

Article 43. Global Networking Groups

43.020. Rotarian Action Groups

43.020.1. Terms of Rotarian Action Groups

A Rotarian Action Group is a voluntary association of Rotarians who unite themselves for the purpose of conducting international service projects that advance the Object of Rotary. Rotarian Action Group activities must be in harmony with RI policy, including the use of the Rotary Marks. Rotarian Action Groups may not be used to promote religious beliefs, political issues, or other non-Rotary organizations. Recognition of a Rotarian Action Group by RI in no way implies legal, financial or other obligation or responsibility on the part of RI, or any district or club. A Rotarian Action Group may not act on behalf of RI, or represent or imply that it has authority to act on behalf of RI. A Rotarian Action Group is not an agency of RI. Rotarian Action Groups must be self-sustaining financially, administratively, and otherwise. Rotarian Action Groups may not exist or function in any country in violation of the laws of such country.

Individual Rotarian Action Groups are not covered by RI insurance and are encouraged to assess their own risk and secure coverage as appropriate, including directors' and officers' insurance. (*November 2006 Mtg., Dec. 75*)

Source: June 2005 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 302; *Amended by* November 2006 Mtg., Dec. 75

43.020.2. Organization and Membership

A Rotarian Action Group shall have a governing document (charter, constitution, bylaws or similar document) which must be consistent with RI policy. Rotarian Action Groups must adopt the standard bylaws approved by the RI Board. The governing documents, including such bylaws, may include other provisions not inconsistent with the standard bylaws and RI policy. All governing documents and amendments thereto must be approved by the RI Board. A Rotarian Action Group shall be organized with at least three officers, one of whom shall be the chair (president or other administrative head). Each officer must be an active Rotarian. A group's membership shall be open to all Rotarians and spouses of Rotarians. Groups are encouraged to open their memberships to Rotaractors. Only Rotarians, spouses of Rotarians, and Rotaractors may be members. (*November 2006 Mtg., Dec. 75*)

Source: June 2005 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 302; *Amended by* November 2006 Mtg., Dec. 75

43.020.3. Criteria for Recognition as a Rotarian Action Group

All Rotarian Action Groups are subject to approval by the Board for recognition. The Board shall not recognize Rotarian Action Groups formed to promote, participate or be involved in religious or political activities, deal with subjects that negatively affect health or safety, or are not in accord with the Object of Rotary or the overall policy and program of Rotary International.

To apply to become a Rotarian Action Group, the group must:

- 1) Consist of Rotarians representing at least three countries who share a common interest in a specific worthwhile service activity which advances the Object of Rotary. The Board may reduce or waive the number of countries represented.
- 2) Complete an application, including an action plan that outlines how the group plans to accomplish its service goals, what types of projects it intends to promote or conduct, and the expertise its founding members have in the subject.
- 3) Be organized in accordance with RI policy;
- 4) complement the service activities of Rotarians, clubs and districts in advancing the Object of Rotary and not conflict with the purposes of an existing Rotarian Action Group, RI Program or Rotary Foundation program, unless approved by the Board.

Within a two year period, the Rotarian Action Group must have undertaken an international service project and achieved a membership of 100 individuals representing at least 10 countries and three zones. Until these criteria are met, groups will be considered provisional. Provisional groups shall have all the rights and responsibilities of Rotarian Action Groups. Provisional groups that do not achieve these threshold levels within two years of official recognition will be terminated, unless granted a waiver or extension by the board.

Groups that are denied recognition or terminated may not reapply for a period of two years from the date of such denial. (*November 2006 Mtg., Dec. 75*)

Source: June 2005 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 302; *Amended by* November 2006 Mtg., Dec. 75

43.020.4. Termination of Recognition

The Board may terminate a group's recognition by RI, with or without the consent of the group's officers or members, for failure to function in accordance with RI policy. Failure to respond to communications from the general secretary for a one-year period may result in termination of recognition of the group.

