

Facts about Rotary Foundation Scholarships

The Rotary Foundation has a rich history of funding scholarships for undergraduate and graduate study in a wide range of academic fields. Under Future Vision, the Foundation will continue to support scholarships through district, global, and packaged grants, which differ in their requirements and suggested timelines.

District Grant Scholarships

District grants can be used to sponsor secondary school, undergraduate, or graduate students studying any subject, either locally or abroad. In addition, the scholarship may cover any length of time — from a six-week language training program to a year or more of university study. Districts may ask scholars to make presentations to local Rotary clubs and participate in Rotary service projects, but such involvement is not required by the Foundation.

The district is responsible for all administrative support for district grant scholars. No host counselor is provided for international district grant scholars. Districts may request assistance from Rotarians in the area where the scholar will be studying, but those clubs are under no obligation to act as hosts. It is recommended that districts appoint a scholarships subcommittee chair to manage the logistics of identifying and approving candidates, making payments, and coordinating with the district in which the scholar will be studying.

Global Grant Scholarships

Global grants support scholarships for graduate students studying abroad in one of the six areas of focus. Scholarships range from one to four years and therefore can include an entire degree program. Prospective scholars must show proof of admission to the chosen university before the grant will be approved.

The Foundation does not require global grant scholars to carry out ambassadorial duties, but the scholarship sponsor may encourage participation in club events or service projects.

Global grant scholarships are funded using cash and/or the District Designated Fund, matched by the World Fund. The global grant budget must total at least US\$30,000, but a scholarship may be a component of a larger grant application — for example, a scholarship plus a humanitarian project.

Packaged Grant Scholarships

The Rotary Foundation currently offers packaged grants for scholarships with two strategic partners. As additional partnerships are formed, more scholarships may become available.

The Rotary Foundation offers eight packaged grants annually for water and sanitation professionals to study at UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education in Delft, the Netherlands. Rotary clubs and districts interview applicants who have been admitted to the institute in one of three master's degree programs and recommend scholarship candidates.

Aga Khan University awards scholarships to students from Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda to study nursing and midwifery at its School of Nursing campuses in East Africa. Rotarians from District 9200 select the scholarship recipients and mentor them throughout the two-year program in the child and maternal health area of focus.

“Many of the same promotional strategies for Ambassadorial Scholarships can be used for global grant scholarship applicants. The scholarships cover most expenses and fund graduate-level study, which are true advantages for the student to gain education to really make a difference.”

—Robert Warner, past district governor and chair of District 6150's Rotary Foundation committee

Global Grant Scholarships

The timeline for global grant scholarships, as shown in the sample timeline for 2013-14 below, is significantly shorter than that for Ambassadorial Scholarships. (Note: The timeline will be modified for 2014-15 and beyond, when applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis throughout the year.)

October 2012:

Districts can begin the qualification process and then qualify their clubs.

October-December:

Sponsors select scholars who have been accepted or are likely to be accepted by their chosen university and communicate with host districts.

Beginning January 2013:

Sponsors apply online at www.rotary.org for a global grant. Applications should be submitted at least 90 days before travel is scheduled to begin to ensure that ticketing can be completed before the scholar's departure date.

April:

The Foundation begins approving grants. Following approval, scholars must complete online orientation on www.rotary.org or attend a regional orientation event.

Successful Global Grant Scholarships

Global grants have already funded many outstanding scholars to study at the graduate level in one or more of the areas of focus. The following examples show how Rotarians are using global grants to provide scholarships to students who will pursue careers that will make a lasting impact in fields related to the Foundation's six areas of focus.

A Rotary Scholar from Texas, USA, is pursuing a master's degree in health administration at the Latin American Center for Human Economy in Montevideo, Uruguay, with funding from a global grant. While studying, Julia Lukomnik is working for a women's health organization that helps Uruguay's transgendered population, which has a high rate of HIV/AIDS. She plans to continue working to improve health in Latin America after she receives her degree.

Global grant scholar Alex Dalley earned his master's degree in business administration at the Erasmus University Rotterdam School of Management in the Netherlands. He believes that impoverished communities in developing countries can sustain economic and social growth if small farmers are connected to global agricultural supply chains. Upon graduation, Dalley hopes to work with large global agricultural retailers to help build relationships with small farmers in developing countries.

Through her clinical fellowship at the Neonatal Care Unit of Queen Charlotte's and Chelsea Hospital associated with Imperial College London, global grant scholar Sara Lunardi gained new skills in treating extremely premature babies, thereby reducing infant mortality rates and improving their long-term health.

Scholar Megan Luczak received a global grant to pursue a Master's of Social Services and Public Services at the Universidad de Salamanca in Salamanca, Spain. The program focuses on analyzing social needs in an effort to develop more effective policies and social interventions in education, social services, and other areas. Luczak's goal is to work in the field of international education or education policy in organizations such as the U.S. Department of Education or State Department or the United Nations, developing innovative strategies for dealing with education challenges throughout the world.

Tips for Success

Appoint a district scholarships subcommittee chair to coordinate the many details involved in sponsoring a scholarship.

Reach out to universities to identify career-minded graduates interested in pursuing graduate studies in one of the areas of focus.

Consult the areas of focus policy statements to ensure that a prospective global grant scholar's academic plan fulfills the goals under the chosen area. For example, a student pursuing a master's degree in business administration would not automatically be eligible under the economic and community development area unless the program focused on developing economic solutions for struggling underserved communities.

Contact the host district as soon as possible, especially if the scholar will be studying in one of the more popular destinations, such as London, Cambridge, or Oxford in England, or Boston or Washington, D.C., in the United States. These districts limit the number of global grant scholars they host, and they are not obligated to host district grant scholars.

Involve alumni in your region as advisers to scholars.