

# From Pitch to Podium

How a Rotary Program goes from an idea to a club presentation

1. The Rotarian submits the program proposal to the Program Committee through the Rotary 21 website here: <https://rotaryspokane.com/SitePage/request-a-program> or by attending a Program Committee meeting, held the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of every month at noon.
  - a. If a Rotarian chooses to submit a program through the website, they may still be asked to attend a Program Committee meeting to share with the committee why they feel this would be a good program for Rotary. Having the program proposer in the meeting allows committee members to ask questions and get clarification (e.g. has the proposer heard the presenter speak, will the presenter make an 'ask', how may the presenter address contentious issues).
  - b. Unsolicited program ideas from non-Rotary 21 members will be discussed and voted on, however, they are unlikely to be successful without a program owner.
2. If the program is approved for Rotary by the Program Committee a program owner will then be identified. The program owner is typically the Rotarian who proposed the program. If the Rotarian who proposed the program is not a current member of the program committee, then a current member of the Program Committee will be assigned to help if needed.
  - a. If a program is approved but there is no Rotarian who feels strongly to volunteer as program owner, then the program may be removed from the approved list of programs.
  - b. Programs proposals that are not approved can be revisited once questions have been answered or when the proposer is able to attend a meeting to answer questions directly.
3. Once the program has been approved and a program owner has been identified then the program owner can invite the potential speaker to present to Rotary and confirm various details with them. When inviting a potential speaker to present remember to cultivate and be friendly with the Speaker:
  - a. Get acquainted—you may be their first impression of Club 21
  - b. Invite them to visit lunch in advance
  - c. Name Club 21 Members they may already know
  - d. Describe the membership and the goals of Rotary—help the speaker address this audience
4. If the speaker accepts the invitation to present a program, work with the Program Chairs to identify and schedule a date for their presentation. In many cases a date may have been discussed earlier in the process. This is completely acceptable since some speakers have very tight schedules. Please remember regarding scheduling:
  - a. Communicate with the Program Committee chair(s) to confirm what dates may be available and if they can possibly be held for programs that have not yet been approved.
  - b. If you choose to explore possible dates with a speaker before their program has been approved please be clear that it is tentative until it has been approved by the Program Committee and they may have more questions or feedback to guarantee the program's success.
  - c. Confirm the date and process with the speaker after the program is approved.
5. Prep the Program
  - a. Provide the [Program Committee Chairs](#) and the [Rotary office](#) at, a complete Program Info Sheet (**with speaker's picture**) for the presentation **3 weeks prior** to the presentation date so that it can be included in the newsletter and used for promotion.
  - b. Help the Speaker make a successful presentation
    - i. Be explicit about the time limit: 20 minutes to speak

- ii. Insist on at least 5 minutes Q & A—it's a required segment and may be more while on Zoom
  - iii. Include some personal information—don't be just "official"
  - iv. Review slide decks: simple, big type, images & illustrations are best
  - v. Be cautious about slides prepared for other audiences
  - vi. Videos are discouraged
  - vii. Explain Survey Monkey
  - viii. Emphasize descriptive information, not promotional
  - ix. No outright appeals for volunteerism nor donations
  - x. Say in advance, "Sorry, we don't distribute your literature."
- c. Communicate the technical details
- i. Audio/visual needs must be coordinated at least one (1) week in advance and should be tested before the Club's noontime start. Slide decks must be provided to the Rotary office by the Tuesday before at noon. If slides are unable to be emailed due to size, the speaker must arrive to the venue by 11:40 am to allow the Rotary office enough time to set up their presentation.
  - ii. Explain that all programs are streamed and recorded for use by Rotary Club 21 and its members only. Replays of meetings are not available for speakers to view afterwards unless the Program committee approves, in advance, to post the replay of the meeting/program publicly.
6. Present the Program
- a. Host the Speaker on arrival
    - i. Check the presenter into the 'cash' lunch table to get their name badge.
    - ii. The presenter's lunch is always purchased by the Program Committee.
    - iii. The program owner and presenter are always sat at the Head Table.
    - iv. Enjoy lunch, offer help & answer questions.
  - b. Program Introduction – at approximately 12:40 you will be called up to the podium to introduce the program. Program introductions should include a brief speaker biography and short personal connection that you may have (if you wish) and should last no more than 2 minutes.
7. After meeting follow up – thank the presenter and, if appropriate, share feedback from survey.

#### Additional Notes:

Once a program has been approved the program owner is responsible for that program date and speaker. The program owner has access to significant support and assistance but it is their responsibility to ask for it.

#### Ask for help from Program Committee leaders

1. If the agreed date is in doubt
2. If the speaker is unresponsive to your contacts, or if the speaker's doorkeeper provides poor access
3. If the speaker pushes back against these suggestions
4. If you're worried or uncertain about what's developing
5. If you have reason to believe the content of the program will violate the 4 Way Test or will significantly diverge from what was proposed and approved
6. If you have reason to believe the presenter may cancel, which would require a replacement program.