

RYLA



ROTARY YOUTH LEADERSHIP AWARDS GUIDELINES



Rotary International

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Guidelines

Introduction

The importance of youth leadership development

Rotarians recognize that today's young people will become tomorrow's leaders. Preparing those future leaders is a significant task. Young people need guidance as they navigate their way through a culture that promotes values that are not always positive or productive. Sound character and strong ethics may take a back seat to delinquent behaviors such as crime or drug abuse, and many young people have no access to resources or information that can help them choose otherwise. Rotarians can assist young people in making decisions that have a powerful influence on their personal development.

Many young people have already assumed leadership roles. Their actions and attitudes can have a significant and long-lasting influence on their peers. Steering these young leaders in a promising direction can have an immediate impact on a community's youth and a long-term impact on the leaders' lives.

Encouraging young people to choose the best path toward adulthood requires engaging them in activities that build their confidence and self-esteem and that provide them with the vision to identify how best to apply their own potential for leadership.

Rotary Youth Leadership Awards

Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) is an intensive training program for youth leaders. RYLA programs vary from one community to the next, but all involve a workshop or camp, generally 3 to 10 days long, run by Rotarians. Often all expenses are paid by participating Rotary clubs.

Officially adopted by Rotary International (RI) in 1971, RYLA prepares thousands of young leaders every year. A RYLA event can be held at the club, district, or multidistrict level, and each program has an RI-recommended core curriculum. The age range of the participants is 14 to 30, though most programs focus on a narrower range within that scope. The rest of the details, including programming, recruiting, and organizing, are left to the individual clubs and districts, which tailor their RYLA programs to fit the needs of their own communities.

While RYLA itself is a major Rotary youth activity, it also complements other Rotary youth activities: RYLA programs often lead to the formation or strengthening of Rotaract and Interact clubs, or encourage youth to participate in Youth Exchange or Ambassadorial Scholarships. In fact, a RYLA program should, by design, strive to prepare young people to be Interactors, Rotaractors, or Rotarians.



RYLA

RYLA aims to:

- Demonstrate Rotary's respect and concern for young people
- Provide an effective training experience for selected youth leaders and potential leaders
- Encourage leadership of youth by youth
- Recognize publicly young people who are rendering service to their communities

The impact of the program spreads beyond the awardees as they go out into the world and influence others.

Meeting the needs of youth

RYLA was created because Rotary believes in the potential of youth and in the importance of investing in youth leadership. The recognition of young peoples' potential plays a central role in improving their image in the community and facilitating relationships between young people and adults.



RYLA gives young people an opportunity to expand their horizons by:

- Developing leadership skills
- Increasing self-confidence
- Gaining exposure to a variety of issues and people
- Making new friends
- Obtaining career information and skills

RYLA participants are also exposed to values that Rotarians deem essential for those who hold leadership roles: ethical behavior, integrity of character, and a commitment to community service.

A unique approach to youth leadership training

Some of the same strengths that give Rotary its distinct image also make RYLA unique among programs oriented toward youth.

- Rotary's strong emphasis on ethics and commitment to the community is an integral part of any RYLA event.
- Rotary is an international organization with a worldwide perspective.
- Rotary's commitment to youth does not end with RYLA. Interact, Rotaract, Youth Exchange, and Ambassadorial Scholarships can continue the development of young leaders who have been through a RYLA program.
- As business and professional leaders, Rotarians are highly qualified to serve as role models. They serve in leadership positions and have a range of professional skills, a knowledge of important issues, and a commitment to service.
- Rotarians represent an immense pool of talent. Among club members can be found individuals with organizational expertise to arrange RYLA events, recruiting skills to select the appropriate participants, and the ability to connect with young people.
- As community leaders, Rotarians have valuable contacts and can call upon the expertise of non-Rotarians who can serve as speakers, facilitators, and staff at RYLA events. Rotarians also have access to resources, such as funding and facilities, that might otherwise be unavailable to a youth program.

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Diverse Experiences

While RI has established the basic framework for RYLA events, Rotarians are strongly encouraged to develop programs based on the particular needs of the participants in their own RYLA programs and the resources available through their club or district. A number of variables — including length of event, age groups served, venue, activities, goals, and whether the event is held at the club, district, or multidistrict level — will shape your RYLA program and make it unique and useful.

For example, it is recommended that a RYLA event focus on youth with a two- to three-year age range. Individuals ages 14 to 18 require a different approach than those ages 19 to 30. It is up to each program to make these determinations.

