



# Rotaract Handbook

Rotaract



# What is Rotaract?

Rotaract is a service club for young people ages 18 and up who are dedicated to finding innovative solutions to the world's most pressing challenges while developing leadership skills and making friends from around the world. Rotaract clubs are members of Rotary International.

Rotaract clubs decide how to organize and run their own clubs, manage their funds, and plan and carry out activities and service projects that are important to their communities. Clubs that sponsor Rotaract clubs offer guidance and support, and work as partners in service.

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# 1

## STARTING A ROTARACT CLUB

Assess the Needs of Your Community

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### Assess the Needs of Your Community

Rotaract clubs are started by motivated and passionate individuals who wish to hone their leadership skills and plan projects that make a difference locally and globally. If your university or community doesn't have a Rotaract club, take action and organize a group of dedicated young people to get started.

Especially in the beginning, it's important that you discuss and assess what type of Rotaract club makes the most sense for your university or community. Consider the following questions:

- What kind of Rotaract club does your area need: community- or university-based?
- Could nearby Rotary or Rotaract clubs sponsor your new Rotaract club? Discuss how these other clubs can best support young people in your community, and how sponsoring a new Rotaract club might fit into these efforts.
- Are you an alumnus of a Rotary program for young leaders? Can you engage with other Rotary alumni in your community, such as former Interactors, Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) participants, or Rotary Youth Exchange students, who may be interested in joining?

### Establish a Base

Each Rotaract club is based either at a university or in a community. A university-based club draws its members from one school, university, college, or other institution of higher education, while a community-based club draws members from all over the community.

If your Rotaract club is based at a school, university, college, or similar institution, any eligible student regardless of age may join, as allowed by the school's policies. Community-based clubs are open to young adults throughout the community, ages 18 and up.

Whether your club is based at a school or in your community, meetings can take place in person, online, or a combination of both. This makes Rotaract a flexible option for rural residents, traveling professionals, and university students who are studying abroad or seeking a degree online.

## Choose Your Sponsorship Option

Rotaract clubs can choose to organize with or without a Rotary or Rotaract club sponsor. When you're organizing a new Rotaract club, this is one of the most important decisions you'll have to make. Rotary International's policy is designed to ensure that Rotaract clubs have the flexibility to choose the sponsor relationship that best supports their needs. To determine the best option for your club, consider:

- How could sponsorship benefit the new Rotaract club?  
(Possibilities include help with attracting new members, planning and organizing service projects, offering mentoring or professional development opportunities, and handling finances.)
- What does sponsorship mean to you and your club?

In the next chapter you'll learn more about the role of Rotaract club sponsors to help you make an informed decision.

## Find Members

When you've decided whether to base your club at your school or in your community and which sponsorship option is the right fit, you can begin looking for prospective members. Invite students, young professionals, and service-minded young people, including those from diverse backgrounds to learn more about Rotaract.

Help young people who are already connected to Rotary — family members of Rotarians, Interact and RYLA alumni, and former Youth Exchange students — discover new opportunities through Rotaract. Use your professional and community networks to promote the club to employees or interns at local businesses, members of community centers, and youth groups at places of worship.

University-based clubs should work with school officials or a faculty adviser to find students who might be interested in joining a Rotaract club.

For a community-based club, hang posters in public areas where young people get together to study, play sports, or connect with peers. Give promotional materials to community partners and promote Rotaract through social media.

Meet with potential members to answer their questions and confirm their interest in starting a Rotaract club. This is a good time to decide when, where, and how (online, in person, or a combination of both) the new club will meet.



## Elect Officers

Each Rotaract club has a president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and board of directors. Clubs can create additional officer posts and define their roles in the club's bylaws. Learn more about officers' roles in this handbook and find information on officer elections in the Standard Rotaract Club Constitution and recommended bylaws.

## Make It Official

Here's how to charter your Rotaract club:

- Adopt the **Standard Rotaract Club Constitution** and customize the **recommended bylaws** as needed.
- Complete and sign the **Rotaract Club Certification Form**, and obtain the required signatures from your district governor and if applicable, your sponsor club(s).
- Scan your completed form and send it to **rotaract@rotary.org**. You can also email, fax, or mail it to your region's **international office**. Keep the original for your club records.
- Until 30 June 2022, new Rotaract clubs must pay a one-time \$50 certification fee. Contact the Rotary International **financial representative** assigned to your district about payment options and instructions.

### GOOD TO KNOW

You don't have to wait for your official certificate to arrive to start club activities. Even before you receive it, members of the new Rotaract club can meet, organize, and take action in the community.

Beginning 1 July 2022, Rotaract clubs will pay per capita dues to Rotary International. University-based clubs will pay \$5 per member each year, and community-based clubs will pay \$8 per member each year. New clubs will no longer have to pay the one-time \$50 certification fee after 1 July 2022.

You'll receive your certificate of organization via email several weeks after Rotary International receives your completed form and payment.

## Celebrate

When the certificate arrives, it's time to celebrate your new Rotaract club. Your celebration can strengthen the connection between Rotaractors and your Rotary district. Invite Rotaractors, Interactors, alumni, family members, school administrators and teachers, community partners, Rotarians, and district leaders.

There's no standard ceremony for chartering a Rotaract club, inducting members, or recognizing officers. You decide how to celebrate these events in a way that will be meaningful to your club and community. You can honor

Rotary traditions or establish your own. Present new club members with an **identification card** or special recognition of their commitment, such as member pins or certificates available from Rotary's **licensed vendors**. And don't forget to share photos and stories on social media.

