



FAQ's FOR ROTARY CLUBS

District 5500's Rotary Youth Exchange (RYE) Committee is here to support you in your endeavors of building a strong and lasting RYE program. Below is general information to get your club started.

Who Can Apply for a Long-Term Exchange?

Students who qualify for the Long-term RYE program must be between the **ages of 15.5 and 18.5 when they depart from the United States in August 2026**. Students of Rotarians may apply for the program, but also note that most of our students do not have any Rotary connection via their family. ***This program is open to Rotarian and non-Rotarian youth.***

Where Do the Students Obtain an Application for a Long-term Exchange?

Outbound student applicants may apply to the Long Term Rotary Youth Exchange Program by creating an account and completing an [online application](https://yehub.net/S50-obapp), accessed on District 5500's website at <https://yehub.net/S50-obapp>.

District 5500's RYE webpage (<https://rotaryd5500.org/rotary-youth-exchange>) has information for parents and prospective students considering the Long Term Rotary Youth Exchange Program. This is a great site for Rotarians to learn a bit more about our District's program as well.

What if the student wants to go on a Short-term Exchange instead?

Students who want to go on a short-term exchange can be between ages 15 – 25 and usually go on the exchange in the summer. The **Family-to-Family option** allows a student to be matched with a family with a student of similar age in a different country, travel to that country for several weeks and then host that student here in Arizona for several weeks. Students apply for Family-to-Family online at: <https://yehub.net/S50-stapp>. Clubs need to interview the student and family that will be hosting and sign off as the sponsor club. (No fee to club; costs paid by students)

The **International Youth Camp options** are organized by Rotary Clubs in different countries to bring together youth from multiple countries who exchange ideas and experience camps on different themes. Students can check out camp/tour options on the D5500 webpage for RYE page: <https://rotaryd5500.org/rotary-youth-exchange>) Students apply for a camp/tour online at: <https://yehub.net/S50-ctapp>

Clubs need to interview the student and family that will be hosting and sign off as the sponsor club. (No fee to club; costs paid by students)



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With Which Countries Does D5500 Exchange?

This may differ from year to year and student to student. There are over 150 countries that are approved by Rotary International to do exchanges. During the application and interview process at the district level, students may indicate regions or countries of interest. The interviewing team will have the final say on country selection. When a student asks about country preference, we tell them to be prepared to go anywhere for their year abroad.

Why Are Students Calling or Emailing My Club?

All prospective outbound students must have **a local club who is willing to sponsor them** who interviews the student and parents prior to district interviews. At the district level, when a student contacts us, we refer the student to their local Rotary club for information on the club application due date, club interview date, and more.

What is the Process for Clubs to submit an applicant to the district level?

1. Students submit their application electronically via YEAH, which will be flagged to the attention of the sponsoring **Club's** Youth Exchange Officer (YEO) and president.
2. The Club YEO and Club RYE Committee conduct local interviews of their long-term exchange applicants and select (by October 31th) their candidate(s) and possible alternates.
3. The Sponsor Club President and the Sponsor Club YEO (or Club Secretary) both sign in blue ink the candidate's *Guarantee Form*. This is a blank form the applicant should download from his/her YEAH application packet and deliver to the Sponsor Club YEO to triage. The Sponsor Club's information must also be filled in before the Club YEO returns one (1) completed form to the student. The student will then upload this signed form into their YEAH application so that the District RYE Chair has it by **October 31st**.

Clubs may host and sponsor more than one student. Clubs may also send more than one potential candidate to the district interviews and request that the District select the best candidate for them to sponsor outbound with the other student serving as the club alternate.



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Does My Club Need to Sign a D5500 RYE Annual Club Affidavit of Compliance and Youth Exchange Agreement?

Yes. All clubs that sponsor a long-term RYE student to go outbound to another country must also host an inbound student in D5500 for the same year. *Clubs may opt to co-host a student with another Club(s) to share the financial and/or club counselor responsibilities.*

D5500's RYE Annual Club Affidavit of Compliance and Youth Exchange Agreement must be returned to the District RYE Chair by **October 31st** at YouthExchangeOfficer@RotaryD5500.org.

Does a Club Have to Sponsor an Outbound to Host an Inbound?

No. Clubs may host an inbound student without sending an outbound student. Clubs may not have any candidate or they may believe the candidate is not qualified for the program or perhaps the student was not accepted at the District level. Clubs can still host an inbound student.

That said, Clubs *may not* sponsor an outbound student *without* hosting an inbound student. *Remember, Clubs can work together to co-host an inbound student.*

What is the Cost to the Club?

The total cost to the club is approximately \$3,450 for one inbound and one outbound student, combined.

For outbound students, Clubs are expected to provide a \$100 stipend to the student to be used toward the cost of a blazer, pins and/or gifts for the host family. In addition, we want the club to fund their outbound student to attend RYLA (\$500), as we believe they are better Rotary ambassadors while abroad for having additional Rotary experiences prior to their departure. The club could also invite them to join club service projects, attend some meetings, and get acquainted with you, their sponsor club.