This is where contact with other RYLA programs becomes helpful; RI's guidelines give a general idea of how to proceed, but the ideas and expertise of those involved in other RYLA programs can help a new RYLA effort succeed.

Here is a sampling that illustrates the variety of RYLA programs:

- District 9790 in Victoria, Australia, held a 10-day workshop in a rural retreat for 30 young professionals ages 21 to 30, with a follow-up weekend later in the year. The focus was on business leadership skills, communication, and planning and organizing. The length of the event and the remote location gave the awardees a chance to immerse themselves in group activities, experiential learning, and extended interaction with the training team and guest speakers.
- In the Netherlands, District 1560 staged a management game for ages 18 to 26. The event lasted three days, over a weekend, and involved some 50 Rotarians who acted as “coaches” during the game. The goal of the game was to give awardees a better understanding of their own management, social, negotiation, and public speaking skills. The awardees played the role of a newly appointed company director. They received instructions on the first day of the event and began the game on the morning of the second day. Fresh from a fictional business trip, the awardees were confronted with a full mail box. Drawing from the information in their mail box, they went about the task of completing a certain



number of assignments during the day. The third day was spent reviewing and evaluating the awardees' performances.

- Districts 2670 and 2680 in Japan held a joint four-day event for 120 awardees over the age of 20 at a campground in a national park. Awardees were drawn from volunteer and youth groups and were placed in cabins in groups of 10, along with a counselor, to facilitate group discussions about their experiences as young leaders. Lectures and recreation were also included. Presenters covered topics such as world understanding, community issues, and youth programs. These districts also hold a RYLA reunion at the same campsite every 10 years to maintain bonds between the awardees and their Rotarian mentors.
- District 4470 in Brazil held a one-day event for members of various local youth groups. The event featured a series of presentations, a quiz with prizes, and an awards ceremony in which a select few awardees were recognized for outstanding leadership in their own organizations. Presentation topics included global and community leadership, what Rotary does for the community, and young people and sexuality.
- District 5490 in Arizona, USA, held an eight-day event for ages 15 to 18 that included 88 awardees, 11 junior counselors (awardees from the previous year), 10 Youth Exchange students, and two Interactors. The program focused on leadership training, with presentations covering communication, conflict resolution, and community responsibility. The awardees also heard presentations about Youth Exchange and Interact. Activities included problem-solving exercises and team-building games. Awardees also attended a Rotary club luncheon meeting.

RYLA

Organization and Administration

The organization of a RYLA program is a complex undertaking. A successful program requires a concerted effort among many people who perform various important functions. After developing a RYLA team to lead the effort, questions of timing, determining the site, funding, and selection of the participants need to be considered.

The first step is to establish a committee with an enthusiastic chairperson and motivated members. Working on a RYLA program involves a great deal of interaction with young people, so it is especially important that those who participate have a strong desire to work with youth.

If you haven't organized a RYLA event before, visit one organized by another district or club. Even if you already have a RYLA program, visiting other RYLA events is a good opportunity to learn ways to improve your program.

The support of the **district governor** is crucial. He/she must be kept informed and involved in decision-making. The district governor (or club president if the program is organized at the club level) determines if there is adequate interest in the program, appoints the RYLA committee, promotes participation, and approves the budget and site selection.

The **Rotary clubs** are what make RYLA happen. Clubs are responsible for selecting the RYLA awardees and funding their participation. All clubs involved in a RYLA program are also charged with acquainting awardees with Rotary ideals and presenting them with certificates after they complete the program.

Developing a team

The **RYLA committee** consists of Rotarians with an interest in developing youth leaders. The committee handles the preparation, publicity, and arrangements. The rest of this section describes tasks involved, such as deciding the date and location of the RYLA event, developing a budget, and establishing guidelines for the selection of participants.



While the recruitment for a district-level RYLA is done by various Rotary clubs, the committee for a club-level RYLA may decide to recruit and select the awardees themselves.

RYLA staff consists of those individuals who are present at the RYLA event, supervising living arrangements, facilitating the activities, and implementing the program. Staff could include Rotarians who may or may not be part of the RYLA committee, paid or unpaid non-Rotarians, and past RYLA participants. Every effort should be made to place qualified Rotarians in as many positions as possible. One of the central purposes of RYLA is to encourage positive relationships between young people and Rotarians.

