



Service Above Self is the principal Rotary motto. Every Rotarian is responsible for finding ways to improve the quality of life in his or her community and communities around the world through service projects. By carefully selecting, planning, and evaluating a project, a Rotary club can successfully carry out service projects that address such community needs.

Responsibilities

As president, you have the following service projects responsibilities:

- Appointing and meeting with your service projects committee
- Assessing the current state of your club's service projects, using the *Planning Guide for Effective Rotary Clubs* [Appendix I, *President's Manual* pages 120-127]
- Setting service goals, using the *Planning Guide for Effective Rotary Clubs*
- Ensuring that the club and its members adhere to youth protection policies [Refer to Appendix G, *President's Manual* page 79]
- Ensuring that the service projects committee is following the basic steps of conducting successful service projects:
 - Needs assessment
 - Planning and implementation
 - Evaluation

Service Projects Committee

The service projects committee should carry out projects that address the needs of your club's community and communities in other countries. Include the service projects committee as one of the five standing committees of your club. Your club may amend its bylaws to reflect the specific responsibilities of this committee, adding subcommittees as needed.

Appoint Rotarians to the service projects committee who have a strong knowledge of the community, as well as community volunteer experience, and an interest in this area.

Effective Service Projects

As president and president-elect, work with the service projects committee to determine whether current club projects will continue into the coming year. Incorporate any continuing service projects as you set your goals.

Your service projects committee has the following responsibilities:

- Achieving club service project goals for the coming year
- Conducting a needs assessment of the community and the club
- Planning service projects, both local and international, using club, district, and RI resources, and ensuring that promotion is planned
- Implementing service projects and involving all members
- Evaluating all service projects and using the finding to strengthen future service projects

You'll find more information on the service projects committee in the *Club Service Projects Committee Manual*.

The following people can provide support in implementing club service projects:

- Rotarians and their families and friends
- Community organizations
- Rotary Foundation alumni
- Youth Exchange students and RYLA participants
- Rotary Community Corps
- Interact and Rotaract club members
- Assistant governor and district governor
- Members of other Rotary clubs

Service provides an opportunity for networking and fellowship among club members. Involving all members in service projects will help membership retention efforts.

Important Point

Please take note of the following resource. When conducting a service project with Interactors, RYLA participants, Youth Exchange students, or other children, or a project where volunteers will be working directly with child beneficiaries, review the *Abuse and Harassment Prevention Training Manual and Leaders' Guide* for screening and training resources. Again, your responsibilities are in Appendix G, *President's Manual* page 79.

Needs Assessment

Successful service projects must be relevant and address real and current community concerns. As club president, you'll need to ensure that the service projects undertaken by your club reflect community needs as well as club capabilities and interests. You should encourage your club's service projects committee to conduct a needs assessment to determine the resources and interests within the club and the most pressing needs and concerns of the community.

The Internal Assessment

It's important to consider whether a particular project fits your club members' mix of skills, interests, and abilities. An internal assessment should focus on the following:

- Past project experiences and the lessons learned from them
- Club composition, including:
 - Number of members willing to participate in service projects
 - Diversity of skills
 - Level of member interest in potential projects
 - Satisfaction level for past projects

Evaluating these factors will help define the types of service projects best suited to your club. To increase the likelihood of success, identify a project that takes advantage of the widest array of member skills and interests. An internal survey can assist you here.

The External Assessment

An external assessment, or community evaluation, will help your club understand the needs of the community. To determine key areas of concern in a community, examine these aspects:

- Economic situation
- Geographical setting
- Education levels
- Demographic profile
- Political conditions

To learn more about working with your club and community to develop a service project, consult *Communities in Action: A Guide to Effective Projects*. To see sample tools your club can use to conduct an external assessment, see *Community Assessment Tools* at www.rotary.org.

To properly conduct an external assessment, your club's service projects committee should consult with a wide range of community members. These groups can provide your club with a resource base of experts on community issues, project strategies, and future club service projects. In addition, working with community members to develop and carry out service projects helps identify potential new Rotarians.

