of your hard work leading up to, during and after!

X looks forward to hopefully seeing everyone at State Championships, whilst his passion for LA is pretty high, this tour has just instilled that even more."

HOW TO NOMINATE

If you wish to be considered for selection, please click on the "NOMINATION LINK" button below and complete the online (Google Form) nomination form.

Online **nominations close at 11am on Monday 31st August.** LAVic will assess the nominations and advise all applicants of the outcome by 5pm on Friday 11th September. In the event that one or more athletes offered a place decline their invitation, then additional offers may be made to those that initially missed out.

NOMINATION LINK

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions about the Tour, please contact Brett Johnstone via email at brett.johnstone@lavic.com.au or phone (03) 9960 8609 during LAVic business hours (9am to 5pm weekdays).

Further information about the Colgate Games can be found on the Athletics New Zealand website (HERE). Included on the site are the "Conditions of Entry" (which includes a draft programme of events) and the "Meeting Rules". This site will be updated as further 2027 Games information becomes available.