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Because of their familiarity with and enthusiasm for the program, past RYLA participants are a valuable resource. They can help your RYLA program in the following ways:

- **Providing input to the organizers**
- **Educating Rotary clubs and the community about RYLA**
- **Establishing awardee acceptance criteria**
- **Recruiting and interviewing nominees**
- **Offering peer support to current RYLA participants**
- **Serving on the RYLA committee or working as RYLA staff**

Tasks related to the implementation of a RYLA event can be delegated to various committee or staff members. Two essential roles are the program director and the program administrator.

- The **program director** should be a Rotarian who assists the district or club RYLA committee in preparing and implementing the program agenda. This may or may not be the same person as the RYLA committee chairperson.
- The **program administrator** is a Rotarian who supervises logistics and acts as a liaison with the district RYLA committee. For a district program, this person should come from the host club.

Depending on the size and scope of the event, other roles to be filled by the committee or staff can include:

- **Counselor:** preferably a social worker or someone with extensive social service experience. Assists the program director and assures the well-being of attendees.
- **Activities leader:** a good position for a past awardee. Conducts the recreational and social activities.
- **Seminar secretary:** preferably a past awardee. Handles on-site registration and telephone inquiries and works with other staff members in acquiring educational supplies.
- **Treasurer:** develops budgets for events, tracks revenues and expenditures, coordinates accounts payable and vendor management.
- **Facilities manager:** oversees accommodations and catering.

- **PR/outreach contact:** establishes connections with schools and youth groups and publicizes the RYLA program.

A concerted effort

Effective work from a group of people requires motivation, commitment, and follow-through. Some volunteers are exceptionally motivated, others are less so. Some ways to motivate people include:

- Providing a vision of how the project will positively impact the community
- Showing people the significance of their role in the project
- Recognizing accomplishments
- Giving people responsibility
- Building effective teams

Commitment is the key to getting action. Once people have volunteered their time and effort to a project, continuing to encourage them can bring the project to a successful conclusion. Some ways to build commitment among RYLA committee and staff are by:

- Defining the mission of your RYLA program
- Inviting participation in setting common goals
- Ensuring that people know why they are doing what they do
- Giving people ownership of the project
- Being specific and abundant in praising successful efforts

Follow-through is essential for obtaining desired results. It is a way to maintain and build momentum.



RYLA

Some examples of ways to follow through might include:

- Contacting RYLA committee or staff members by phone
- Sending reminder notes
- Asking for periodic evaluations of the project or task from volunteers

Timing

Schedule your RYLA event as far in advance as possible. Remember to allow adequate time to select the site, develop the budget, create a program, communicate information to the clubs or to club members, and time for them to recruit and select participants and send funds to the committee. The district governor also needs ample time to share the information with clubs. The suggested time line on page 9 provides a general idea of the time frame within which to accomplish the various tasks.

RYLA events generally run somewhere between one day and one week in length. The length depends on what the committee wants to accomplish and the amount of time available to the committee, staff, and participants. Students will tend to have long stretches of time during school holidays; young professionals will likely have shorter amounts of time away from work available to them.

Also consider the weather during the RYLA event. Conditions that are too cold or too hot can limit outdoor activities.

Selecting a site

An appropriate site for a RYLA event should include these features:

- A central location and easy accessibility
- Privacy: A school or university available during vacation periods or a recreational site in a rural setting are good options
- Adequate accommodations for both male and female awardees and program staff
- Cooking facilities and a dining area and/or auditorium for plenary sessions
- Areas for small group activities
- Facilities for indoor/outdoor recreational activities
- Reasonable proximity to host club

It is a good idea to plan to hold your RYLA event at the same site each year. Familiarity with the venue

will help during the planning stage. In large districts, however, rotating between two sites from year to year may be preferable.

Developing a budget

Many organizers aim to make the RYLA events self-supporting and self-sustaining; clubs pay the costs of the participants they sponsor, and no district funds are necessary. In some cases, district funds are available for unexpected expenditures or to serve as seed money. Some organizers have been able to procure funding from other organizations and groups. In the USA, for example, one RYLA chairperson obtained a US\$2,000 grant from a local energy company to bring 20 former RYLA awardees back for additional training.

A sample budget might include:

- Promotional and application materials
- Rental of program site and associated costs (e.g., heating, laundry)
- Equipment and supplies (e.g., speaker system, typewriter or computer, photocopier, telephone, postage, Rotary and RYLA informational materials, recreational equipment)
- Meals or catering services
- Insurance
- Honorariums to guest speakers and entertainers
- Transportation for staff members and guest speakers
- Transportation of awardees
- Rotary accessories (e.g., name tags, badges, certificates, flags, banners)
- Incidental expenses

Some of the goods and services necessary for the event are often donated. Among these are time, experience, expertise, management services, speakers, meals and snacks, truck rental, transportation, program materials, stationery, and accommodations and facilities. Finding sources for these and other items can help keep costs down.

