
Rotary District 7120 Polar Plunge Fundraiser

Youth-Oriented Micro-Grant Pilot Information Guide

Overview

The Youth-Oriented Micro-Grant Pilot is funded through net proceeds from the Rotary District 7120 Polar Bear Plunge.

This initiative invests directly in measurable, youth-centered growth across District 7120 by supporting local club initiatives that expand Rotary's impact among younger generations.

Purpose

The Youth Micro-Grant Pilot aims to:

- Expand youth engagement within District 7120
- Strengthen the Rotary leadership pipeline (Interact → Rotaract → Rotary)
- Support international and domestic youth development opportunities
- Encourage sustainable, youth-driven programming at the local club level

This initiative complements the core mission of the Polar Bear Plunge by extending its impact beyond fundraising into long-term youth development.

Eligible Project Types

Grants may support initiatives including, but not limited to:

- Formation or expansion of an Interact Club
- Formation or expansion of a Rotaract Club
- Hosting a Rotary Youth Exchange student
- Sponsoring a student to attend RYLA
- Supporting youth-led community service initiatives

- Sponsoring or piloting a youth-led satellite club
- Providing partial outbound Rotary Youth Exchange scholarships
- Youth membership recruitment initiatives
- Seed funding for youth-focused programming

Projects should demonstrate:

- Direct youth engagement
- Clear alignment with Rotary's mission
- Defined local impact

Eligibility Requirements

To apply for a Youth Micro-Grant, a club must:

1. Have a minimum of \$500 attributed to them in that year's Polar Bear Plunge.
2. Appoint a designated Polar Bear Plunge Representative.

The Representative must:

- Communicate event updates internally
- Promote participation
- Serve as the primary liaison with Rotex Rotaract

The Representative must be appointed and their contact information submitted to:

RotaryYouthExchange7120@gmail.com no later than the date of grant application submission.

Application Availability & Communication

The official grant application form will:

- Be posted on the Polar Bear Plunge page of the District 7120 website no later than two weeks following the event (no later than April 26, 2026).
- Be distributed district-wide via email by District Secretary Leslie Vecchiotti no later than April 26, 2026.

This ensures all clubs receive timely and equal access to application materials.

Application Process

The application process is intentionally simple and streamlined.

Clubs will complete a short standardized online application including:

- Club name and representative contact information
- Project description (maximum one page)
- Amount requested
- Basic project budget
- Intended project timeline
- Expected youth impact

Applications will be submitted via email.

Funding Limits & Award Structure

As this is a pilot initiative, funding is designed to support multiple youth-focused projects across the district.

- Clubs may request up to \$1,000 per application.
- The Youth Grant Oversight Committee reserves the right to award partial funding.
- Final award amounts will depend on total available funds and the number of qualified applications received.

The intent of this program is to distribute funding across multiple clubs whenever feasible, rather than concentrate the full allocation into a single award.

If only one or a small number of applications are received, the board may award up to the available funding at its discretion.

In future years, maximum award amounts may be adjusted based on available funding, pilot participation, and overall financial performance of the Polar Bear Plunge.

Grant Timeline

- Application Deadline: June 1
- Review Period: Early to Mid-June

- Award Decisions Finalized: Late June
- Disbursement Date: July 1 (beginning of the new Rotary year)

This schedule allows funded initiatives to launch at the start of the Rotary year and aligns reporting with the subsequent grant cycle.

Oversight Structure

Applications will be reviewed by a five-member Youth Grant Oversight Committee consisting of:

- Two Rotaract members
- Immediate Past District Governor or if unavailable, a Past District Governor
- District Youth Services Chair
- One member of Rotary Youth Exchange Committee leadership

This structure ensures:

- District-level oversight
- Youth voice in funding decisions
- Cross-committee collaboration
- Administrative sustainability

Conflict of Interest & Recusal Policy

To maintain transparency and fairness:

- Any oversight committee member affiliated with a submitting club must formally recuse themselves from discussion and voting on that application.
- Recusals will be documented in meeting records.
- A simple majority of non-recused members will determine award decisions.

This ensures impartial review and protects the integrity of the pilot program.

Reporting Requirements

To maintain responsible stewardship without excessive bureaucracy, grant recipients must submit:

- A brief 1–2 page implementation summary
- A simple accounting of fund usage
- Photos or documentation if applicable
- A short impact statement outlining measurable outcomes

Reports are due within 60 days of project completion or no later than May 1 at 11:59 p.m. ET of the Rotary year in which funds were disbursed.

This allows outcomes to be reviewed before the next grant cycle begins.

Long-Term Evaluation

Following the 2026 cycle, the board will evaluate:

- Participation levels
- Financial sustainability
- Project outcomes
- Administrative feasibility

If the pilot demonstrates strong participation, measurable impact, and sustainable administration, the Rotex Rotaract Board may consider expanding the Youth Micro-Grant to a higher fund allocation percentage in future years. Any expansion would require formal board approval.

Questions or Concerns?

Please Contact:

RotaryYouthExchange7120@gmail.com

We are happy to help.