For inbound students, the cost is a monthly allowance of \$100 and the cost to send your inbound student to RYLA (\$500). We also encourage clubs to arrange for a winter holiday gift (\$25) and a birthday gift (\$25) to be given to their Rotary son or daughter.

A club fee is assessed at the district level of \$1,200.

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Where does the District receive funding to operate the program:

RYE is funded by our outbound student fees as well as the \$1,200 fee we require Clubs to pay who are hosting an inbound student. We do not receive any District funds for the program.

What Do These Fees Cover?

The D5500's RYE program fees cover the cost of all orientations for outbound students and their parents; interview expenses; orientations and training for host family parents, Club Counselors and Local Area Coordinators; the inbound student orientation; materials and mailings of documents overseas; dues that D5500 must pay to our multi-district South Central Rotary Youth Exchange; the cost of all criminal background checks required by Rotary International, CSIET and Department of State; outbound students' roundtrip airfare and health insurance; the cost of District conference for all inbound students, a weekend typically in Jan. or Feb. for our students to attend a SCRYE Conference to meet exchange students from around the world.

Duties and Responsibilities of the Club to its inbound student(s)

1. Establish a Club RYE Committee, comprised of a Club Youth Exchange Officer (YEO) and a Club Counselor, both of whom must qualify as a Local Area Coordinator to satisfy the US Department of State's regulations. The District provides free training and peer support for these positions!

Your Club YEO will:

- Serve as the primary liaison between the Club and the District RYE YEO.
- Ensure all Club RYE volunteers submit applications, references and criminal background checks. Volunteers include any Rotarians, adult host family members, and non-Rotarians who will be working with youth. RYE students that are 18 and over are considered minors while on D5500's RYE Program. Volunteer applications and supporting documents are all entered into D5500's YEAH HUB.
- Ensure documented orientations take place for volunteers or host family members who are unable to attend the District RYE orientations.
- Appoint a Club Counselor to work with the outbound and inbound student(s). Counselors for inbound student(s) must identify as the same gender as the student(s) and be a member of Rotary willing to serve as the Local Area Coordinator. The club counselor will make monthly contact with the student and host family and submit reports in YEAH as well as address concerns that arise.

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- Assist the Club President in ensuring compliance with RI's policy regarding youth protection.
2. **Host Families:** With the assistance of your outbound student applicant, Clubs must find two to three host families for your inbound student. Built into the Outbound Student application is a requirement that applicants identify three potential host families for the Club to approach. We also require our Inbound Students to assist in finding host families, but the ultimate responsibility lies with the sponsoring Club(s). The District RYE Committee can provide numerous tips and strategies for Clubs to successfully complete this requirement.

Clubs experience the most difficulty when they wait until the end of the school year to do this rather than working on this during the prior winter months. Starting in December before inbound students arrive ensures ample time to work with your Outbound Student in host family identification.
 3. **School Enrollment:** The Club will arrange for their local high school to accept an Inbound Student for the upcoming school year. School districts and schools may make these arrangements as early as February of the prior school year.
 4. **Home Visits:** One of your Club's Local Area Coordinators will conduct home visits, ensure all volunteer applications of Rotarians and host families are entered into the YEAH database. This person will also have, minimally, monthly contact with the student and host family.
 5. The Club will provide the monthly allowance to the student (see fee structure above).
 6. The Club ensures that the student attends Rotary meetings and functions. Students understand they are ambassadors of Rotary and actually want to attend meetings, community service projects and assist with fundraisers. They have a great deal of energy and D5500 hopes that they become a part of your Rotary family.

Duties and Responsibilities of the District RYE Committee

1. Maintain compliance with Rotary International, CSIET and Department of State, as well as with South Central Rotary Youth Exchange (SCRYE) the multi-district that D5500 is a member of.
2. ALL Exchanges must be arranged at the District level per Rotary International Requirements. Clubs are not allowed to arrange for a Club-to-Club exchange. Rotary



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International requires that each District be certified via its criteria it has put into place to protect students and Rotarians. Rotary International provides a list of certified Districts that may be exchange partners and provides this list to the District RYE Chair multiple times during the year.

3. D5500 provides training and support to Clubs, local Rotarians and host families who will be working with our RYE students.
4. Club Programs: Programs range from how to bring RYE to your club, having a Rotex (a returning student who went abroad via Rotary a year or several years ago) speak or a current inbound.
5. We can provide Recruitment tools to your club. These tools include how to recruit a host family, recruiting students to the program, and information for schools.
6. Support and assistance for the RYE student while they are on their exchange in the United States, as well as support and guidance for their host families.
7. Involve Rotarians as District RYE committee members to build and maintain a vibrant, impactful exchange program that positively impacts students, host families, communities and the world. (Current needs include Inbound Program Officer, Marketing/Outreach coordinator, and Short-term exchange coordinator)