The budget and the cost per participant must be communicated to clubs early on; they will need to include the amount in their budgets or raise the required funds.

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Sample budget

RYLA Budget

Income:	\$120 participant fee x 100 people	\$12,000
Expenses:	Logistics	
	Meeting facility	750
	Dormitory (\$3/student)	300
	Meals (\$10/meal/student) x 3 days	9,000
	Administration	
	Fax, telephone, e-mail	200
	Photocopying	0 (donated by Rotarian)
	Gifts for speakers	100
	T-shirts and pins for attendees (\$12/person)	1,200
	Contingency fund	450
	<hr/>	
	Total Expenses	\$12,000

Selecting participants

All awardees should meet certain basic qualifications:

- Leadership experience or potential, demonstrated through participation in youth groups or service activities
- Cooperative nature and willingness to participate in a group
- Awareness of current events
- Strong communication skills
- Good performance in school or work
- Enthusiasm for sharing new-found skills with others

When considering the number and age of attendees at the RYLA event, the RYLA committee needs to take into consideration factors such as site capacity, staff size, and level of support from Rotary clubs. The program should also be designed to target a specific age group.

The age range for RYLA participants is 14 to 30. Many RYLA organizers have determined, however, that events are more effective when geared toward

some smaller age range within these parameters and better serve particular levels of maturity and experience. For example, 14- to 18-year-olds are still in the process of becoming adults, while 19- to 30-year-olds will probably be much more career-oriented in their thinking.

Clubs are also encouraged to include economically and socially disadvantaged youth with leadership potential. These youth may require an additional investment in time and effort, but the potential for impact is all the greater.

You can attract young people to your program through a number of avenues:

- Contact schools.
- Contact employers.
- Contact community groups.
- Work with Interact and Rotaract clubs.
- Ask past awardees to spread the word.

When recruiting, you can use an application form based upon the following sample.

Sample application form

RYLA Application

(Please print or type.)



Name _____

Address _____

Date of birth _____

Telephone:
Business _____ Home _____ Mobile _____

Fax _____ E-mail _____

Occupation or course of study _____

Employer or school:

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

In case of emergency, contact:

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Describe briefly your reasons for applying for this RYLA workshop.

Please include a brief resume with this application.

Signature _____ Date _____

(Signature indicates agreement to abide by guidelines and rules established by the RYLA organizers.)

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Suggested time line

Below is a suggested time line for a district-level RYLA event. It can be modified accordingly for a club-level event.

TIME	District governor	RYLA Committee	Rotary club(s)
12 months prior to RYLA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Appoints RYLA committee ● Publicizes the decision to hold a RYLA program ● Approves program site and date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Publicizes RYLA and encourages participation by Rotarians ● Selects program site and date; determines budget and cost per awardee ● Prepares publicity and application materials 	
6 months prior to RYLA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Approves budget ● Publicizes event at district conference and assembly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Distributes publicity and application materials ● Selects program staff and develops program agenda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Publicizes program in community and distributes applications to interested youth
3 months prior to RYLA			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Club committee interviews all applicants and selects awardees ● Pays fees for each awardee to RYLA committee
4 weeks prior to RYLA		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completes physical/logistical preparations for program site ● Verifies availability of transportation for RYLA participants 	
2 weeks prior to RYLA			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clarifies logistical issues such as transportation and other last-minute details with awardees
RYLA			
2 weeks after program		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reviews awardee evaluations of RYLA and prepares report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Invites awardees to club meeting and presents certificates
4 weeks after program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Highlights recently completed RYLA program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Forwards report on outcome of RYLA program to DG and to Rotary International 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Encourages young people to join Interact or Rotaract clubs where available

RYLA

Programming

A RYLA event's focus is on leadership, citizenship, and personal development; therefore, its programming should be designed to:

- Build on the existing leadership potential of the awardees, providing them with the opportunity to sharpen their leadership skills and put them into practice.
- Encourage participants to further develop their own talents and abilities.
- Remind the awardees that they have a responsibility to their communities and to the world.

Elements of a core curriculum

While each RYLA event is tailored to the age and interests of the participants, the RI Board of Directors recommends a core curriculum that covers the following:

- Fundamentals of leadership
- Ethics of positive leadership

- Importance of communication skills in effective leadership
- Problem-solving and conflict management
- What Rotary is and what it does for the community
- Building self-confidence and self-esteem
- Elements of community and global citizenship

The core curriculum should, of course, reflect issues of local relevance and be presented in a manner consistent with local customs. Consult past awardees for ideas about how to make the topics and presentations interesting. Young people can provide you with the best input on what interests other young people. Topics and activities should be of interest to the selected age group.