## Connect With Rotary

Let Rotary know that your club is active by reporting its club and membership information. Rotaract club presidents are required to update this information in Rotary's records by 30 June each year through the **Club Administration** page on My Rotary. Club advisers may also **report their name and contact information** each year.

By keeping Rotary updated about your club, you'll be sure to receive the latest news about Rotaract and the Rotaract Preconvention and have access to Rotary's online tools and resources.

Clubs that do not report their club and membership information each year will be terminated.



# 2

## SPONSORS AND ADVISERS

Sponsor Clubs

Rotaract Advisers

How Sponsors and Advisers Can Support Rotaract Clubs

Clubs that are sponsored by a Rotary or Rotaract club enjoy dynamic partnerships through service projects and lifelong friendships. To build a successful sponsor relationship, it's important to outline expectations and responsibilities for Rotaractors, sponsor clubs, and advisers.

### Sponsor Clubs

The partnership between Rotaract clubs and their sponsor clubs can help each one of them grow and thrive. Hold joint planning meetings, assign sponsor club members as mentors, and find an enthusiastic adviser who can effectively connect Rotary and Rotaract. Sponsor clubs are also encouraged to budget to help Rotaract club leaders attend all necessary district training meetings.

### Rotaract Advisers

Rotaract advisers serve as mentors and club contacts for Rotaract clubs. They support the day-to-day operations of Rotaract clubs, function as the primary liaison to sponsor clubs, and connect Rotaractors with service and leadership opportunities and Rotary resources.

Advisers can be Rotarians or Rotaractors from sponsor clubs, school administrators or faculty, or community volunteers. Although only one adviser can be reported to Rotary International for each Rotaract club, Rotaractors benefit from having several advisers who can help mentor and support their club.

University-based Rotaract clubs should work with a faculty adviser who ensures that clubs carry out activities with the university's full cooperation.

### How Sponsors and Advisers Can Support Rotaract Clubs

Although Rotaract activities vary depending on local custom, the support that sponsor clubs and advisers offer is universal. Here are some ways you can help your Rotaract club succeed:

### FACILITATE (FOR ADVISERS)

- Attend meetings, including Rotaract board meetings, and act as a liaison between sponsor clubs and Rotaractors.
- Provide guidance during officer elections.
- Help maintain accurate club records and manage club funds.
- Ensure that the club president provides updated club and member information to Rotary every year.
- Help coordinate the Rotaract club calendar of events with sponsor club or university schedules.

### MENTOR AND MOTIVATE

- Create mentorship and professional development opportunities that match sponsor club members with Rotaractors based on interests, career path, or expertise.
- Offer advice and expertise during project planning and implementation.
- Give Rotaract members meaningful roles in Rotary club meetings and events so they'll want to stay involved in Rotary for years to come.
- Encourage them to build strong, flexible, and innovative clubs that support Rotary's **Action Plan**.

### LEARN TOGETHER

- Invite Rotaractors to your district conferences and attend district Rotaract training events.
- For sponsor Rotary clubs, pay for and strongly encourage Rotaract club officers, directors, and committee chairs to attend training events to share ideas and network with Rotaract and Rotary leaders.
- Talk with Rotaract leaders to learn what strategies they use to promote Rotaract, train emerging leaders, and help clubs grow.
- Attend the annual **Rotaract Preconvention** to exchange ideas, learn from engaging speakers, and enhance the connection between Rotaract and Rotary internationally.

### PARTNER TO SERVE

- Volunteer at Rotaract club service projects and invite Rotaractors to join your club's projects and fundraisers.
- Develop joint service projects that build on each club's strengths and give Rotaractors the chance to take the lead.
- For sponsor Rotary clubs, involve Rotaract clubs in your global grant projects to give them experience working on large, international projects.
- Help Rotaract clubs develop sustainable service activities that align with Rotary's **areas of focus**.
- Guide members in developing strategies to meet their financial, logistical, and equipment needs for projects and activities.

#### GOOD TO KNOW

Clubs can partner with other clubs in their district to co-sponsor a Rotaract club. Up to three clubs can sponsor a Rotaract club. When clubs co-sponsor, they share the responsibilities of supporting and mentoring Rotaractors.

## PROMOTE ROTARACT

- Recognize Rotaractors' accomplishments at sponsor club meetings and events.
- Encourage clubs to earn the **Rotary Citation for Rotaract Clubs** and to nominate their service projects to receive a **Rotaract Outstanding Project Award**.
- Commemorate World Rotaract Week each March with a joint project or activity.
- Share how Rotaract makes a difference in your community during Youth Service Month in May.
- Promote Rotaract in the community and help clubs develop promotional materials using the customizable templates available in the **Brand Center**.

## STRENGTHEN ROTARY CONNECTIONS

- Encourage Rotaractors to serve as mentors for Interactors or volunteers at RYLA events.
- Design a New Generations Service Exchange that gives Rotaractors the chance to combine their professional goals with a humanitarian project in another country.
- Encourage Rotaractors to apply for a scholarship or Rotary Peace Fellowship.

### GOOD TO KNOW

Rotaract clubs are required to update club and membership information in Rotary's records by 30 June each year. (This includes reporting the incoming president.) Only current year Rotaract club presidents, advisers, and sponsor club officers who have been reported to Rotary International can view and update this information through their My Rotary accounts within the **Club Administration** page on My Rotary.

