Committee Chair and Co-Chair Guide 2026

The Board of Directors and Rotary leadership are appreciative of the key role that committees and committee chairs play in insuring the vibrancy of our club. Strong committees are instrumental in engaging our members and positioning our club to attract new members. Our committees are the conduit for Rotary's good works in our community, and a very important part of the Rotary experience.

How do members join a committee?

- Every July, the RCM office asks all Rotarians to sign up for committees for the Rotary year. Members may choose to remain in a current placement or try new ones. The office will provide an updated list of members to committee chairs by mid-August.
- New members are also asked to sign up for committees when they first join.
- Committee chair and co-chairs should not be shy about recruiting new members at any time! A personal ask is always the most effective way of engaging members.

What is the role of the Chair or Co-Chair in orienting new members?

- It is important to set a welcoming tone at each meeting. Don't assume that everyone attending the meeting knows each other – it is a good idea to have everyone introduce themselves regularly, especially when a new member attends.
- When a new member signs up for a committee, the office will let the chairs know and provide contact info. Please reach out to the new member before the next meeting to introduce yourself and explain the work of the committee. The office will add the new member to the calendar invitations.

Where and when do committees meet?

- Some committees have standing meeting dates and times (first Tuesday of the month at 11am, for example). Others meet less regularly or on an "as-needed" basis. It is up to each committee. Calendar invitations are sent by the Rotary office for up to the full Rotary year.
- Some committees choose to meet on Tuesday before or after the regular meetings. Some meet virtually. Others offer a "hybrid" option that allows for both in person and virtual participation. Hybrid meetings are typically held in the Rotary office.
- The office can set up Zoom meetings for the committees and send the link and calendar invitation to each committee member.
- Committee chairs should do their best to engage virtual participants along with those attending in person and encourage those online to keep their cameras on as much as possible.

How do I organize a committee meeting?

- It is always helpful to have an agenda for the meeting set in advance – a good rule is to set your agenda and send to the committee 3-7 days before your meeting. The office can add the agenda and meeting materials to the calendar invitation.
- To ensure continuity, the chair or another designated committee member should take meeting minutes.
- If members agreed on any action items and/or assignments during the meeting, follow up with committee members regarding these items.

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Do committees have budgets?

"Club-focused" committees such as Social or Marketing have fixed operational budgets; other committees may only provide coordination for projects without funds.

How does a committee request funds to support a project in the community?

The charitable work of the club is supported by the RCM Community Trust which distributes about $125,000 annually. All funds distributed from the RCM Community Trust must have Board approval.

Connecting to the Community Grants offer an avenue for donations to organizations in the community. Committees are encouraged to support organizations in their application for Connecting to the Community Grant.

For projects that fall outside the Connecting to the Community Grants, we recommend that you start by talking with Melissa Marschka who can explain the process. There are forms available through the office to initiate a request.

What are the best means of communicating with other Club members?

Share your stories – tell the wider club about events, opportunities, projects and committee work. You can share through a link in the weekly email, the flyer on the luncheon tables or, in some cases a podium announcement. Contact the Rotary office to discuss further.

If a committee has a specific event that requires larger club participation, it is important to discuss this event with the office with plenty of lead time.

How does a committee plan for the future?

The club has a strategic framework, Rotary International's Four Pillars:

- Increase our impact
- Expand our reach
- Enhance participant engagement
- Continuously adapt and improve

Some committees may have very clearly defined goals that don't require much in the way of strategic planning. Others may want to engage in strategic planning annually or every 2-3 years to continually redefine committee goals and strategies. It can be helpful to:

- Revisit the history of the group – what has the committee accomplished in the past?
- Review the overall mission of the committee.
- Meet with club leadership, such as the President or Executive Director. Committees should consider their goals in context of the wider club.

When setting committee goals, carefully consider your committee's financial and volunteer resources. Rotarians are encouraged to consider big, bold ideas – but it's important to set achievable goals.

The office can provide more resources on request.