



A QUICK GUIDE TO ROTARY FRIENDSHIP EXCHANGE

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PURPOSE

[Rotary Friendship Exchange](#) offers Rotarians, Rotaractors, and their families and friends the opportunity to take turns visiting and hosting one another in their homes and clubs. Participants experience cultural immersion in another country and develop greater international understanding. They often form lasting friendships and, in some cases, build connections with potential service partners. Rotary Friendship Exchange also allows professionals to enhance their vocational skills.

Exchanges arranged through Rotary Friendship Exchange have certain characteristics:

- They involve at least two Rotary districts in two countries.
- They are reciprocal. That is, visits take place in both (or all) countries.
- They're funded entirely by the participants and their Rotary districts.
- They're open to Rotarians, Rotaractors, and their family members and friends.
- Each one has a specified purpose and goals.

TYPES OF EXCHANGE

Exchanges can be any one of these four types, or a combination.

Cultural: Participants study another country, get to know its people and institutions, and promote an appreciation of cultural differences worldwide.

Fellowship: Exchange group members and hosts communicate and live with each other in a spirit of fellowship and goodwill. They consider each other's challenges, aspirations, and concerns and foster long-term friendships and international understanding.

Service: Visiting participants take part in a service project in their host district.

Vocational: These exchanges provide a unique educational opportunity for professionals of all ages. Participants develop professional or leadership skills that can help them address the needs of their own communities or communities around the world.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN ROTARY FRIENDSHIP EXCHANGE

To organize and carry out an exchange:

1. Ask your district governor to introduce you to your district's Rotary Friendship Exchange chair and consult with them as you develop your plan.
2. Invite fellow Rotary or Rotaract members and friends in your district to participate in the exchange. (Anyone under age 18 will need to be accompanied by their parent or guardian.)
3. Find participating districts on the [Exchange Finder Map](#). Contact the Rotary Friendship Exchange chair in the district you want to travel to and invite them to do an exchange with your district.

4. Working with the other district, make some decisions about the exchange:
 - **Type of exchange:** With your exchange group, choose a clear purpose and set the goals to be achieved by the exchange. Does your group want to focus on cultural immersion, participate in service abroad, expand your vocational skills, or build cross-cultural friendships? Are you interested in establishing a twin club or service partner relationship with your hosts?
 - **Length of exchange:** Exchanges usually last one to two weeks. Determine the length of yours based on participants' availability and the goals of the exchange.
 - **Budget and funding:** Exchanges are typically paid for by participants. Participants can pay the expenses themselves, or exchange groups can raise funds before their visits.
 - District grant funding: District grant funds can also be used for Rotary Friendship Exchange visits that are focused on vocational learning or service, as long as the participants comply with The Rotary Foundation Conflict of Interest Policy (section 10.030.) and [Terms and Conditions for District Grants](#). Funding for exchanges can be included in part or full by district grant spending plans.
 - **Destination:** The visiting district may want to travel to a particular part of the host district, and the host district may also need to consider where it can best house guests and help achieve the goals of the exchange.
 - **Timing:** Find the best time for both groups. Consider these factors:
 - Lodging: Usually, participants are hosted by Rotary members in their homes. Hotels and rental homes are also options.
 - Weather: You may want to avoid periods when heavy rain or extreme heat or cold are common. Make sure all trip participants are aware of the destination's typical weather at the time of the exchange.
 - Seasonal attractions: If your group wants to experience particular events or places during your visit, make sure the attraction will be available then.
5. Plan the details of the visits in collaboration with the other district. Make sure to communicate clearly about what your group hopes to get from the exchange and what it can offer when it hosts. Meeting virtually before the visits can help everyone get to know each other and start building relationships. Finalize the exchange itineraries and goals during this virtual meeting.
6. Participate in the first exchange, and then participate in the second exchange.
7. After the visits, continue to feature your exchange on social media, on club and district websites or blogs, in newsletters, and through other communications.
8. [Share your story and photos with Rotary International](#). We'll feature your stories to inspire others to participate in Rotary Friendship Exchange.