# 3

## BUILDING A SUCCESSFUL CLUB

Constitution and Bylaws

Leadership Roles and Responsibilities

Club Meetings

Member Engagement and Retention

A strong foundation will help your club grow and thrive. Transparent constitutional documents, clear leadership roles, organized club meetings, and a robust member engagement strategy will ensure your club's success for years to come.

### Constitution and Bylaws

All Rotaract clubs must have a club constitution and bylaws. These documents provide structure and help clubs govern themselves according to Rotary International's policies and procedures. All Rotaract clubs automatically adopt the **Standard Rotaract Club Constitution**, and changes can be made only by Rotary International's Board of Directors. Club bylaws supplement the Standard Rotaract Club Constitution and set common club practices. You are welcome to adapt the **Recommended Rotaract Club Bylaws**, or create your own, as long as they do not conflict with the Standard Rotaract Club Constitution and the **Rotary Code of Policies**.

### Leadership Roles and Responsibilities

A team of strong leaders can help your Rotaract club find and retain members, raise funds, and carry out successful projects. The club's board of directors should be familiar with the Rotaract constitutional documents. In addition, incoming Rotaract club officers must participate in leadership training offered by the district.

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The board of directors serves as the governing body of a Rotaract club and includes the president, immediate past president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and any additional officers your club decides are needed. Officers' duties and additional roles should be defined in your club bylaws. Advisers should regularly attend board meetings to provide guidance. Sponsor club members may also attend these meetings as observers. The board should meet regularly and report any action taken at the next club meeting.

During its meetings, the board reviews and approves the club's plans and service projects, ensures the club's financial solvency, and delegates

responsibilities. At the end of the Rotary year, the board prepares a final report that describes the major actions taken over the preceding 12 months. A copy of the report should be sent to sponsor clubs, if applicable.

The district Rotaract committee is required to offer training for all incoming Rotaract officers, directors, and committee chairs. We encourage sponsor clubs to budget to help leaders attend all necessary training meetings. The training can vary by district. Sometimes Rotaract leaders participate alongside Rotarians at district Rotary officer training events, or the district committee organizes a separate training event just for Rotaract leaders. Find information about training events and conferences in the Meetings and International Events chapter.

## PRESIDENT

The president's primary role is to lead the club and preside at all meetings of the club and board of directors. The president also motivates, inspires, and coaches club committees to ensure that the club's professional and leadership development activities and service projects are successful.

### Suggested responsibilities:

- Conduct club meetings with detailed agendas that allow enough time for reports from officers and committee members.
- Chair meetings of the board of directors.
- Appoint all standing and special committees, with board approval, and serve as an ex officio member of all committees.
- Appoint committee chairs based on individuals' experience, and seek their opinions about committee members.
- Delegate responsibilities to help members develop their skills for future club leadership roles.
- Encourage club members to get involved in projects that build on their skills and interests.
- Ensure that club activities and service projects are successfully promoted and executed.
- Support a membership strategy that encourages diversity.
- Communicate and collaborate with the adviser, sponsor club members, and district Rotaract officers. In university-based clubs, the president should also consult with the club's faculty adviser.
- Resolve conflict among club members and ensure your club culture and environment encourages diversity, equity, and inclusion, and is free from any form of harassment.
- Update club and membership data every year by 30 June through the **Club Administration** page on My Rotary.

## UPDATE CLUB AND MEMBER INFORMATION

To keep their charter active, Rotaract clubs are required to update club and membership information in Rotary's records by 30 June each year through the **Club Administration** page on My Rotary. (This includes reporting the incoming president.) These updates also ensure that your club stays connected to Rotaract news, Rotaract Preconvention activities, and other resources.

Clubs that fail to report their club and member data each year will be terminated and will no longer be eligible to attend the Rotaract Preconvention or Rotary International Convention, or receive Rotary International resources and support.

## VICE PRESIDENT

The vice president's primary role is to support the president. Some clubs may choose to have the incoming president serve as vice president.

### Suggested responsibilities:

- Preside over meetings in the president's absence.
- Serve on the board of directors and as an ex officio member of all committees.
- Handle special assignments as directed by the president.
- Stay current on club goals and activities.
- Succeed to the office of president if a vacancy occurs.

## SECRETARY

The secretary's primary responsibility is to help the club function efficiently. The secretary should be well organized and have good communication skills.

### Suggested responsibilities:

- Maintain all club records, including membership, committee appointments, attendance, dues payments, and important club documents such as the club's certificate of organization, budgets, and reports.
- Notify the district leaders of members who are interested in joining a Rotary club, either as a current Rotaractor or after leaving Rotaract.
- Provide club and member information to the president for required annual updates to Rotary.
- Take minutes — a clear, concise written record of meeting discussion and actions — at all club meetings.

## TREASURER

The treasurer oversees all funds and maintains accurate financial records, ensures transparency in financial operations, and responds to inquiries from club members and sponsor clubs, if applicable. The treasurer should be a responsible, detail-oriented person.

### Suggested responsibilities:

- Chair the finance committee.
- Collect membership dues.
- Manage all money collected from dues and all proceeds from fundraising projects.
- Pay all club bills and reimbursements for club expenses.
- Prepare and administer the budget.
- Prepare monthly reports that accurately detail the club's finances and expenses.

- Ensure that the club complies with all government financial reporting requirements.
- Prepare and distribute an end-of-year report to club members and the incoming treasurer. Treasurers' reports become part of the club's permanent record.

### IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

Your club's immediate past president can provide useful opinions and perspective in planning club activities, assisting with special projects, and supporting board and club members.

### CLUB COMMITTEES

Committees help your club carry out its activities and projects. The club president, with the approval of the board, appoints standing committees, such as club service, community service, international service, professional development, and finance, and additional committees as necessary. Your club's bylaws should clearly define the responsibilities for all committees.

Committees should meet regularly to discuss plans and activities. A committee may divide into subcommittees to accomplish all of its tasks. All committee activities and expenses are subject to the board's approval, so committees should share their plans with the club president.

#### GOOD TO KNOW

Rotaract clubs may amend the **Recommended Rotaract Club Bylaws** as long as the changes don't contradict the **Standard Rotaract Club Constitution** and the **Rotary Code of Policies**. Clubs with sponsors should receive approval of their bylaws from their sponsor clubs.

### Club Meetings

Rotaract clubs can decide where, when, and how to meet, including in-person, online, or a combination. Clubs that are sponsored should meet with their sponsor clubs at least once a year, but together they can decide how often to meet or when to attend each other's meetings.

Consider appointing a meeting chair to organize the program for each meeting or nominate a different member each time to serve as the meeting's organizer and facilitator. Involving your members in planning ensures that club meetings are interesting and relevant to everyone. Sponsor clubs can be a good source for program ideas.

Invite experts from the community or university, business leaders, or international guests to speak at your meetings. Consider taking a trip to local businesses, community organizations, or cultural sites. Use a meeting to update members about club projects or new Rotary initiatives.



## AGENDA

Following an agenda is the best way to ensure effective use of everyone's time. Your meeting agenda might include:

1. Time for socializing before the meeting
2. Introduction of guests and new club members
3. Announcements and reminders
4. Board member and committee reports
5. Program presentation
6. Closing
7. Adjournment

## Member Engagement and Retention

### FINDING MEMBERS

A membership strategy or plan can help your club set reasonable goals for finding and keeping club members. You can find ideas in **Strengthening Your Membership: Creating Your Membership Plan**.

The top two reasons people join Rotaract are to meet new people and to get involved in their communities. Many of your peers are likely seeking the same things. Invite them to help with a service project, attend a networking night, or participate in a club gathering so they can experience Rotaract for themselves. Consider these potential individuals for membership:

- Friends
- Relatives
- Classmates or colleagues
- Interactors, Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) participants, and Rotary Youth Exchange students

Here are just a few ways you can promote your club and its service projects:

- Develop a club website or blog where prospective members can learn about club projects and how they can get involved. In university-based clubs, ask for a link to your club's site on the university website.
- Use social media to share your club's meeting, event, and project updates.
- Arrange to display photos or show videos of your club's activities at community events. Give potential members promotional cards and brochures so they can contact you.
- Market your club as a professional development and leadership organization where members can accomplish their goals and develop new skills.
- Publicize your club's activities in the university newspaper or other local media.

### GOOD TO KNOW

Rotary's **Brand Center** has colorful, customizable promotional materials to help you promote your club. Create your own double-sided promotional cards, posters, and club logo, or download banner templates and more.

- Arrange for Rotaract displays at local libraries, coffee shops, community centers, and other places where young adults gather. Make it easy to find your club.

## ENERGIZING NEW MEMBERS

Understand your members' motivations for joining Rotaract. Do they want to make the world a better place, develop their leadership skills, expand their circle of friends? Connect members with activities and opportunities that help them achieve their personal goals while making the club stronger.

Some other ideas:

- Welcome and celebrate new members with a special meeting or event.
- Develop an orientation program that engages new members and acclimates them to your club and the Rotary family.
- Ask experienced Rotaractors to mentor new members and make them feel welcome.
- Follow up with new members who miss a meeting.
- Encourage new members to invite their friends and family members to participate in club activities and service projects.

## ENGAGING CURRENT MEMBERS

Retaining club members is just as important as recruiting new ones.

Work hard to deliver an experience that will keep members excited about Rotaract. Successful strategies include:

- Recognizing members for their achievements
- Involving members in club projects and activities
- Encouraging Rotaractors to get involved with Interact, Rotary Youth Exchange, Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA), and other Rotary opportunities in your area
- Advocating for members to take leadership roles
- Sending monthly email updates
- Regularly asking for members' opinions about club meetings, activities, and programs

### SPONSOR CLUB ADVICE

Sponsor clubs know the importance of strong membership, and they've likely encountered many of the same challenges your club faces. Ask for advice and resources on recruiting and retaining members. Rotary provides membership development strategies and resources that your Rotaract club can use too.

# 4

## INNOVATIVE AND SUSTAINABLE SERVICE

Rotaract clubs should complete at least two service projects each year, one that meets your local community's needs and one that helps a global community. These projects are a great way for Rotaract clubs to get involved in their own community, connect with young adults globally, and attract new members.

### PLANNING SERVICE PROJECTS

Make a lasting impact by choosing service activities that work in collaboration with community members and the recipients of service. Conduct a community assessment to determine how your club's expertise and resources can best support local or global communities. **Community Assessment Tools** can help your Rotaract club work with the community to select a service project that is successful, sustainable, and relevant. To target service efforts, Rotary has identified **areas of focus** where we can contribute to lasting change: peacebuilding and conflict prevention; disease prevention and treatment; water, sanitation, and hygiene; maternal and child health; basic education and literacy; and community economic development.

