



Frequently Asked Questions

1) What is the Open World Program?

The Open World Program, managed by the Open World Leadership Center (OWLC) and funded by the U.S. Congress, is a special program available to Rotary clubs in the United States. Participating Rotary districts or clubs host six Open World (OW) civic leaders in their communities and develop a program based on one of the Open World civic themes. A few examples of OW hosting civic themes:

1. Accountable Governance
2. NGO Development
3. Rule of Law
4. Social Issues, focusing on *Education, Health-care Issues or Social Services*

2) What is the purpose of the OW Program?

- a) Its original purpose was to promote mutual understanding between the United States and countries of Eurasia¹ by introducing current and emerging Eurasian leaders to their U.S. counterparts and to U.S. democratic and free-market institutions. Additionally, the program emphasizes professional development, exchange, and cooperation. Key concepts for exchanges include transparency, accountability, civic initiative, and volunteerism.

3) What is the host Rotary club(s) expected to do?

- a) A club is expected to coordinate all on-the-ground logistics:
 - i) Provide home-stay for 6 OW participants (5 delegates and 1 facilitator) for 8 days and nights;
 - ii) Meet and greet at the airport, provide transportation between scheduled events/activities, attendance at Rotary club meetings etc.;
 - iii) Prepare a substantive program schedule that includes a variety of professional meetings in accordance with the selected hosting theme, cultural activities, and opportunities for interaction and sharing between OW participants and U.S. host communities;
 - iv) After hosting a club (a host coordinator) is responsible to submit a Final Report (Host Narrative, final agenda, articles, etc.) and an Expense Reimbursement Report/Request Form with corresponding materials to RI.

Host Rotary clubs/districts should provide first hand experiences with professional counterparts within their daily work routine and give a view of American life through participation in community and cultural activities and home stays. OW visits often lead to ongoing contact and collaboration between delegates and their American hosts and presenters. OW facilitates such professional ties by maintaining a digital directory with automatic translation capability (<http://dd.openworld.gov>).

4) Who are the OW participants?

- a) A six-person group of OW participants includes five delegates and one facilitator. Delegates are young professionals (aged mid 20s to 45), whose occupations include civic leaders in health, economics, environment, education fields, business owners, mayors, attorneys, journalists, NGO (non-governmental organizations) or NPO (non-profit/not-for-profit organizations) directors, educators, and political party officials. The facilitator is usually a young person who is fluent in English and in many cases has spent time in the United States as a student or intern.

5) How long will our Rotary club be responsible for hosting the group?

- a) The participants stay in the host community for 8 days and nights. The host Rotary club is responsible for 8 nights of home hosting and 8 days of programming and meals. The program schedule should provide professional activities for a minimum of 4 full working days (32 hours) in addition to cultural and social events during the evenings and weekends and time that the participants will spend with host families.

6) What should be the focus of the program?

¹ Eurasia here means Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan.

- a) OWLC identifies hosting themes for each programming year. A host Rotary club should select one of the hosting themes and build an 8-day professional development and cultural program around the selected theme. More information on each theme is available from RI. Additionally, the club should specify a sub-theme for its program, as themes are broad and focusing on a smaller topic would be helpful. Choosing a sub-theme for the program depends on the club's interests and local resources availability. OW will do its best to match the right delegates with your choice of a theme and sub-theme with the right delegates.

7) What funds are available to Rotary club hosts?

- a) Reimbursement of eligible expenses up to \$3,000 for hosting and program expenses is available from Rotary International (as a grantee of the OWLC). Additional funds are available for hiring a local interpreter. Please see the next question for details.

8) Do we need to hire a professional interpreter?

- a) Yes. According to the grant guidelines, Rotary hosts have to contract a local or out-of town professional interpreter to assist throughout professional parts of the program. Funds of up to \$2,500 for local professional interpreter and up to \$3,000 for an out-of-town professional interpreter available for this purpose in addition to the \$3,000 funds, allocated for hosting/programming expenses. RI also maintains a list of professional interpreters who have supported Rotary clubs and are willing to travel to a local hosting community. However, an out-of-town interpreter will need home hosting accommodations because there are no additional funds to cover hotel expenses. Please inquire about this option if you are interested.

9) What types of expenses are eligible for reimbursement?

- a) Transportation: rental of vehicle to transport visitors, airport transportation, mileage reimbursement for usage of private vehicles (current government rate per mile); business related meal/food costs – the purpose of the function at which food is served must be explained (for instance, lunch with business executive as part of the discussion on economic issues or informal social events, e.g., a potluck dinner or informal banquet); community-wide event, local cultural and recreational events i.e., baseball games, concerts, museums, hikes, etc.; cultural events – theater, exhibits, field trips; programming costs associated with planned civic theme activities: press conference set up, rental of speakers, microphones, and facility; attendance at a Rotary club meeting; small gifts or souvenirs for participants; and photographs and other media. For more information please see Financial Guidelines and Applying for Reimbursement Instructions.

10) What types of expenses are ineligible for reimbursement?

- a) Payment to host families and/or visitors; cash to visitors, fines, entertainment (hiring dancers, musical bands for entertainment at dinners or banquets), alcoholic beverages, and promotional materials for Rotary (Rotary pins, merchandise or literature), etc. Please see Financial Guidelines for more information.

11) How are we reimbursed for our expenses?

- a) Within two weeks after the hosting is complete, a host club/coordinator must submit RI Open World Program Expense Reimbursement Request Form along with corresponding materials including **original receipts/invoices** (for any expenses that are equal or above \$25), organized by date, to the Open World Program Officer at RI headquarters in Evanston. Note: **NO ALCOHOL EXPENSES ARE COVERED BY THE PROGRAM**. Please see Financial Guidelines and Applying for Reimbursement Instructions for more information. Note: RI can reimburse only a host Rotary Club.

12) How can we get more information on the program?

- a) Contact the RI OW Officer via email OpenWorld@rotaryintl.org or phone: (847) 866-3381. Visit RI Web site at <http://www.rotary.org>
Visit the OW Program Web site at <http://www.openworld.gov>