



JUNIOR RANGERS

CHALLENGES & POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

HOW CAN WE RUN A JUNIOR RANGER PROGRAMME WHEN THE PARK MANAGEMENT IS ALREADY UNDERSTAFFED?

- Make an NGO and ask for donations
- Get people in the local community to help (e.g. retired people, local birders, foragers, nature guides, farmers)
- Reduce the number of days of activities
- The lowest commitment for a EUROAPRC programme is 5 days per year
- This could be a 3 day summer camp, 1 Spring day and 1 Autumn day
- Work with an environmental education organisation to outsource it
- Still ensure the park staff / rangers showcase frontline conservation
- Get a sponsor
- Partner with other organisations

HOW CAN MENTORS BETTER BALANCE TIME BETWEEN COORDINATING THE JUNIOR RANGER PROGRAMME AND THEIR OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES?

- Teach older "Junior Rangers" or "Youth+" to act as mentors
- Plan for the Junior Rangers to join already planned activities with others (e.g. In Sweden the JRs sometimes go with local "outdoor promoters" for some planned activities such as bird watching)
- In Latvia JR is part of the job description for mentors as it counts towards environmental education and awareness raising goals but we ask colleagues to help develop activity ideas for the Junior Rangers.
- Consider for project proposals to include the JRs as part of the outreach activities and allocate staff capacity to it.

WITH BUDGET CUTS, HOW CAN WE SOURCE MATERIALS AND TOOLS FOR JUNIOR RANGER ACTIVITIES?

- Choose activities that don't need materials
- Ask for donations of materials (e.g. wood)
- See if there are organisations that lend tools and see if they could help (there are more and more local groups such as Repair Cafe's, or website with a "to lend" or "for free" notice boards)
- Ask parents if the kids could bring tools/materials with them
- For sports equipment, ask local groups like canoeing clubs if they could help
- Go to different projects and ask if they have funding for activities that fall under outreach, or ask municipalities if they could help

THERE IS A LIMITED NUMBER OF JUNIOR RANGER POSITIONS, HOW DO YOU SELECT WHICH GET TO JOIN?

- Have the kids actively apply with homework
- Give preference to those who have siblings already in the programme to ease the burden of the parents involved
- Have a waiting list in case kids drop out
- Have a "3 times miss activity then out of the programme" policy to ensure commitment
- Have an "open day" where they actually do work so you can see who listens well and is interested
- Possibly link it to good grades or recommendations from schools
- Consider preference for a specific target group (e.g. mental health needs, homeschooling or neurodiversity)



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THERE IS HIGH INTEREST FOR SOME ACTIVITIES (CAMP) BUT LESS FOR OTHERS. HOW CAN WE ENSURE HIGH LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION?

- Combine less wanted activities with things that are usually well received
- Let the Junior Rangers take part in organising their activities
- Connect with other Junior Ranger groups in your area to spark motivation (competitiveness on who works the hardest)
- Have requirements for the camp that they only get to take part if they committed to other activities throughout the year.
- Have clear goals for high commitment such as participation in local and international camps or exchanges.

HOW CAN WE ENSURE WHEN ONE MENTOR RETIRES/LEAVES THE NEW MENTOR HAS THE NETWORK TO CONTINUE THE PROGRAMME?

- If possible, have a phase of the retiring mentor teaching new mentors what they have done so far
- Encourage current rangers to make lists of their connections, phone number and reoccurring programme plans
- Consider time it takes the Junior Rangers to get used to the new mentor
- Give the mentor good team support because they might have to just “jump in and swim” and be brave
- Train older Junior Rangers to assist new mentors if there can't be an overlapping training phase

HOW CAN WE MAKE TRANSPORTING GROUPS TO VISIT OTHER LOCATIONS EASIER?

- Ask parents to help, they might be interested to join the activities as well (carpool so not all parents have to join)
- Maybe public transport is an option - make it an adventure!
- Consider cycling there if all have bikes
- Ask bus company for discounted prices (“mates rates”)
- Ask other organisations to share their cars/sponsor petrol
 - youth centres, churches, retirement homes
- Ask the municipality for funding or help if all the JR are from one region, this works in Latvia

HOW CAN WE RECRUIT NEW JUNIOR RANGERS AND MAKE SURE THEY ARE THE “RIGHT” ONES?

- Offer a few days a year of “trying out” the programme
- Go into schools and show images of past activities
- Ask current Junior Rangers to make presentations in school
- Have flyers at the visitor centre
- Have a clear application procedure
- Offer it to kids who are home schooled
- Advertise in places where neurodivergent kids might regularly go
- Advertise to active parents in climbing or birding groups