Include these elements of a successful service project in your planning and implementation:

- Conduct a **community assessment**.
- Align a project with Rotary's **areas of focus**.
- Ask for help with project design, planning, and implementation. Sponsor clubs, Rotary Action Groups, or district leaders, like the district international service chair, can offer advice.
- Secure funding and set up a dedicated fund for your project.
- Make sure your project creates lasting change that the community can continue to support after your club's involvement ends. Learn the **six steps for a sustainable project**. Establish measurement and evaluation benchmarks. Include evaluation findings when developing future projects.
- Celebrate your success. Share your project photos and results on social media, with local media outlets, and on **Rotary Showcase**.
- Use Rotary's **discussion groups** to connect with other Rotaractors and Rotarians, find project partners, and exchange ideas.

## FUNDRAISING

Fundraising helps pay for club service projects and other activities. Examples of successful Rotaract fundraisers include dinners, festivals, raffles, sporting events, races, and benefit performances.

When organizing a fundraiser, consider these suggestions:

- Be creative. A unique event will attract the attention of potential club members, donors, and the media.
- Try to have an accurate idea of the financial support you need so you can set realistic fundraising goals.
- When asking for money from individuals, businesses, or organizations, make sure they understand how their donations will be used and recognize them for their contribution.
- Take advantage of your members' skills, talents, and contacts. Nominate a confident public speaker to emcee your next fundraiser, and ask your members to activate their networks to support your initiatives.
- Invite the local media to attend (see public relations tips in the next section).
- Ask your sponsor clubs or other Rotaract clubs for tips and best practices. Learn from their experience and success stories.
- Involve your sponsor clubs in implementing and funding your project as partners in service.

### ROTARACT OUTSTANDING PROJECT AWARDS

Each year, Rotary recognizes Rotaract projects for their exceptional community and international service work. Award recipients are invited to present their projects at the annual Rotaract Preconvention. Nominate a project by 1 February. Learn more on Rotary's [Awards page](#).

## PROMOTION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Your club and its projects will receive more support if the community knows about them. Having a good image in the community can also help your club recruit members and contribute to a positive impression of Rotaract and Rotary.

Make sure your good works receive the attention they deserve by:

- Taking high-quality photos and video at club events, projects, and fundraisers
- Publicizing club activities on social media channels
- Creating unique and colorful promotional materials and banners, like the ones in Rotary's **Brand Center** or from Rotary's **licensed vendors**
- Briefing club members on important talking points about upcoming or recently completed projects so they can act as promotional ambassadors at school, work, and in the community
- Creating a promotion plan for all upcoming projects so your team can get started early

### WORKING WITH LOCAL MEDIA

Appoint a member to be your public relations contact who can get to know the local media — and tell them how your club is creating real, lasting change. Provide reporters with background materials on your project and club, such as fact sheets or promotional cards, and invite them to cover your events live. Don't forget to send photos and videos after your event, along with a short, clear description so they can promote your activities.

Find more ideas and resources, including sample press releases and tips for working with the media, in Rotary's **Brand Center**.

# 5

## DISTRICT, MULTIDISTRICT, AND INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

District Roles

District Committees

Rotaract Multidistrict  
Information Organizations

Rotary International Roles

Sponsor clubs can play an important role in guiding and mentoring new Rotaract clubs, but Rotary districts also support Rotaract. A Rotary district is a group of Rotary clubs in a specific area or region. Rotary has more than 530 districts worldwide.

Rotary supports several district-level roles, committees, and training events to promote and strengthen Rotaract. In addition, districts are strongly encouraged to invite and develop a budget for Rotaractors to attend district events, service projects, and training sessions.

### District Roles

Through these roles, each district has the opportunity to support Rotaract.

#### DISTRICT GOVERNOR

The district governor supports all clubs, programs, and activities in the district. The governor approves new Rotaract clubs, as well as appoints the district Rotaract chair. The district governor, in consultation with the district Rotaract committee, resolves any district Rotaract representative election disputes.

District governors are required to pay for district Rotaract representatives to attend a district, multidistrict, or international leadership training meeting.

District governors are also encouraged, but not required, to defray all or part of the costs for district Rotaract representatives-elect to attend the Rotaract Preconvention.

#### DISTRICT ROTARACT CHAIR

The district Rotaract chair is a Rotarian who administers Rotaract within the district and ensures that all clubs report club and membership information to Rotary International every year. The Rotaract chair finds innovative ways to connect Rotaract clubs with one another and to strengthen the link between Rotaract and Rotary.

### DISTRICT ROLES

Rotaractors may serve as chairs of all district committees except the district Rotaract committee. The district Rotaract chair is a Rotarian appointed by the district governor.

### DISTRICT ROTARACT REPRESENTATIVE

Are you a district Rotaract chair or representative? Ask your district governor to confirm that you've been reported to Rotary so that you'll receive emails about Rotaract news and opportunities.

### DISTRICT ROTARACT COMMITTEE

Find out more about the roles and responsibilities of the district Rotaract committee in the Get Ready: District Rotaract Committee course in the **Learning Center**.

### DISTRICT ROTARACT REPRESENTATIVE

The district Rotaract representative is a Rotaractor elected by the Rotaract clubs in the district. To be eligible, a Rotaractor must complete one year as a Rotaract club president or member of the district Rotaract committee. The district may include other eligibility criteria in its bylaws, including an age limit. If a district has only one Rotaract club, the representative is the most recent and available past Rotaract club president, or current president if the club is recently organized. The representative co-chairs the district Rotaract committee and is the liaison between the Rotaract clubs and the district.

