



ROTARY'S PROGRAMS OF SCALE GRANT COMPETITION HANDBOOK

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1. About Programs of Scale

Programs of Scale is a way for Rotary members to increase our impact within our areas of focus by supporting proven methods of achieving positive change, measuring our results, and sharing what we learn with each other and the communities we aim to serve.

Rotary's Programs of Scale builds on the scope, impact, and sustainability of successful Rotary service projects in our [areas of focus](#) by supporting larger and longer-term undertakings. Programs of Scale gives Rotary members the opportunity to work with experienced partners in order to implement large-scale, high-impact programs that benefit a large number of people across a sizeable geographic area. The knowledge gained from each program is shared so that all clubs and districts can benefit from the experience and apply successful practices to their own local and international service projects.

Rotary has a unique role as a civil society organization whose culturally, professionally, and geographically diverse members are active in their communities and connected with one another around the world. Our global nature and a reputation built on decades of persistence and success make partnering with us appealing to other organizations that share Rotary's values and goals. Our members contribute to scaling through their ability to innovate and their presence in communities around the world, where they are well positioned to inspire action. Through Programs of Scale, Rotary members can measure their impact; share what they learn with other members, partners, and communities around the world; and ultimately increase Rotary's global impact.

Programs of Scale Annual Grant Competition

The Rotary Foundation awards one \$2 million Programs of Scale grant each year to a program sponsored by a Rotary club, Rotaract club, or district that is working in strong collaboration with partners. Each grant helps a program scale up, or expand, over three to five years.

The competitive application process requires a concept note and, later, a detailed program design in the form of a proposal. Concept notes must include a description of how the program has already demonstrated success in achieving measurable results and of how it is ready to scale.

Applicants will demonstrate that their project is ready to scale by:

- Sharing past results and evidence that the program model works
- Demonstrating that the program is relevant, in demand, and will be implemented successfully in partnership with local stakeholders, including Rotary and Rotaract club members and Rotary district leaders, target beneficiary groups, and the institutions required to support longer-term change
- Demonstrating why Rotary is essential to the change process and how our members will directly participate in the program's success
- Building sustainability into the program concept so that it is clear how the benefits of the program will continue beyond the life of the grant
- Documenting preliminary co-funding arrangements (such as intent or pre-commitment) as well as implementation commitments from each of the key stakeholders

Applicants with the most competitive concept notes will move on to the second stage to compete for the \$2 million grant award. When preparing a concept note, keep in mind the timeline for fully developing your program design from concept to proposal stage. Applicants who are invited to submit a proposal have two months to solidify the details with all partners.

For the proposal stage, applications must have a full implementation plan with:

- A detailed budget
- Monitoring, evaluation, and learning plans
- Final co-funding arrangements and commitments from each of the key stakeholders



2. Programs of Scale Terminology

Impact — The positive, long-term change resulting from our actions. In your application, describe the program's *intended impact*, or the planned, measurable effect of the program on people or communities, both while it is being implemented and afterward.

Scaling — An intentional effort by Rotary members, in partnership with others, to expand proven program models within our areas of focus in order to benefit more people and in more places and foster lasting change.

A program can be scaled by expanding:

- Its geographic coverage (extending to new locations)
- The breadth of coverage (reaching more people in the currently served groups and areas)
- Its target population (serving new groups of people)
- The definition of the problem (applying an existing innovation to different problems)

Theory of change — An explanation of how a program will achieve the intended impact and in what circumstances. As you work with your partners to develop your theory of change for Programs of Scale, please consider the current situation, Rotary's advantage over other organizations, short-term changes, medium- to long-term changes, program activities, and program inputs.

Current situation (also called situational analysis or problem analysis):

- What is the nature and the extent of the problem you plan to address? You may give some broader context, but also give data and context that are specific to the area.
- What are the problem's causes?
- What are its broader consequences?

Rotary's comparative advantage:

- What aspects of the problem are being addressed by others?
- What aspects of the problem are best addressed by Rotary and why?
- Which potential partners could best help you affect the change you're aiming for?

Short-term or early changes:

- What changes would you expect to occur immediately if you addressed the problem effectively?

Medium- to long-term changes:

- What steps are needed to achieve the desired long-term change?
- Who will you reach?
- How would you expect that group of people or institutions to change (e.g., change what they do, change the environment where they operate) over the medium to long term?
- Who else might be reached as a result of the program?
- What changes would we expect in this group?
- How do these changes contribute to long-term results?

