

Frequently Asked Questions by Rotary Clubs

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1. What is the club's role in the RI D6600 HS Scholarship (long-term) program?

Rotary clubs that participate in the RI D6600 HS Scholarship (long-term) Youth Exchange program are able to offer the prestigious RI D6600 HS Scholarship to local high school students in their communities at minimal cost to the sponsoring Rotary club. These clubs are demonstrating their commitment to both International and Youth Services in one of the best, most direct, most meaningful, and most fun ways possible. Clubs will promote the availability of the RI D6600 HS Scholarship and sponsor local (Outbound) students to spend a year of their high school overseas in a remarkable, life-changing experience. The club will also host one or more foreign (Inbound) students for a year in your community.

Under the leadership of a club Youth Exchange Officer, Rotarians use local media community announcements, visit high schools and/or local community organizations to create awareness about the RI D6600 HS Scholarship to local schools, teenagers and parents. They meet with interested students and their parents and interview the students to determine their suitability for the program. Clubs are urged to invite their RI D6600 HS Scholarship candidates to one or more Rotary meetings before the student leaves to help them learn more about Rotary and your club. The RI D6600 HS Scholars should be given a few club banners to exchange overseas.

For the Inbound students, the club is responsible for finding host families and arranging for schooling, in addition to providing the student with a monthly allowance (see below). For the Outbound students, it is requested but not required that 3 host family recommendations be provided and those host family applicants complete the Host Family Applications. Ideally, there should be three or four different host families through the year, so the student gets to enjoy a variety of experiences, several families get to enjoy the student, and no one family is overburdened. The club must get approval from a local high school for the student's enrollment there, and that information, along with the identity of the first host family, must be submitted to the District Youth Exchange Committee at least three months before the student's arrival.

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The host club must also designate one of its members to serve as the Inbound student's Counselor, to meet with the student on a regular basis, keep on top of the student's progress through the year, help resolve problems, and provide a direct link to the Rotary club. The Counselor can be the Youth Exchange Officer or a different member, but the Counselor cannot be the current host parent.

Host clubs should try to bring their Inbounds to at least one Rotary meeting each month, so as many members as possible can meet the student. It's also a great idea to involve the student in club activities, whether they are community service efforts, social events, or whatever. These events allow the student to meet more Rotarians, and vice versa, opening wonderful opportunities for future times together and greater international understanding.

2. What is the club's role in the Short-Term program?

Rotary's Short-Term exchange program offers teenagers a unique opportunity to spend part of a vacation with a family in another country, and then share an equal time here with a foreign teenage guest. The program is a family-to-family exchange, usually during the summer months when school is not in session.

Clubs wishing to offer this program in their communities need only to find students and families who wish to participate. The club then interviews the students and parents, and, if they are acceptable candidates, forwards their applications on to the District YE Committee. As with the RI D6600 HS Scholars, it's a nice idea to invite the Short-Term Outbound student and parents to a Rotary meeting, to get to know the members and gain an understanding about the club and the organization.

Some clubs schedule a special activity for both students during the Inbound part of the exchange – a cookout or other outing, or perhaps just an evening at a club member's home. Inviting both students to a Rotary meeting is, of course, always a nice idea.

3. What will it cost the club to sponsor an RI D6600 HS Scholar (long-term Outbound) student?

There is no direct cost. However, the sponsoring club is required to host an Inbound student during the academic year the RI D6600 HS Scholar is overseas. See below for cost and info.

4. What will it cost the club to host an Inbound student?

For Long-term Inbound Students, hosting clubs should budget between \$2,500 and \$3,000 total for the year they are hosting the Inbound student. This amount would cover the Rotary Club's monthly allowance to the long-term Inbound exchange students (normally \$100 but not less than \$55 p/m). This amount is specified on the Guarantee Form (part of the student's application). This money is paid directly to the students to help offset the cost of school lunches and other regular expenses, and it is a valid use of charitable Rotary funds.

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Additionally, that budget amount would also include a birthday, Christmas/holiday, and goodbye gift. It's also common to give some sort of memento (i.e. framed picture of the student) to the host families.

The cost of providing a Rotary meal to an exchange student who visits the club regularly may also be considered an expense of the program.

For Short-term Inbound Students, there is no cost to the club other than potential social engagements (e.g. exchange banners, lunch at club meeting).

5. How do we promote the RI D6600 HS Scholarship and Short-Term programs?

If you think that most teenagers could not be exchange students and could not handle the challenges of a new language, people, and culture, well, you're absolutely correct! But there are exceptional students in every town who would be perfect for this program, and would jump at the chance to take part, if only they knew about it. So you need to reach those kids!

The first proven way to promote the program is to contact a school counselor at each high school in your area. Explain that your club is offering the RI D6600 HS Scholarship currently valued at \$35,000 and also an affordable family-to-family summer exchange program. Ask the counselor to invite the students to an information meeting at the school. The school needs to announce the meeting a few days in advance on their announcement system, and the students should sign up in advance for the meeting. It's good to schedule it shortly after classes are over during any school day. You may ask the District RYE committee for help with the meeting if you like. The district also has posters available for you to distribute.