### DISTRICT ALUMNI CHAIR

The district alumni chair eases the transition from Rotaractor to Rotarian and connects alumni with other Rotary opportunities, including scholarships and exchanges.

## District Committees

District governors are encouraged to appoint a district Rotaract committee to promote and strengthen Rotaract. Rotaractors may serve on this and other district committees, such as finance, membership, public image, training, alumni, community service, international service, convention promotion, Interact, Rotary Youth Leadership Awards, and Rotary Youth Exchange.

### DISTRICT ROTARACT COMMITTEE

Members include an equal number of Rotarians and Rotaractors; the district Rotaract chair and district Rotaract representative serve as co-chairs. This committee promotes Rotaract, encourages new clubs to form, and provides local support for clubs. The co-chairs of this committee also plan and organize a one- to two-day leadership training seminar for all incoming Rotaract club officers, directors, and committee chairs. If anyone on the committee is a dual member (Rotarian/Rotaractor), the district will decide which role that person will represent.

### DISTRICT YOUTH SERVICE COMMITTEE

This committee supports young leaders' transition through Rotary's programs (for example, from Interact to RYLA to Rotaract) and offers them progressively greater leadership opportunities as they develop their skills. It also strengthens connections between the programs and encourages participants to take part in alumni activities.



## Rotaract Multidistrict Information Organizations

Several districts can work together to form a multidistrict information organization (MDIO). MDIOs spread information about service projects and events and foster communication among districts. Each MDIO comprises two or more Rotary districts and may represent the Rotaract clubs in a region, a country, or several countries. Read more about forming a new MDIO, including a **sample constitution and bylaws**.

## Rotary International Roles

Rotaract policies are strengthened and improved by Rotary International's Board of Directors with advice from the RI Rotaract Committee and dedicated staff at Rotary International.

### RI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The RI Board of Directors sets policies for Rotary International, including those related to Rotaract. Rotary clubs elect the members of the Board every year at the Rotary International Convention, with each director serving for two years. Only the Board can amend the Standard Rotaract Club Constitution.

### RI ROTARACT COMMITTEE

This committee, appointed by the Rotary International president, advises the Board on Rotaract. It reviews policies for strengthening cooperation, promoting reciprocal mentoring between Rotarians and Rotaractors, and advancing Rotaract's goals of leadership, professional development, and service. Under the direction of the RI president, the committee plans and develops program content for the Rotaract Preconvention.

### SECRETARIAT

Rotary International's global staff of hundreds of professionals certifies new clubs, sends regular updates to club and district leaders, designs meaningful engagement opportunities like the Rotaract Outstanding Project Awards, promotes World Rotaract Week, and develops resources and materials for clubs worldwide. When clubs report their club and member information, they stay connected to all of the latest information and resources from Rotary. Contact **rotaract@rotary.org** or your region's **international office** if you have questions.

# 6

## MEETINGS AND INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

District and Multidistrict Events

International Events

When Rotaractors attend district and international events, they network with other Rotary and Rotaract members, develop their leadership and professional skills, and have fun. Work with your district leaders to bring Rotaractors and Rotarians together at training events and conferences, where they can exchange ideas with other service-minded leaders in your region.

### District and Multidistrict Events

#### ROTARACT CLUB OFFICER TRAINING

One of the district Rotaract committee's most important tasks is to provide training for Rotaract club officers, Rotaract club committee chairs, advisers, and faculty advisers. Schedule the training at least one month before the leaders take office so they have time to familiarize themselves with their new roles. We strongly encourage districts to conduct training of Rotaract leaders in conjunction with the presidents-elect training seminar (PETS) and Rotary club officer training. We also encourage sponsor clubs to develop a budget to help Rotaract club officers attend necessary training.

#### DISTRICT ROTARACT REPRESENTATIVE-ELECT TRAINING

To ensure continuity of leadership, the district Rotaract committee should take an active role in training the new district Rotaract representative. Rotary districts are required to pay for district Rotaract representatives to attend district, multidistrict, or international leadership training meetings. District governors are also encouraged, but not required, to pay for all or part of the costs for district Rotaract representatives-elect to attend the Rotaract Preconvention.

#### DISTRICT ROTARACT CONFERENCES

These annual events, which the district Rotaract representative organizes, give Rotaractors the chance to share project planning ideas, promote their service projects, strengthen international understanding, enhance professional development, and build friendships and networks in your area. Plan your Rotaract district conference in conjunction with the Rotary district conference and include at least one joint session to strengthen the connections between Rotaract and Rotary. Learn more about planning a

district Rotaract conference in the Get Ready: District Rotaract Committee course in the **Learning Center**.

At a district Rotaract conference, Rotaract clubs may vote to undertake a districtwide service project and form a voluntary district Rotaract service fund to raise money for this project. A three-fourths majority of the Rotaract clubs in the district is required and the district governor has final approval of the project and fundraising plans.

### MULTIDISTRICT MEETINGS

Joining together across districts gives Rotaractors an even greater opportunity to learn from one another, work cooperatively on projects, and see the global community of Rotaract in action. The host governor and the host district Rotaract committee are responsible for providing guidance and oversight and maintaining liability insurance.

## International Events

Connect with Rotary on a global scale. Network with leaders, learn from speakers, and travel while making friends from around the world. Rotary's international events are for everyone in the Rotary family. Join us to learn, share, be inspired, and have fun.

