

NZCF Press Release re: 2021 World Cup

BACKGROUND

Recently FIDE announced the expansion of the World Cup knockout tournament to 206 players (Open) and 103 (Women's). This is a new direction from FIDE to allow more countries to be able to compete. Previously players in countries in zone 3.6 [Oceania] had to qualify by competing and winning the two-yearly Zonal Championships. (NB This year's event was scheduled to be held in Melbourne from January 20-25 but has since been cancelled). Because New Zealand (and Australia) are ranked within the top 100 FIDE nations (based on the average FIDE rating of their top 10 rated players) NZCF has the opportunity to select a player directly into this year's tournament. Unfortunately, this does not apply for the Women's tournament because we are outside of the countries that automatically qualify.

Consequently, NZCF now calls for expressions of interest from players rated FIDE 2100 or above that are interested in competing in this prestigious event. At the moment we are still awaiting confirmation of final details but have listed below some of the considerations that should be factored into a decision to apply.

Positive factors:

A substantial prize fund is offered by FIDE meaning that even first round losers would receive \$3,750 USD (less the 20% commission payable to FIDE)

The opportunity (maybe once in a lifetime) to represent NZ in one of the most prestigious events of the year and to experience mixing with the world's elite chess players.

All expressions of interest must be received on the application form by the secretary no later than April 15th, 2021. You will find the Player Application document linked with this announcement.

Important things to take into consideration:

Players at this stage would need to quarantine for the minimum 2-week period on return to New Zealand. The MBIE website states this as a cost of \$3,100 including gst. Players should make themselves familiar with the rules and regulations surrounding booking quarantine facilities for their return to New Zealand. **It is advisable to pre-purchase the Quarantine voucher before making travel arrangements.**

Players are required to meet their travel, meals and accommodation and need to stay in designated hotels. [More information on this will be posted as it comes to hand]. Currently NZCF cannot guarantee any financial assistance but will seek to help find support if possible.

The minimum amount of time involved would be 4 days – arrival day, two games (one per day) and tie-break day then departure day. This would need to be coordinated with flight timetables.

Russia have offered to host this event but we are still awaiting the official announcement on exact dates and venue. The FIDE calendar does not contain the event. A non-FIDE website says Sochi in July with a July 10 start.

Russia currently requires a covid test done 72 hours prior to arrival and an official certificate result in Russian or an official stamped translation.

Any final decision about sending a representative player or not will be made and announced by the end of April, 2021.