

# Rotary Short Term Youth Exchange Program



Rotary's Short-Term Exchange Program presents opportunities for students to advance their knowledge and world understanding by allowing them to visit a different country for a limited period of time. Participating students live with a matched host family in their selected country from three to four weeks in the summer under the sponsorship of a local Rotary Club.

The objective of the Short-Term Exchange Program is to foster world peace, international understanding and good will by extending international communication at the personal level through the exchange of students of high school age. It is our hope that these students will be able to see firsthand the problems and accomplishments of other peoples of different colors, creeds, and cultures.

The Rotary Short-Term Family-to-Family Exchange arranges for the student's family to host a matching Rotary applicant usually during the summer. Student exchanges are arranged between the two families for typically 3 to 4 weeks.

Cost of travel, Rotary application/registration fee, Rotary insurance, clothing and personal expenses are the responsibility of the participating students and their families.

Travel to the host country is arranged by each student's family communicating with the other student's family, determining dates, times and airlines to be booked for the exchange. Frequently, students who exchange first accompany their host sibling on the return flight home.

The earlier an application arrives, the better your chance of exchanging in your first choice country. It is also helpful for placement if you are able to host a student of either gender.

## Qualifications for Short-Term Exchange Students

Any student, age 15-19 as of July 1 of the exchange summer, of good character who possesses a warm personality and a desire to live abroad and host in return is eligible for Rotary's Short-Term Exchange. Candidates should be adaptable and flexible, well-mannered and want to experience life in other countries and cultures. Children of both Rotarians and non-Rotarians are eligible. Host families and participating students do not have to be vaccinated against Covid-19.

## Short-Term Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### 1. Why is it called an exchange program?

You will be matched with a student of similar interests in a country of your choice. The two of you will spend an agreed-upon time together — half of that time in your home and half in his/her home.

### 2. Is proficiency in a foreign language needed?

No! The program is cultural in nature but is also for a short period of time. Many countries throughout the world teach English as a second language and most participating students are quite proficient in it. If you have taken a foreign language in high school and elect to visit a country that speaks that language you will be able to gain some conversational ability. Most students do not find language to be a barrier to having a great

exchange experience whether they know the language or not.

### **3. How does a student benefit from being abroad?**

Being away in a foreign country has a powerful broadening and an accelerating effect on your maturing process. Managing your own finances and making decisions give you more confidence and independence to take care of yourself. You become more tolerant of other people, different cultures and different personalities. Your youth exchange experience will be priceless, something that you can't replicate any other way.

### **4. How much does the short-term program cost?**

Four elements comprise the cost of the program:

- Rotary application fees (\$200) for application processing and program administration
- Rotary approved one month medical insurance policy (\$76)
- Cost of round-trip airfare from your home to the foreign country where you will exchange
- Passport fee and visa fee (if necessary)

### **5. What is so special about Rotary's Short-Term Exchange Program?**

The Rotary International Exchange Program is volunteer-driven. It is organized and administered by volunteer Rotarians and their families throughout the world within the local Rotary club, the district, and regionally. Rotary volunteers screen student applicants, select the exchange students, prepare them, and arrange hosting abroad, travel, insurance, visas, etc. All of this is done by Rotarians as an unpaid service.

Because we depend on volunteers, the Rotary Program is the least expensive, safest and highest quality program. Students are provided supervision by members of the local hosting Rotary club, who are directly involved in the welfare of these students. Because of this close connection with local Rotarian advisors, students away from home are more comfortable knowing that Rotarians from their host club are available to help and offer guidance.

### **6. Is there a web site that I can learn more about the Rotary Short-Term Exchange Program?**

Yes, Rotary student exchanges are managed by Rotary's Eastern States Student Exchange (ESSEX) at <https://www.exchangestudent.org/short-term-program/>

### **7. What countries are available for the summer Short-Term Exchange?**

The countries can change based on safety, health, and travel guidelines and restrictions. Students select their top choices for exchange when applying. The following countries typically participate in the summer Short Term Exchange: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Mexico, India, Japan, Taiwan.

### **8. What is the deadline for submitting an application for a summer exchange?**

All of the application's processes (on-line application, background checks, references received, passport, on-line training courses, etc.) must be completed by May 1. The earlier the completed application is submitted, the better the chance of attaining the first-choice country for the exchange.

### **9. How do I go about participating in the Rotary Short-Term Exchange Program?**

Contact your local Rotary Club. If you do not know who to contact within your local Rotary club, then contact the Rotary District Short-Term exchange chair: Gary Dehnel – [gcdehnel@verizon.net](mailto:gcdehnel@verizon.net) 603-677-7910