### ROTARACT PRECONVENTION

Strengthen your Rotaract club, learn about outstanding Rotaract service projects, and build lasting friendships at our annual Rotaract Preconvention. Join Rotaract leaders from around the world to share ideas in workshops, learn how to enhance your leadership and service, and make lifelong friendships as you explore an exciting new destination each year. Special sessions are offered for district Rotaract representatives-elect.

The event is open to all Rotaractors and Rotarians interested in Rotaract. Plan now to attend the next **Rotaract Preconvention**.

### ROTARY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

The annual Rotary International Convention draws Rotary members from around the world to discover new ideas, exchange best practices, and build stronger clubs. Rotaractors are invited to stay after the preconvention to see the full scope of Rotary's international service through forums, workshops, project exhibitions, and general sessions. Register for the **next convention**.

## INTEROTA

Interota is a worldwide Rotaract meeting that Rotaractors organize and host every three years in a different city. While it is not an official RI meeting, Rotary recognizes the value of this event and supports Interota by approving its program content and ensuring that RI leadership is represented at the event. The meeting offers workshops, discussions, and interesting speakers as well as cultural activities. Delegates also present proposals for the location of the next Interota, and participants vote to select the next meeting site. Find out more about Interota on the **Rotaract page** on Rotary.org.

Before making a bid to host an Interota meeting, Rotaractors must obtain approval from the host district governors. After a site is selected, Rotary International will request that the host district Rotaract representative submit a complete proposal at least one year before the event date.

## WORLD ROTARACT WEEK

During World Rotaract Week, Rotaractors and Rotarians around the world commemorate the chartering of the first Rotaract club. The celebration, which takes place during the week that includes 13 March (from Monday through Sunday), is an ideal time for Rotaract clubs and their sponsors to carry out joint activities and promote Rotaract clubs' contributions to their communities. Rotaractors can decide the best way for their club to celebrate — completing one, two, or an entire week's worth of activities.

After clubs have completed their World Rotaract Week events, sponsor clubs or district Rotaract chairs can present them with a certificate of recognition, available on Rotary's **Awards page**.



# ROTARACT'S GLOBAL COMMUNITY

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One of the best things about Rotaract is that it connects young leaders with Rotary's worldwide family, giving them the chance to expand their professional networks and foster international understanding.

Here are some ways for Rotaractors to connect with other clubs, both locally and globally:

- Start with your district. Rotarians can download a list of Rotaract clubs in your district from Rotary Club Central. District Rotaract representatives can download the list from the **District Administration page** on My Rotary. Reach out to neighboring clubs to plan a district service project or invite the members to district leadership training.
- Create a profile on **My Rotary** to connect with other Rotary and Rotaract members. Find an international service project partner, start a twin club relationship, or plan a visit to another club by using the **Club Finder** tool. Exchange ideas in discussion groups for Rotaractors, and explore the good work that Rotaractors and Rotarians are carrying out locally and globally.
- Discover the world of Rotaract through social media. Follow Rotaract on **Facebook** and **Twitter**, and Rotary International on **Instagram** and **Snapchat** @Rotary, to learn what's on the minds of Rotaractors worldwide and see how they take action to improve their communities. Reach out to other Rotaract clubs and districts to develop friendships, exchange project ideas, and share photos on social media.
- Search the web for other clubs and districts worldwide, and connect directly with them through their websites.

# 8

## BEYOND ROTARACT

Rotaract is just one of the ways that Rotary invests in young leaders. Explore some of the other opportunities we offer, and learn how you can take action to create lasting change through Rotary.

ROTARY FELLOWSHIPS bring people together who share a common recreational interest or hobby — you'll find everything from cycling and marathon running to social networking and the environment. **Learn more.**

ROTARY ACTION GROUPS are organized by Rotarians and Rotaractors who are experts in a particular field, such as water and sanitation or HIV/AIDS. You can share your expertise and make a difference in projects beyond your club or district. **Learn more.**

INTERACT is a service club for young people ages 12 to 18 who want to connect with other young people and have fun while serving their communities and learning about the world. Include nearby Interact clubs in your service projects and events or mentor Interactors and help them prepare for university. Rotaract clubs can co-sponsor Interact clubs with one or more Rotary clubs. **Learn more.**

ROTARY YOUTH LEADERSHIP AWARDS, better known as RYLA, is a leadership experience developed by clubs and districts for young people ages 14 to 30. Each RYLA has a particular focus — building confidence, developing skills, providing professional development, or encouraging personal growth — and all of them give young people an opportunity to develop leadership skills and make new friends. Rotaractors can attend, lead, or even organize RYLA events. **Learn more.**

ROTARY YOUTH EXCHANGE activates the global community of Rotary — districts, clubs, host families, and schools — to give students ages 15 to 19 the chance to discover a new culture, learn a different language, and become ambassadors for peace in countries around the world. Encourage young people in your community to participate in this Rotary program and provide peer mentorship to students on exchange. **Learn more.**

NEW GENERATIONS SERVICE EXCHANGE offers a customized and intensive international experience with a humanitarian or vocational focus for participants ages 18 to 30. Rotaractors can design their own New Generation Service Exchange, use their networks to expand exchange programs, and invite visiting participants to join their service projects. **Learn more.**

ROTARY CLUB MEMBERSHIP is the perfect way for Rotaractors to continue their involvement in Rotary and put their leadership skills into action through service. Rotaractors can join Rotary clubs while remaining members of their Rotaract clubs. To appeal to young professionals, Rotary clubs may want to create flexible membership types and unique club experiences, such as relaxed attendance requirements or reduced fees.