To maintain its status as a Rotarian Action Group, a group must:

- 1) Function in accordance with its recognized purpose and in accordance with RI policy;
- 2) regularly undertake an international service project;
- 3) Publish a newsletter (which may be distributed solely by electronic means) for members of the Rotarian Action Group in good standing, at least once during each Rotary year, and file the newsletter and other important communications and documents with the general secretary;
- 4) Hold an annual forum by way of a newsletter, annual meeting, or other activity appropriate to the Rotarian Action Group, through which group members in good standing can interact;

5) Respond to inquiries from members, potential members, and the general secretary;

6) Submit an annual report of activities, including summary of service projects completed, cost of membership dues and a financial statement showing revenues and expenditures during the previous Rotary year, and a statement of funds on hand at the time of the report, to its members with a copy to the General Secretary by 1 October in each year. (*November 2006 Mtg., Dec. 75*)

Source: June 2005 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 302; *Amended by* November 2006 Mtg., Dec. 75

43.020.5. Independent Review of Financial Statements

Rotarian Action Groups with annual gross receipts or expenditures of more than US\$25,000 or equivalent are required to provide an annual financial statement and report that has been independently reviewed by a qualified accountant, to their members, and supply a copy to the general secretary by 1 October in each year. (*November 2006 Mtg., Dec. 75*)

Source: June 2005 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 302; *Amended by* November 2006 Mtg., Dec. 75

43.020.6. Services and Suspension

The General Secretary may suspend services provided to a Rotarian Action Group, with or without the consent of the group's officers or members, for failure to function in accordance with RI policy. These services include use of the Rotary Marks, listing in the *Official Directory*, program publications, and on the RI Web site, and provision of a booth at the International Convention, on a space available basis. (*June 2005 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 302*)

Source: June 2005 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 302

43.020.7. Incorporation of Rotarian Action Groups

Rotarian Action Groups are encouraged to incorporate. The advisability of incorporation is a matter the members should determine in light of their activities. Applications for incorporation must be submitted to the general secretary. The articles of incorporation, or equivalent corporate document, of a Rotarian Action Group must include a statement to the effect that the group is not an activity or agency of RI and must be in accordance with RI policy. (*November 2006 Mtg., Dec. 75*)

Source: June 2005 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 302; *Amended by* November 2006 Mtg., Dec. 75

43.020.8. Rotarian Action Groups at RI Conventions

An annual general meeting of each Rotarian Action Group should be held immediately preceding or during the convention. Space should be provided at the International Convention for Rotarian Action Groups to meet, where possible, at no cost to the Rotarian Action Groups. (*June 2005 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 302*)

Source: June 2005 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 302

43.020.9. Rotarian Action Group Information in the *Official Directory*

The name, address and Web site of each Rotarian Action Group, and the name, contact information and classification of the chair of each group, shall be listed in the *Official Directory* each year, provided that such information is submitted by the date set by the general secretary. No further descriptive information shall be included. (*June 2005 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 302*)

Source: June 2005 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 302

43.020.10. Promotion of Rotarian Action Groups

Rotarian Action Groups are encouraged to maintain Web sites that promote their activities and inform their members. Groups in formation that have not yet received recognition from the Board may organize a Web site to seek potential members, as long as the Web site clearly states that the group is not a Rotarian Action Group, and does not use the Rotary Marks. Groups in formation that are denied recognition must disable these Web sites upon notification of the Board's decision. (*November 2006 Mtg., Dec. 75*)

Source: June 2005 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 302; *Amended by* November 2006 Mtg., Dec. 75

43.020.11. Statement in Publications

Rotarian Action Groups' newsletters, publications, brochures, and Web sites must prominently display the statement "This Rotarian Action Group is not an agency of, or controlled by, Rotary International" or similar language approved by the general secretary. Following is an approved example of how such language may be incorporated into a statement describing a Rotarian Action Group.

"The Rotarian Action Group for Urban Concerns is a group of Rotarians whose purpose is to mobilize Rotarians and provide global leadership to address issues such as crime, unemployment, substance abuse, and homelessness. This Rotarian Action Group operates in accordance with Rotary International policy, but is not an agency of, or controlled by, Rotary International." (*June 2005 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 302*)

Source: June 2005 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 302

43.020.12. Agreements with Other Parties

Any agreement between a Rotarian Action Group and other parties must clearly state that the Rotarian Action Group is not an agency of, or controlled by Rotary International, an Illinois corporation, and that Rotary International is not liable for the activities of the Rotarian Action Group. Any such agreement must also clearly state that Rotary International is not a party to the agreement, and that Rotary International is not liable for the performance of, or any obligation under, the agreement. The Rotarian Action Group shall provide a copy of any such agreement to the general secretary. (*November 2006 Mtg., Dec. 75*)

Source: June 2005 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 302; *Amended by* November 2006 Mtg., Dec. 75

43.020.13. Rotarian Action Group Dues

Rotarian Action Group dues must be of a reasonable amount and limited to that necessary to cover administrative costs. Each Rotarian Action Group shall disclose how dues are used in their governing documents, and on their membership application materials. Rotarian Action Groups shall prepare and circulate a statement of income and expenses annually to their members as provided in 43.020.4. (*June 2005 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 302*)