Effective Service Projects

A Balanced Program of Service

Having service projects that address each Avenue of Service will ensure your club is pursuing the Object of Rotary. When planning projects, the service projects committee should consider ideas from the Presidential Citation program and emphases, the four Avenues of Service, the RI Strategic Plan, and any other service priorities identified by the RI Board of Directors, and the mission of The Rotary Foundation and its areas of focus. These areas of focus can be found at www.rotary.org.

Create a detailed public relations strategy to gain support for the service project, attract potential members to the club, and enhance Rotary's image in the community.

RI and Rotary Foundation Programs

To ensure the effectiveness of a service project, your club needs financial, human, and informational resources. Rotary International and its Foundation offers a broad range of humanitarian, intercultural, and educational programs and activities designed to improve the human condition and advance the organization's ultimate goal of world understanding and peace. These programs help clubs and districts achieve their service goals in their own communities and those abroad, fostering fellowship and goodwill in the process.

Rotary Foundation grants or grants from other foundations are available to provide funding for service projects. Other financial resources include funds raised from individual donors and local businesses, through the ProjectLINK database, or through club fundraisers.

International Service Projects

In Rotary, the idea of community extends far beyond the place in which a single Rotary club is located; it encompasses all peoples of the world. This is especially true today, as high-speed communications and transportation are bringing people together from all parts of the globe.

The basic strategies for carrying out local service projects can be applied to international service projects. However, because at least two clubs in different countries must work together, communication is even more critical to a project's success.

World Community Service (WCS) is an excellent way for clubs to participate in projects internationally. WCS occurs whenever a Rotary club in one country assists a club in another country with a service project. The ProjectLINK database at www.rotary.org helps Rotary clubs find international partners to support service projects.

As you develop your WCS project, remember that many qualify for funding from The Rotary Foundation. Consider applying for Foundation grants to enhance and increase the impact of a WCS project.

To participate in an international project, clubs need to find an international partner. You can approach this in various ways:

- Explore the ProjectLINK database at www.rotary.org.
- Speak with your district's World Community Service committee chair and/or district governor.
- Contact your district Rotary Foundation committee chair.
- Network with fellow Rotarians at district and international meetings.
- Attend a Rotary-sponsored project fair.
- Use your club's Rotaract club to network (as applicable)
- Reach out to fellow Rotarians on the Internet.

For more information on using Foundation grants to help finance your international service projects, see the "The Rotary Foundation" section of this PETS Manual.

More information on WCS can be found in the *World Community Service Handbook: A Guide to Action*.

Project Planning and Implementation

Planning can minimize delays and failures of service projects. Work with the service projects committee to set project goals, develop a budget and timeline, and begin implementation.

Before beginning a service project, check with your service projects committee to ensure they have answered the following questions. Answers to these questions will result in a project action plan:

- Which projects are club members currently involved in?
- What will be the goal of the project?
- Who in the club and community will be involved?
- How will your club work with members of the community benefiting from the project?
- When will the project occur?
- Where will the project occur, and how will volunteers get there?
- Why is your club undertaking the project?
- What resources are needed to complete the project?
- How will the club ensure proper use of resources?
- How will your club promote the project?

During the project's implementation, keep all club members involved, and continuously monitor activities to ensure that the action plan is being carried out.

Effective Service Projects

Evaluation

Evaluation on the effectiveness of a project should be a part of all stages, from planning to implementation. As president, ensure that your service projects committee evaluates all service project activities.

When evaluating a completed service project, consider these key questions:

- Did the project meet community needs? If not, why?
- Did all club and community members have an opportunity to participate?
- Was there adequate media coverage of the project?
- Was your club able to meet the financial demands of the project?

A complete guide to evaluating projects is included in *Communities in Action: A Guide to Effective Projects*.

Consider sharing a successful project with RI by using the project database submission form, which is included at the end of *Communities in Action: A Guide to Effective Projects*. This way, clubs around the world can access examples of successful projects on the ProjectLINK database.

Resources

The following resources are available to help you conduct successful service projects:

Communities in Action: A Guide to Effective Projects (605-EN) — Comprehensive instructions for planning, conducting, and evaluating a service project.