ROTARY SCHOLARSHIPS fund secondary, undergraduate, and graduate study. The Rotary Foundation offers Rotary Peace Fellowships (see below) and global grant scholarships that fund graduate study abroad in one of Rotary's areas of focus. **Learn more.**

ROTARY PEACE FELLOWSHIPS provide fully funded training in peace and conflict resolution at premier universities around the world. Each year, The Rotary Foundation awards up to 50 fellowships for master's degrees and 80 for certificate studies at one of seven Rotary Peace Centers. We encourage Rotaractors, alumni, and professionals committed to careers that develop peace and international understanding to apply. **Learn more.**



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## SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

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As you plan activities and events, it's important to make sure you're taking the necessary steps to ensure the safety of all participants and upholding Rotary's commitment to high ethical standards and code of conduct. All volunteers should understand their responsibilities and role in creating a positive, inclusive experience for each other and the community.

### LIABILITY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Rotary clubs and Rotary district conferences that invite Rotaractors or Rotaract clubs to participate in their activities and events should have sufficient trip, accident, and liability insurance to protect the Rotary club or district conference against any possible legal or moral obligation and liability.

Risk management involves identifying situations and factors that may harm people and property, and finding solutions to minimize or avoid risk. Before any Rotaract club activity, evaluate potential risks and develop coordinated plans to address them. University-based clubs should coordinate any risk management plan with their university administration. Rotaract clubs and their sponsors (if applicable) should assess Rotaract-related liability issues and obtain appropriate insurance. Rotaract clubs that do not have a club sponsor may be required to obtain liability insurance on their own or from their district. It's advisable to seek the advice of legal and insurance counsel about liability protection.

Rotary's liability insurance program only covers Rotaract clubs that are based in the United States. Send insurance-related inquiries to **[insurance@rotary.org](mailto:insurance@rotary.org)**.

## CONDUCT FOR ROTARY EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Rotary is committed to maintaining an environment that promotes safety, courtesy, dignity, and respect. All members and individuals attending or participating in Rotary or Rotaract events or activities have the right to an environment free of harassment, including unwelcome physical contact, advances, or comments. Rotarians, Rotaractors, and their guests will demonstrate good character, integrity, and leadership by fostering a professional environment at club events and activities. Allegations of unwelcome physical contact, advances, or comments at Rotary or Rotaract events or activities shall be reviewed by the club board and responded to within a reasonable time. If the offending individual is a member of the club board, he or she is expected to recuse himself or herself from the discussion. Any allegation of criminal behavior should be referred to local law enforcement. Failure to adequately address allegations of inappropriate behavior may be referred to the district governor. To learn more, take the Preventing and Addressing Harassment course in the **Learning Center**.

### STATEMENT OF CONDUCT FOR WORKING WITH YOUTH

Rotary International strives to create and maintain a safe environment for all youth who participate in Rotary activities. To the best of their ability, Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses and partners, and other volunteers must safeguard the children and young people they come into contact with and protect them from physical, sexual, and psychological abuse.

If you have questions about this policy, contact **youthprotection@rotary.org**. To learn more, take the Protecting Youth Program Participants course in the **Learning Center**.

# 10

## ROTARY RESOURCES

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Online Tools

Events and Awards

Communications and  
Publications

### Online Tools

**Brand Center** — Customize and download your Rotaract club logo, promotional materials, and more.

**Rotary Showcase** — Be inspired by completed service projects, and post yours for everyone to see.

**Discussion groups** — Share your experiences and ideas with members around the world.

**Learning Center** — Prepare for your leadership roles with our interactive courses.

**Rotaract Facebook page**

**Rotaract Twitter**

**Rotary International Instagram**

**Rotary Snapchat**

### Events and Awards

**World Rotaract Week** — Celebrate Rotaract's global impact during the week that includes 13 March, Rotaract's anniversary, from Monday to Sunday.

**Rotaract Outstanding Project Awards** — Recognize Rotaract clubs that are making a positive difference through their exceptional community or international service projects.

**Rotary Citation for Rotaract Clubs** — Recognize Rotaract clubs that are achieving goals aligned with Rotary's Action Plan and making a positive difference.

## Communications and Publications

**Young Leaders in Action** — Monthly newsletter covering Rotary's programs for young leaders, including Rotaract

**Rotaract Club Certification Form**

**Standard Rotaract Club Constitution**

**Recommended Rotaract Club Bylaws**

**Rotary's Areas of Focus** — Introduction to the areas of focus, with examples of service projects for each

**Community Assessment Tools** — Guide for identifying effective service projects within the community

**Rotary Code of Policies** (policies related to Rotaract can be found in chapter 2, article 12) — Decisions approved by the RI Board of Directors in support of the RI Constitution and Bylaws

Visit **Rotary.org** for more resources to support Rotaract clubs. Questions? Email **rotaract@rotary.org** or your region's **international office**.

### GOOD TO KNOW

This is the 2020 edition of the Rotaract Handbook. The information contained in it is based on the Constitution and Bylaws of Rotary International and the Rotary Code of Policies. Please refer to those documents for exact Rotary policy. Changes to the documents listed above by the Rotary International Board of Directors override policy as stated in this guide.

Send questions or comments to **rotaract@rotary.org**.



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