



District 7040 Youth Exchange Program

Serving Eastern Ontario, Northern NY State, Western Québec and Nunavut
www.ye.rotary7040.com



Am I eligible to be a Rotary exchange student?

The Rotary Youth Exchange program is open to high school students between the ages of 15 and 18 on departure. It does not matter whether your parents are members of a Rotary Club - the program is open to children of Rotarians and non-Rotarians alike.

Exchange student candidates must be outgoing, self-confident, friendly, adaptable, and adventurous, willing to learn a foreign language, with above average grades in school. The application form will require you to tell about yourself and your family, and provide references from school teachers and administrators.

What is the long-term program?

Rotary offers two types of exchanges for high school students. For a truly amazing, life-changing experience, there is nothing like the long-term exchange. Students spend a year in another country, becoming fluent in the language and immersed in the culture, and developing friendships that will last a lifetime.

Participants attend high school, and may or may not get credit back home for courses taken student will have up to three host families through the year, to broaden the experience and see the variations that exist in all cultures.

It takes a very special teen to consider him or herself capable of spending a year abroad, but the rewards and experiences are unlike anything you may ever know again. If you think you can do this, don't let the opportunity pass you by.

What is the short-term program?

Interested in a taste of the world, and willing to share yours with others? Then the short-term program may be for you. Rotary's short-term exchange program usually takes place during the summer, and brings together paired families from different countries.

Typically, you would spend 3-4 weeks overseas with a family that has a son or daughter of approximately the same age. And then, you and your new host sibling would come back for a 3-4 week stay with your family (the order can be reversed, with the foreign student coming here first - whichever works best for the families is fine).

The short-term program does not generally include school attendance, and instead provides its educational experiences through exposure to a new language and culture.



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Naturally, the friendships that develop often last a long time, with repeat visits a very common occurrence.

For younger students, or perhaps those wanting to sample the experience before committing to the long-term program, Rotary's short-term exchange program can be a good fit.

Do I get to choose my country?

A very popular question. And the answer is ... yes and no. The countries we exchange with are those we know run top-quality programs, and we re-evaluate them each year. There are a limited number of exchanges available with each country, and we will not overload any country in either direction, inbound or outbound. Therefore, if you're going to spend a year overseas, we ask you to select five preferred countries, and we allow you to refuse any countries that you would not accept an assignment to. The majority of students will get one of their five choices. But remember, flexibility is a vital characteristic for a successful exchange student, and that starts right at the beginning.

Do I have to know another language?

No, not at all. Naturally, it would help to have some familiarity with the language of the country you go to, but we don't limit the program to those who are already bi-lingual. In fact, one of the great benefits of the program is quickly gaining fluency in another language. Typically, our students become fluent in 3-4 months, even without any previous knowledge of the language! But we strongly recommend that all participants start learning their target language as soon as they are selected for the program. The more of the language you know up front, the better your experience will be.

Will I get school credit for my exchange year?

This is always a tough question because it varies from school to school and country to country. You should sit down with your school counselors when you apply and when you know what country you are going to for your year. Pre-planning makes a big difference.



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Is there any future advantage to being a Rotary Exchange Student?

Yes! Past history has indicated that having the Rotary Exchange Year on your college application carries more weight in many cases than your GPA or class ranking. Colleges are looking for students that are going to successfully complete their studies and graduate. By completing a full year exchange in another culture you are showing them that you have the "right stuff". Future employers will take similar views of your year's experience, not to mention the benefits of becoming bi-lingual or bi-cultural!

What if I have problems during my exchange?

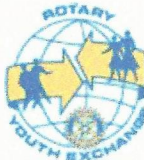
The design of the Rotary Exchange program is such that if you have problems we have the resources to help you solve the problems, starting with a Rotary Club right in the community in which you are living. You will have multiple avenues of help available to you to resolve any problem that might come up.

Rotary International and Rotarians in District 7040 take very seriously our responsibility for the safety and security of all Rotary exchange students, both inbound and outbound. In November, 2002, the Board of Directors of Rotary International adopted the following **Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth:**

"Rotary International is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all participants in Rotary activities. It is the duty of all Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses, partners, and other volunteers to safeguard to the best of their ability the welfare of and to prevent the physical, sexual, or emotional abuse of children and young people with whom they come into contact."

Do my parents have to host an inbound student?

Parents of long-term outbound students are not required to host. Many, of course, choose to do so, partly because they have an empty room, but also so they can experience some of what their son or daughter is going through. We encourage that, but we also recognize that not all families are able to host.



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OK, bottom line, what does it cost?

Probably a lot less than you think. You see, Rotarians are all volunteers, so there are no salaries or commissions paid to the people who administer this program. It does cost money, though, to make the arrangements, present the orientations, provide student materials and supplies, etc. And, of course, there's airfare, insurance, and other travel expenses. Here is a breakdown:

You must submit a non-refundable fee with your application in order to be considered for the program. That application fee is \$550 for the long term program and \$150 for the short term program. (Note: if you don't already have a passport, you will need to obtain one, at your own expense). You will be responsible for the cost of obtaining a passport, any fees for mandatory language camps in the destination country, additional spending money while you're on exchange, and any optional tours offered through Rotary during or at the end of your year.

Rotary exchange students spending a year abroad are provided with a monthly allowance from their host Rotary club. This is usually the equivalent of \$75USD or \$100 CAD,. If you want or need spending money beyond that, it is up to you and your parents to provide it. Of course, you do not have to pay for room and board, school fees, etc.

Almost all students are also required to deposit an Emergency Fund of \$500 with their host Rotary Club. This money is there for unexpected expenses (medical, dental, telephone, etc.), and, if it is used during the year, it must be replenished by you or your parents. If it is not used, it is returned to you at the end of the year.

How do I apply?

All applicants must be sponsored by a local Rotary Club, so it's important that you make contact with someone in your area.

You can contact one of the following from the Rotary Club of Ottawa:

André Bourdon, Chair
Youth Exchange Programs
Albourdon29@yahoo.com

Margot Nicholls, Manager
Rotary Club of Ottawa
rotaryottawa@xplornet.com