Human Resources

- District committee chairs, especially World Community Service and Rotary Foundation Committee chairs, as well as staff members at international offices and RI World Headquarters who can answer administrative questions and direct other inquiries to appropriate RI and Foundation staff.
- RI Programs resource groups — Groups of Rotarians appointed by the RI president to assist Rotary clubs and districts with service projects and efforts to address presidential emphases.
- RI Programs staff at RI World Headquarters — Staff members dedicated to assisting clubs and district with programs, service projects, and awards.
- Rotarian Action Groups — International groups of Rotarians, Rotarian spouses, and Rotaractors who join together to conduct international service projects related to a specific topic.
- Rotary Volunteers — Individuals interested in volunteering or advising on Rotary-sponsored projects. Find a complete list of volunteers on the Rotary Volunteers Database at www.rotary.org.

Informational Resources

- *Club Service Projects Committee Manual (226D-EN)* — Overview of the service projects committee and its responsibilities as well as available resources and specific committee duties.
- ***Community Assessment Tools (605C-EN) (Web only)* — Detailed guidelines for conducting effective community assessments.**
- RI programs newsletters — E-newsletters on specific RI programs. Sign up at www.rotary.org
- *Rotary Community Corps Handbook (770-EN)* — Basic steps for organizing a corps, including how to identify potential leaders; also includes case studies and project ideas.
- Service Projects section of the Planning Guide for Effective Rotary Clubs (See the *Planning Guide for Effective Rotary Clubs* [Appendix I, *President's Manual* pages 120-127] — Club assessment and goal-setting tool used to plan service projects goals.
- *The Rotary Foundation Quick Reference Guide (219-EN)* — A detailed overview of the programs and services of The Rotary Foundation.
- *World Community Service Handbook: A Guide to Action (742-EN)* — Information on the WCS program, including overviews of donations-in-kind projects and the Rotary Volunteers program, as well as Rotary Foundation grants that can assist WCS projects.
- *Abuse and Harassment Prevention Training Manual and Leaders' Guide (775-EN)* — Youth protection guidance that can be modified to comply with local laws and situations to create and maintain the safest possible environment for all participants.
- www.rotary.org — The Service Projects section of running a club includes information about how to start, fund, and download resources for a service project,

Financial Resources

- Funds from individual donors or local businesses
- Grants from other foundations
- Rotary Foundation grants
- Funds solicited through the ProjectLINK database

Effective Service Projects

Appendix

Risk Management for Youth Programs

Risk management can provide a basis for understanding possible risks involved with youth activities, such as injury, illness, and abuse, so that participants make good choices. Risk management will not eliminate all negative occurrences, but it can reduce their number and effects. Your club should consider the following points when developing a risk management program for working with youth:

- Develop and implement a club youth protection policy that addresses physical, sexual, and emotional abuse or harassment. Contact your district to see their policy.
- Establish a code of conduct for adult and youth participants. These rules should reflect local cultural standards and those of the district or club, as well as best practices for youth protection.
- Review your club's policies to ensure they are in harmony with the district's policies and with specific RI guidelines developed by the Board for each youth program.
- Consider these questions when sponsoring a youth program or event:
 - What happens if someone is injured?
 - What happens if a participant alleges sexual misconduct?
 - What happens if a natural disaster strikes during the program or event?
- Work to minimize potential losses in these ways:
 - Teaching participants about safe behavior during the program
 - Developing a disaster emergency plan and practicing it
 - Purchasing adequate liability insurance coverage for your region

Clubs and districts are urged to contact a local insurance professional to determine whether their insurance policies provide adequate coverage for their youth programs. All participants are urged to verify that their health and life insurance will provide adequate coverage, because many health insurance policies provide only limited coverage when traveling or living away from home. In these cases, participants may want to consider obtaining travel insurance that includes coverage for medical expense reimbursement, repatriation of remains, emergency evacuation, and accidental death and dismemberment.

Also, it is recommended that a club consult local legal counsel before signing any agreement or contract with another organization. These documents may contain waivers, hold-harmless, or indemnification agreements that may attempt to release a party from liability and transfer the risk to the club or district. Be aware that Rotary International is not liable for any illness or injury to persons, including participants and organizers, or for damage to any property.