The main components of a RYLA program are presentations and activities. These two components are supplemented by group work, which can be used to enhance the effectiveness of presentations or to facilitate team building.

Presentations

Presentations consist of informative sessions in which a professional or specialist addresses the participants on some issue of interest to them. Speakers should be able to relate to young people, and they should place an emphasis on dialogue rather than just delivering a lecture. Preparation for a presentation includes identifying an appropriate speaker and procuring the necessary equipment (public-address system, visual aids, etc.). Good sources for speakers are Rotarians and their contacts.

Possible topics include:

- Leadership in the future
- Public speaking
- How to face an interview
- Time management
- Community and global leadership
- Prospects of peace
- Ecology and the environment
- Sexual responsibility
- Conflict resolution

To encourage speakers to be inspired by and relate better to RYLA, ask them to spend some time at the event, observing and talking to the young people. Speakers convinced of the relevance and the importance of RYLA may offer to work free of charge.



Guidelines

Group Work

Working in groups encourages young people to voice their opinions, take initiative, and put their leadership skills into practice.

One way to implement group work is through a group discussion after a presentation, responding to a challenge set by the speaker. For example, if a speaker discusses community service, groups may then develop their own ideas for service projects for when they return home. After a speaker discusses business strategy, groups can work together to develop a business plan.

Another effective use of group work is by using it to run the event itself. Specific groups can be assigned specific tasks, such as introducing speakers, organizing the talent night, producing a newsletter, or welcoming participants as they enter the dining area before each meal. This teaches responsibility and creates shared experiences. In fact, some district events are almost entirely run by the young people themselves, with Rotarians providing guidance.

Activities

A good way to convey ideas to young people is through action. Experiential learning will complement the efforts of informative speakers and can also serve as an icebreaker for a group of strangers who need to become acquainted in a short period of time.

Some common cooperative and team-building activities:

- **Blind Polygon** is a group communication activity in which all participants are blind-folded and hold on to a long piece of rope. The group is then instructed to form various shapes with the rope, such as a square, a circle, or a triangle. It's up to the participants to come up with an effective communication strategy that helps them accurately reproduce the shapes.
- **Group Juggling** is a problem-solving activity in which the group stands in a circle. Participants start by tossing a ball to someone else in the circle (except the people standing next to them) until each person has touched the ball once. Following the same pattern the first ball took, the participants must toss multiple balls and try to figure out a way to keep the balls moving without any of them dropping or colliding in mid-air.
- **Have You Ever...** is a way to get participants acquainted with each other by asking questions that can be answered yes or no. Participants sit in a circle. If their answer to the given question is yes, they move quickly to a different area.

Soon the group begins to get a feel for how common or uncommon their experiences are. Questions might include: Have you ever walked into a glass door you didn't see? Have you ever fallen asleep in class? Have you ever known anyone who won the lottery?

- **Human Knot** involves having the group form a tight circle, with each member grabbing someone's right hand with their right hand and someone else's left hand with their left hand. The now-thoroughly-entangled group must find a way to work itself out of a knot and into a circle without letting go of each other's hands.
- **Line-up** is a nonverbal communication activity in which participants are instructed to form a line, standing in order according to their birth dates, but they must do it without speaking to each other.

More important than the activities themselves is the debriefing that follows. The discussion should focus on what the participants learned from the exercise in relation to leadership, citizenship, or personal development.

Some ideas for social activities:

- Morning warm-up
- Hiking
- Quiz program
- Talent night
- Skits
- RYLA olympics
- Ice cream social

Feedback

The best way to assess the effectiveness of your RYLA event is to ask the awardees.

At the very least, participants should be instructed to fill out an evaluation form at the end of the program. Even better is an evaluation at the end of each presentation or activity, before the awardees have forgotten the details of their experiences.

Feedback on the various speakers and the messages they delivered will help in selecting speakers for future RYLA events.

You can modify the sample evaluation form that follows to suit your program.

Sample evaluation form



RYLA Feedback

(Please give us your honest opinion of this RYLA event. Your input is important to us.)