Source: June 2005 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 302

43.020.14. Rotarian Action Group Service Activities

Rotarian Action Groups are encouraged to work through the existing structure of Rotary clubs and districts to promote and support their service projects. Rotarian Action Groups may list projects on their Web sites seeking financial support with notification to the general secretary. (*February 2007 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 160*)

Source: June 2005 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 302; Amended by February 2007 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 160

43.020.15. Rotarian Action Groups and Other Organizations

1. In order to ensure coordination and cooperation with Rotary entities that may be involved in similar activities and avoid conflicts of interest, Rotarian Action Groups approaching other organizations for funds in excess of US\$25,000, or other cooperative relationships, shall notify, and provide a copy to, the general secretary in advance of any formal applications. This provision also applies to funds that will be disbursed to a third party organization working with the group.

2. Notwithstanding point 1. above, Rotarian Action Groups may not contact or solicit any organizations on the “no contact list,” as defined in Article 35.010.1., for the purpose of obtaining funds or cooperation for their projects without the express written consent of the RI president in consultation with the Trustee Chairman. (*February 2007 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 159*)

Source: June 2005 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 302; February 2007 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 159; Amended by November 2006 Mtg., Dec. 75

43.020.16. Rotarian Action Group Circularization Policy

A Rotarian Action Group desiring to request the cooperation of districts, clubs or Rotarians outside of its own membership in connection with any matter whatsoever, shall first submit its purpose and plans to the respective governor or governors and secure his, her, or their approval.

No Rotarian Action Group shall solicit financial assistance or participation in commercial ventures from any Rotary district or club or from individual Rotarians other than its own members unless and until it first secures authorization from the Board. No Rotarian Action Group shall solicit funds on Web sites, with the exception of membership dues.

Even within the limits described above, it is not permissible for a Rotarian to circularize other Rotarian Action Group members on matters affecting his or her individual business interests. (*November 2005 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 38*)

Source: June 2005 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 302

43.020.17. Policy Compliance

Rotarian Action Groups that are not in compliance with RI policy are subject to termination of their status.

The general secretary may, acting on behalf of the Board, terminate a Rotarian Action Group when a group has not communicated with the general secretary for a one-year period, as required by the Rotary Code of Policies, or in cases where the group has decided to voluntarily disband. (*November 2005 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 78*)

Source: June 2005 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 302; November 2005 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 78

43.030. Incorporation Guidelines For Global Networking Groups

The following recommended guidelines apply to all Global Networking Groups that choose to incorporate:

1. The name of the incorporated Global Networking Group shall be the same as the name approved by the RI Board.
2. The corporation shall be a not-for-profit entity, and it shall pay no dividend and no part of its money, property or other assets shall be distributed to its members, directors, or officers.
3. Where any provision of the corporate documents of the incorporated Global Networking Group is not in conformity with the constitution, bylaws, or policies of RI, the terms of the constitution, bylaws, or policies of RI shall prevail at all times.
4. All members of the Global Networking Group shall be members of the incorporated entity.
5. The initial membership of the Global Networking Group shall be the members of the Global Networking Group as of the time of the incorporation. The addition or removal of a member from a Global Networking Group pursuant to the Global Networking Group's governing document shall immediately and automatically result in a corresponding change in the membership of the corporation.
6. Only Rotarians, spouses of Rotarians, and Rotaractors may be members of the incorporated entity.
7. The Global Networking Group corporation shall immediately and automatically cease operations and begin dissolution upon directive of the RI Board or upon the approval of the members of the corporation. The chair shall provide the Board notice of a decision by the Global Networking Group to dissolve the corporation, and shall provide a final report upon the completion of the dissolution process.

8. The board of directors and officers of the Global Networking Group corporation shall be limited to Rotarians, spouses of Rotarians or Rotaractors who are members of the Global Networking Group.

9. The number and terms of the directors shall be as required by local law and as provided for by the incorporated Global Networking Group's corporate documents.

10. There shall be at least three officers of the Global Networking Group, one of whom shall be the chair (president or other administrative head). The chair must be an active Rotarian. The current chair shall be the highest officer of the incorporated Global Networking Group and shall serve as chair of the board of directors. The Global Networking Group may elect such other officers as required by local law and as provided for in its corporate documents.

11. The chair shall report annually to the members on the status of the Global Networking Group incorporation.

12. The Global Networking Group is not an activity or agency of RI. (*February 2006 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 137*)

Source: November 2005 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 76