

Central States Rotary Youth Exchange - Outbound Students 2024 - 2025

Rotary District 5580 is accepting applications for outbound exchange students for the 2024 - 2025 school year. We invite your Rotary Club to identify and interview potential students, and we encourage your club to discuss the Rotary Exchange opportunity with principals and student counselors in your high schools.

Please note that all candidates and their parents must be interviewed by your Rotary Club to assess a student's suitability for the Rotary Exchange program. If you do not have a Youth Exchange committee, you may want to get your New Generations Committee involved in Rotary Youth Exchange.

The application process begins in September, and District level interviews will be held in October. If your club will be sponsoring an outbound candidate, please carefully read the information below for more details, and contact Outbound Coordinator Sam Evans at rotaryyeo@gmail.com for more information or to answer any questions.

If your Rotary Club decides to sponsor an Outbound Exchange Student, you will be responsible for hosting an Inbound Exchange Student for the same year. If your club cannot sponsor an Inbound Exchange Student, you may be responsible for finding another club who is willing to sponsor a student on your behalf or pay the costs for District 5580 to find a hosting club (approximately \$2,000 for the year).

Ideal candidates should possess qualities such as openness, flexibility and an eagerness to delve into new experiences that will enable them to become excellent cultural ambassadors. They should also be prepared to and have interest in learning and living in a foreign language.

Key Qualifications:

- Must be a good student (top half of class or at least a 2.75 cumulative grade point average on a 4.0 scale)
- Between 15 1/2 and 18 1/2 years old at the time of departure (born after February 1, 2006 and born before February 1, 2009)

Other Important Attributes:

- Willingness to go on exchange to whatever country they are assigned
- The initiative to get involved in activities and to make friends in the host country.
- Applicants should have pleasant personality and must be:
 - able to adjust to a new and different culture/country
 - willing live apart from their families and friends for the year
 - open to new and different experiences

Costs for participation:

This can vary by the student's spending habits, the cost of living in the host country, the airfare to and from the country (unfortunately you must purchase a full fare ticket) and host district/country requirements (some require purchase of additional insurance).

District 5580 has an application fee of \$250.00 to be paid by the student to cover district costs for interviewing and related activities. This fee is submitted by the student to Rotary District 5580 Youth Exchange in November with their final application. This fee is non-refundable once received.

District 5580 also has a \$750.00 program fee that is payable by the student upon acceptance of the country assignment from Central States in mid January. This fee will be applied to the cost of the required orientations and supplies, and a Rotary jacket.

Students will also be responsible to pay the cost of a health insurance plan through Central States for the exchange year. The cost of the policy for each student was about \$1,200 last year. This amount varies each year.

Passports will be required and have associated fees in the US and Canada. Visas (where required by the host country) will involve fees specific to that country and could involve a personal visit by student and parents at a consulate or embassy in Chicago, New York, Toronto, or other major city.

The host club typically provides a monthly allowance which may be sufficient for some students. Other students have more lavish spending habits and may expect additional spending money from home. These are discussions to be held between the parents and student. A limited amount of scholarship assistance may be available based on financial need.

Most countries have extra trips to explore their country or other nearby countries. These are optional trips and, although recommended, are usually not required.

For most students, a typical cost for the year is approximately \$9,400, although this is very much dependent on your spending habits while on exchange. This does not include what families save while the student is abroad (food, car insurance, etc.)

Rotary provides:

- host families and school
- monthly allowance
- and often lots of extras ...

Children of Rotarians are welcome to participate. Students **do not** have to be involved with or associated with Rotary in any way in order to apply.

All students are ambassadors of the Rotary club that sponsored them and of their country. They are expected to follow the Youth Exchange program rules, be open to new experiences, and strive to learn the language of the host country.

The student and their own family pays for round-trip air transportation, clothing, health insurance, administrative fees, and incidental expenses. Most other expenses are covered by their Rotary district, club or host family.

Note that District 5580 must complete selections and submit applications to Central States

Rotary Youth Exchange by December 1 in order to get equal chances at country assignments. All applications received after this date may receive a country selection, but only whatever is left over. We are hoping to conduct District Interviews on Saturday, October 7th. Depending on student location, these may be completed in person or electronically. **Final applications are due to the Outbound Coordinator by Saturday, November 4.** Applications received after that date may not be submitted in time for the December 1 Central States deadline.

A preliminary application form in Microsoft Word format is attached that the student should complete prior to an interview with your club. The preliminary application **must be typed and submitted to your club as a pdf file.**

After you have approved the student, send the pdf attachment (not a link) of the preliminary application to Outbound Coordinator Sam Evans at rotaryyeo@gmail.com. He will then send the student a link to the first phase of the computerized application to complete prior to their District interview. Please contact Sam if you have any questions or need additional information.

Thank you for your participation and support for this important Rotary program!