1. Rate the activities on a scale of 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest):

- Morning warm-up
- Volleyball tournament
- Business simulation
- Talent show
- Evening discussion group

2. Rate the presentations on a scale of 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest):

- "Teamwork and Leadership"
- "Business Ethics and Leadership"
- "Public Speaking"
- "Leaders as Followers"
- Closing Remarks

3. Rate your counselor:

Counselor's name _____

Check one:

- Outstanding; should be invited back.
- Acceptable; a replacement should be considered.
- Unacceptable; should definitely not be invited back. *(explain below)*

Remarks: _____

4. Rate the RYLA program overall:

Check one:

- Outstanding
- Average
- Needs improvement *(explain below)*

Remarks: _____

Guidelines

Promotion and Marketing

Promotion plays a significant part in your attempts to establish a RYLA program. Because you want to encourage Rotarians, young people, and the community at large to support your efforts, you will be directing your message to those three groups, all of which overlap in their purposes. Rotarians can work with your program and help recruit young people; young people are participants, but they can also help to recruit or to staff an event; the community can be a source of potential awardees, counselors, speakers, staff, or resources, such as venues or funding.

Promoting to Rotary clubs

Involvement of Rotarians is essential to the success of your RYLA program. Rotarians can serve in many ways: staff, speakers, recruiters of young people, and transportation for awardees.

You can reach Rotarians in these ways:

- Showcase RYLA participants and their achievements at club meetings and events.
- Keep the district governor apprised so that the information can be passed on in the monthly newsletter and during club visits.
- Display your program at the district conference.
- Make a presentation at the district assembly.

Promoting to young people

- Encourage past RYLA participants to visit clubs and talk about RYLA to their friends.
- Involve Interactors and Rotaractors in spreading the word.

Promoting to the community

To gain maximum exposure to the community, consider sending out news releases before the event to attract potential participants and after the event to promote the program's success. Following are suggested releases:

Sample news release *before the event*

RYLA News Release

Contact: *(Your name and telephone number)*

Photo Opportunity: *(date, time, place): (describe unusual team-building activity)*

Rotary Seeks Participants in Youth Award Program

(City), (state) and (date) Young people aged _____ to _____ interested in developing their leadership skills, and having a great time doing so, are invited to fill out an application for the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) program. RYLA is a leadership training and education program for youth.

Sponsored by the Rotary Club of _____, those chosen to participate in RYLA will spend _____ days at *(name of site)* where they will hear informative presentations and take part in fun group activities with other young people sponsored by other Rotary clubs throughout the area.

RYLA participants receive training from successful professionals, with special emphasis on the importance of ethics and community service. They often become leaders in their schools and communities and in their professional pursuits.

Speakers and topics will include: *(list speakers and their topics)*

Those interested in applying should contact *(name)* at *(number)* for more information and an application form.

The Rotary Club of _____ is part of Rotary International's global network of more than 29,000 clubs in 162 countries. Rotary International consists of 1.2 million professional men and women who, as civic leaders, volunteer to improve the quality of life in their home and world communities. Rotary clubs support programs that address today's most critical issues, including violence, drug abuse, AIDS, hunger, the environment, illiteracy, youth development, and international exchange.

RYLA

Sample news release *after the event*

RYLA News Release

(Include photo depicting action between two or three RYLA participants.)

Contact: (Your name and telephone number)

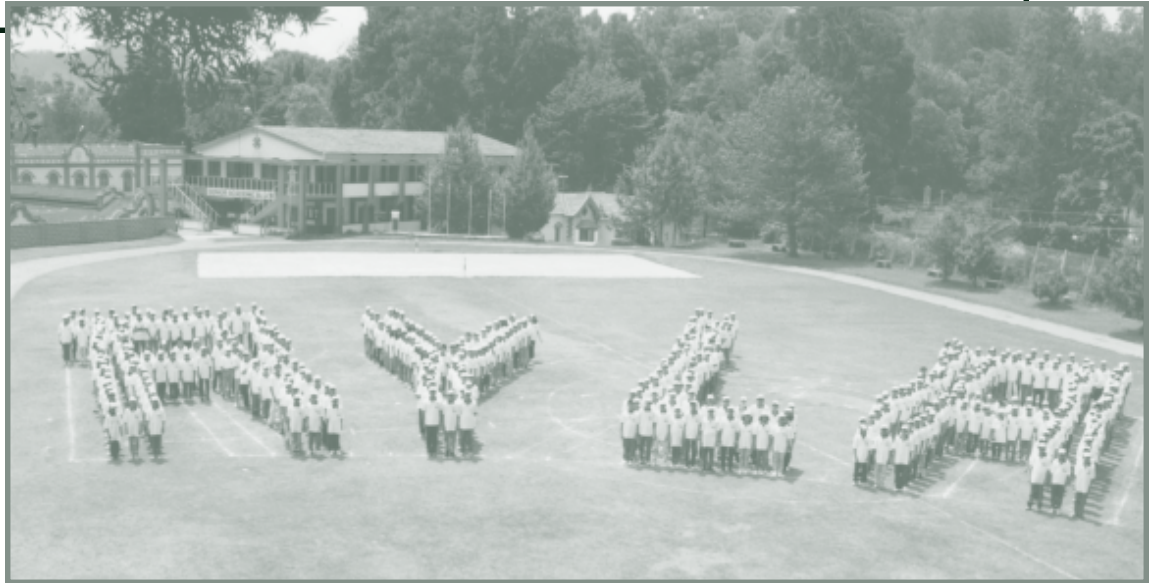
Rotary Program Introduces Youth to Concepts of Leadership