The second proven way of finding prospective Outbound students is to ask your local paper to make a public service announcement. Here is a generic press release you may choose to use:

_____ *Rotary Club Announces International High School Scholarship*

The _____ Rotary Club is proud to announce that it is offering a scholarship for international high school studies (RI D6600 HS). Annually, 9,000 students between the ages of 15 and 18.5 years old participate in this program worldwide. This is for the 20xx-20yy academic year.

In addition to the RI D6600 HS scholarship program, _____ Rotary Club is also offering a short term, family-to-family summer exchange program for high school students.

For more information, please contact [insert YEO's name/tel/email] or visit <http://rotarydistrict6600.org/rye/>

Posted Date: MM/DD/YYYY

Your District Youth Exchange Committee is more than willing to help. Contact your District YE Outbound Chair for assistance – you'll be surprised at how many students in your own

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community would love to apply for the RI D6600 HS Scholarship and/or the Short-Term program.

6. An RI D6600 HS Scholarship student candidate just called us. What do we do now?

A good first step is to refer them to this website (<http://rotarydistrict6600.org/rye/>), where they can find plenty of information – just like you’re doing right now. They will also have a chance to begin the application process so they can get the latest information. It’s important for the club Youth Exchange Officer to meet with the student and his/her family to get a handle on their qualifications and motivation, and to answer any questions they may have. If the YEO is new to the position, or would like some help, just contact the District YE Committee – they are happy to assist.

Once you’ve met the student and decided that your club will sponsor him/her, then work with the candidate to complete the application form and make sure it is forwarded on to the District YE Committee in advance of the annual deadline.

7. Our club got a call/e-mail from a Rotarian overseas, looking for a place for his child. What should we do about this?

Unfortunately, some of our Rotary colleagues overseas will take unfair advantage of their membership and try to open up an opportunity for their own children. As a matter of policy, any such requests should be immediately forwarded on to the District YE Committee. Rotary International regulations prohibit private exchanges, or even club-level exchanges. All YE arrangements must be made at the district or multi-district level.

Our exchanges are established based on years of experience with districts whose programs we know we can rely on, both for selection of Inbounds as well as the hosting of our Outbounds. It is almost always true that attempts to arrange private exchanges are a result of a student’s not meeting the criteria of the local district, or the parents’ trying to push the student into something they really don’t want. Without the proper selection and orientation process, the chances of a student’s exchange being successful are dramatically reduced. Therefore, it is never a good idea to endorse an independent request for an exchange because it puts the reputation of our entire program at risk.

8. Our local high school soccer coach wants us to help bring in a star player as an exchange student. How do we do that?

You probably already guessed the answer to this one. We don’t (and legally can’t). Rotary does not put its stamp on exchanges that are not the product of regular Rotary Youth Exchange procedures. A student in another country must apply through their local Rotary Club, be selected and endorsed by the local district, and be recommended by the district to us. This process not only serves Rotary’s exchange goals, but it is also REQUIRED by the US State Department of any J-1 Visa Sponsor organization. It is not the purpose of this program to help a soccer coach

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win a state championship. Our goals are much more important – to build international friendships, break down barriers and stereotypes, and create understanding that transcends political boundaries.

9. Can our children and grandchildren apply for the RI D6600 HS Scholarship and/or Short-Term exchange?

YES! YES! YES! The Rotary Youth Exchange program (both the Short-Term summer exchange and the RI D6600 HS year-long scholarship exchange) are open to children of Rotarians and non-Rotarians alike. Because this is not a program of the Rotary Foundation there is no restriction on who may participate, and all students may apply irrespective of parent or grandparent Rotary involvement. At the same time, though, be careful not to restrict participation to offspring of your fellow Rotarians. Both the Short-Term and the RI D6600 HS Scholarship programs offer wonderful opportunities to those very special teenagers who recognize its importance and are willing to take on its challenges. Keep in mind that parents of exchange students can also be potential new members of your club!

10. Do host families have to be Rotarians?

Absolutely not. Though some clubs prefer to have the first family be a Rotary family, perhaps to cement the relationship with the club, there is no requirement that all or any of the host families be Rotary members. In fact, host families, like families of Outbounds, often discover Rotary because of this program, and ultimately join Rotary Clubs.

The important thing to remember is that any reputable family in your community is eligible to host a Rotary exchange student. As part of the process, the local club's Youth Exchange Officer will interview each host family to confirm its suitability. Each family must complete the online Host Family Application Form and is required to undergo a criminal background check.

11. So how do we get started?

It's easy! Check out the District Webpage (<http://rotarydistrict6600.org/rye/>), and then contact one of the D6600 Rotary Youth Exchange Chairman at:

Mary Aufdenkampe, 216-570-9669, mary_aufdenkampe@hotmail.com

Gary Aufdenkampe, 216-570-9697, gkamp@mikebassford.com

Schedule one of the Youth Exchange committee members as a speaker for your club and start talking about hosting an Inbound student next year (those arrangements need to be made several months in advance, so it's never too early). Make plans to talk to your area high school students early in the fall, for the RI D6600 HS Scholarship the following year. Invite an Inbound student or former Outbound student to speak at your club to help inspire the membership. And get ready for one of the most rewarding, most wonderful programs that Rotary has to offer.