(City), (state) and (date) More than ____ young people aged ____ to ____ learned _____, _____ and _____ during a _____-long Rotary-sponsored event for youth. Known as Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA), the program provides education and training for young people with outstanding leadership potential.

Sponsored by the Rotary Club of _____, those chosen to participate in RYLA heard informative presentations and participated in such activities as _____, _____ and _____. Many took part in fun group activities with other young people sponsored by other Rotary clubs throughout the area.

RYLA participants receive training from successful professionals, with special emphasis on the importance of ethics and community service. They often become leaders in their schools and communities and in their professional pursuits.

The Rotary Club of _____ is part of Rotary International's global network of more than 29,000 clubs in 162 countries. Rotary International consists of 1.2 million professional men and women who, as civic leaders, volunteer to improve the quality of life in their home and world communities. Rotary clubs support programs that address today's most critical issues, including violence, drug abuse, AIDS, hunger, the environment, illiteracy, youth development, and international exchange.



The Internet (e-mail and a Web site) can also be used to promote your program.

Also look for opportunities to speak about RYLA to other community groups or set up a display at a community event.

For more information on promotion, consult the RI publication *Effective Public Relations: A Guide for Rotary Clubs* (257-EN) and visit the section titled "Public Relations Tools" located in the "Club Focus" area of the RI Web site at www.rotary.org.

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Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Is it necessary to establish a code of behavior for participants?

A: The RYLA committee and/or staff do need to establish rules for the participants to follow during their stay at the program site. These rules should reflect standards of the culture, the district or club, and the institution at which they are guests. The code of behavior should ensure that future Rotary-sponsored programs will be welcomed at that location.

Q: In what ways can we continue to develop the young people who participated in our RYLA after the event has ended?

A: Find ways to stay in touch with the awardees to continue your role as a mentor to them. Many districts establish long-lasting ties by maintaining a network that fosters interaction among past awardees and between past awardees and the RYLA organizers. This can be accomplished through a Web site or a regular newsletter.

You can also organize an event for past awardees, such as a one-day workshop in which you can track the participants' development of their leadership skills and offer them further guidance.

Some RYLA organizers have found that a RYLA event is a great way to encourage the formation of a new Interact or Rotaract club. This gives the

young people an opportunity to extend their Rotary experience and continue on their paths toward leadership roles.

Q: What are the benefits of involving Interactors and Rotaractors in a RYLA event?

A: As participants in a RYLA event, Interactors and Rotaractors receive further exposure to Rotary ideals while getting a chance to focus on honing their own leadership skills, which benefits their clubs. They can also relate their positive impressions of Rotary to awardees who are being exposed to our organization for the first time.

You can also choose to involve Interactors and Rotaractors in the organization of your event. This exposes them to the "other side" of RYLA — the preparation and execution of an event — and can serve as a good educational experience for those who will go on to organize other community service efforts.

Q: Should RYLA incorporate physically, economically, or socially disadvantaged youth?

A: Some RYLA events are designed specifically for disadvantaged young people. District 1090 in the United Kingdom holds a special-needs RYLA each year, alternating between physically disabled and mentally disabled youth. Some clubs, including the Rotary Club of Boca Raton, Florida, USA, have sent at-risk students to their districts' RYLA events. In all cases, the same rules for selection apply: The young people chosen demonstrated leadership potential.

Q: What are some insurance and risk management issues involved in staging a RYLA event?

A: Risk management involves identifying potential losses and formulating plans to deal with them. Organizers are urged to review planned activities, consider scenarios that might cause a loss, and contemplate methods of reducing the chances of a loss occurring and reducing the severity of any loss that does occur. Some loss examples include:

- A participant is injured while participating in a team activity.
- A participant alleges sexual misconduct on the part of a volunteer.
- A fire starts in the cooking facilities, damaging the accommodations.



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- A vehicle used to transport awardees to a Rotary club meeting is involved in an accident.
- A natural disaster strikes during the program.

Q: How can Rotary Clubs minimize potential losses?

- A:** Some ways to prevent or lessen the impact of losses include:
- Purchasing adequate insurance coverage.
 - Ensuring that all transportation providers maintain adequate liability coverage and name all involved clubs, districts, and the RYLA program as additional insureds.
 - Developing a disaster emergency plan and practicing it at least once during the program.

Clubs and districts are urged to contact their insurance brokers or agents to determine whether their insurance policies provide adequate coverage for their RYLA program. Insurance becomes a more complex issue when multiple districts or clubs sponsor a program because each organization may have different levels of coverage.



Q: What types of coverage should participants purchase?

- A:** All participants (awardees and organizers) are urged to verify that their health and life insurance provides adequate coverage for them while attending the program. This takes on greater significance when a participant is traveling away from home because many health insurance policies provide only limited coverage outside of one's home area. Participants may wish to consider obtaining the following types of coverage:

- Medical expense reimbursement
- Repatriation of remains
- Emergency evacuation
- Accidental death and dismemberment

These types of coverage are typically found on a limited travel insurance policy. Contact your local insurance broker or agent for more information.

It is recommended that you consult your club or district's legal counsel before signing any agreement or contract with any organization, contractor, or service provider. Such agreements may contain waivers, or hold-harmless or indemnification agreements, that may attempt to release a party from liability and transfer the risk to your club or district.

Finally, be aware that Rotary International is not liable for any illness or injury to persons, including awardees and organizers, or for damage to any property.

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Rotary International Programs and Resources

RI offers a variety of opportunities for young people, all of which will most likely interest the young leaders you encounter during your RYLA event.

Interact

A Rotary club-sponsored service organization, Interact provides young people ages 14-18 with the opportunity to develop leadership skills while learning the value of teamwork. Self-governing and self-supporting, Interact clubs are either school- or community-based.

Interact Handbook: Guide for organizing and administering an effective Interact club (654-EN)

Serious Fun: Colorful promotional leaflet for recruiting new Interactors (600-EN)

Serious Fun: Video designed to promote Interact among prospective members (650-EN)

Rotaract

Comprising men and women ages 18-30, Rotaract clubs carry out a wide range of community service projects, often working alongside their sponsoring Rotary clubs on joint projects. In addition to developing their leadership capabilities in their self-governing clubs, Rotaractors refine professional skills and enjoy international meeting opportunities.

Rotaract Handbook: Guide to organizing and developing a Rotaract club (562-EN)

Rotaract: Building a Better Tomorrow: Colorful brochure directed at potential Rotaractors (663-EN)

Youth Exchange

In this program, approximately 7,000 students ages 15-19 go abroad yearly, for either the academic year or an extended holiday, broadening their horizons and making lasting friendships. Sponsored and hosted by Rotary clubs, participants stay with families.

Discover Your World: Short-Term Youth Exchange: Promotional piece for potential short-term participants (756-EN)

Youth Exchange: Making a World of Difference: Promotional piece for potential long-term participants (755-EN)

Youth Exchange Handbook (746-EN)

Youth Exchange: The Adventure of a Lifetime!: Promotional video to stimulate interest in the program in the U.S. (740-EN)

Youth Exchange: The Experience of a Lifetime: Promotional video to stimulate interest in the program in Europe (739-EN, -FR)

Youth Exchange: Promotional video to stimulate interest in the program in Central and South America (764-PO, -SP)



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Rotary Foundation Ambassadorial Scholarships

The world's largest privately funded scholarship program, this Rotary Foundation program enables approximately 1,200 men and women to go abroad every year to study and serve as goodwill ambassadors for their countries and for Rotary.

Rotary Foundation Ambassadorial Scholarships Leaflet: Informs potential applicants and Rotarians of program goals, requirements, and operation (132-EN)

New Generations

Rotary Conferences for New Generations: Guidelines for conducting community meetings to address youth issues (735-EN)

Rotary's Programs for New Generations: Video featuring ideas for preparing the New Generations to carry on Rotary's traditions (734-EN)

To place written orders, refer to the annual RI *Catalog*. To place telephone orders, call RI's Publications Order Services Section at 847-866-4600 or your service center.

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