Program activities:

- What activities will the program involve?
- Who will lead and who should participate in these activities?
- What goods and services will the program deliver?
- Who needs to be reached by those goods and services in order to achieve change?

Program inputs or resources:

- What resources are needed for these activities?
- Who needs to agree to the program?
- Who needs to be involved in implementation?

Your theory of change should detail the assumptions of your program. Assumptions are defined as the key circumstances, conditions, and events that are needed for the intended impact to be achieved. These assumptions may also reveal the biggest threats to the long-term success of a program. Many factors could impede the positive change you aim to make. Reflecting on these risks and the program's assumptions may lead you to adjust the program plan.

Sustainability — The likelihood that, after the grant funding is spent, a program's observable, measurable impact will persist through the continuation of the services the program offered. In considering sustainability, think about the longest-term goals of your program, or its legacy. If you return to the area three years after the grant-funded activities end, what do you hope program participants or beneficiaries will say has changed since the program began, or continues to change?

Target population — The people that a program is designed to reach. Examples:

- 10- to 12-year-olds who attend public school
- Pregnant women
- Owners of businesses with fewer than 10 employees
- Nurses in rural areas

Program participants — The people the program works with directly during the three to five years of program implementation to achieve its impact. Examples:

- Teachers
- Doctors
- Community health workers
- Parents
- Students
- Local government officials
- Microlenders
- Business owners

People who will benefit (commonly referred to as beneficiaries) — The people and places who will experience the positive change or impact of the program. The people who benefit may or may not also be program participants. For example, they may be students, patients, businesses, community members, or institutions that have better learning, health, environmental or organization outcomes because of the program.



3. Key Characteristics of a Program of Scale

Programs of Scale concept notes and proposals must:

- Align with at least one of Rotary's areas of focus
- Request \$2 million in funding from Rotary — no less and no more
- Include an implementation timeline that spans three to five years
- Demonstrate co-investment from entities in addition to Rotary. This can include other cash and/or in-kind contributions to be used along with the \$2 million from the Foundation (note that funding cannot come in the form of District Designated Funds).
- Include an implementation partner(s) that shares responsibility for achieving successful program outcomes and supports the long-term impact of the program.
- Include DRFC authorization.

Programs should also be ready to scale, sustainable, promote learning, and represent Rotary.

READY TO SCALE

A program that can be scaled, or expanded:

- Benefits a significant number of people in a community or population
- Is based on a clearly articulated theory of change
- Has already demonstrated successful implementation with proven, measurable results. If the program has not yet been implemented within the system that you intend to scale, please consider implementing a pilot within the new setting to establish how well the program model works before applying to Programs of Scale
- Is informed by a community assessment that includes a review of the system's policies, incentives for change, and key actors
- Follows a program model that could be adapted by others who have similar needs
- Includes commitments by implementing partners, key stakeholders, and co-funders, all of whom agree on the program's goals, timeline, and metrics and on everyone's roles and responsibilities during and after implementation

BUILT FOR SUSTAINABILITY

A program that is sustainable:

- Is designed in collaboration with the key stakeholders who represent the communities and institutions that will implement the program and sustain its impact after implementation
- Is integrated into or supported by existing local, regional, or national systems — whichever level is best suited for the proposed program
- Has clearly identified financial support that will continue, either through revenue streams or public budgets
- Demonstrates sensitivity to beneficiaries' culture, traditions, and language
- Promotes gender equity and the inclusion of vulnerable or marginalized groups
- Explains how long-term outcomes will be sustained
- Sources materials, technology, and labor locally whenever possible

PROMOTES LEARNING

A program that catalyzes learning:

- Budgets at least 10% of its total funding for rigorous monitoring and evaluation (which can be done by an implementing partner, a local research institution or university, or community stakeholders)
- Presents baseline data in its proposal
- Is led by sponsors who are willing to learn together with their implementing partners, local stakeholders, and The Rotary Foundation during and after implementation, and to share what they learn broadly

REPRESENTS ROTARY

A program that represents Rotary:

- Demonstrates the role of Rotary members as people of action who mobilize in their communities, advocate for sustainable positive change, use their networks to get additional financial and other resources to strengthen programs, and participate directly in program implementation at the program site
- Aligns with one or more of Rotary's areas of focus
- Is led by a Rotary club, Rotaract club, or district in collaboration with an implementing partner organization (a nongovernmental organization, government entity, or private sector institution) that has experience successfully managing large-scale efforts similar to the proposed program (no international Rotary sponsor club is required)
 - The Rotary sponsor must be in good standing with The Rotary Foundation and must be qualified to participate in grants.
 - The roles and responsibilities of all participating clubs and districts should be clearly outlined.
 - The Rotary sponsor must receive authorization from its district Rotary Foundation chair in consultation with the district governor.
- Has one or more program managers who are based in the community or region throughout the life of the program to ensure effective implementation, rapidly respond to any risks or problems, and report to stakeholders on the program's progress in a timely manner
- Models, along with all of its sponsors and implementing partners, sound financial management and stewardship practices, with financial systems and controls that are adequate for cost-effective management of \$2 million over three to five years

4. Restrictions

A program, or its sponsor, cannot:

- Pilot a new approach or method
- Consist only of research to determine evidence for future programming
- Discriminate against any group, promote a particular political or religious viewpoint, support purely religious functions, support activities that involve abortion, support activities that are undertaken solely for sex determination, fund the purchase of arms or ammunition, or serve as a contribution to The Rotary Foundation or another Rotary Foundation grant
- Exacerbate social inequities, political unrest, or environmental degradation
- Allocate any part of the grant award to an implementing partner for whom that allocation would be the primary funding
- Fund overhead or administrative costs that are not directly related to implementing the program
- Fund scholarships only



5. Resources

A major part of Programs of Scale is sharing what is learned. The knowledge gained from each program is shared so that all clubs and districts can benefit from the experience and apply successful practices to their own local and international service projects. Various resources are available to help the Rotary community learn more about designing and scaling effective service projects, attracting partner support, and measuring for impact.

Before putting together a concept note, applicants should complete the [Increase Your Impact learning plan](#) in the Learning Center. Through the plan, they will learn from experts how to implement successful activities on a larger scale and how to design programs that achieve results.

Other helpful resources include:

- [Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland: In Focus No. 3 Programs of Scale](#), a presentation by Rotary's Director of Programs and Grants Sarah Crawford
- [MSI Scaling Up Toolkit](#)
- [ExpandNet](#) tools and guides
- [Millions Learning](#) project resources



6. The Application Process and Timeline

Concept notes for the Programs of Scale grant competition are due two months after the initial call for concept notes. The Programs of Scale Selection Committee, composed of Rotary staff, members of The Rotary Foundation Board of Trustees and Cadre of Technical Advisers, and, potentially, external subject matter experts, will select a limited number of applicants to advance to the proposal phase.

Successful applicants will be invited to submit proposals for the next phase. The Programs of Scale advisers — a group of Cadre members, staff, and external subject matter experts — will review the proposals, and the Programs of Scale Selection Committee will recommend their selection to The Rotary Foundation Board of Trustees. Final approval will be made by the full Board of Trustees.

Submissions at both the concept note and proposal stages must include all requested documentation and information, have all required authorizations, align with at least one area of focus, request \$2 million from The Rotary Foundation, include an implementation partner and come with some level of co-funding commitment. Incomplete concept notes and proposals will not be considered.

Due to the competitive nature of this grant, Rotary staff cannot provide guidance on applications. We encourage applicants to reach out to the [Cadre of Technical Advisers](#), [Rotary Action Groups](#), or their district's international service chair for assistance when designing the program or completing the application. We also strongly encourage applicants, before they submit a concept note, to contact Rotary leaders in the districts where the sponsoring club is located and where the program will be implemented. The long-term nature of these programs means that local Rotary ownership and support is essential.

Action	Date
Phase 1	
Call for concept notes	June 2023
Concept notes due	August 2023
Concept note screening, review, and selection	August to September 2023
Selected applicants invited to submit proposals	October 2023
Phase 2	
Proposals due	January 2024
Review of proposals, including desk review, interviews, and site visits	January 2024 to March 2024
Applicants notified of results	April 2024
Phase 3	
Grant agreement signed	May 2024
Program implementation	3-5 years

The time frame for the grant payments and specific reporting due dates will be determined after the award recipient is selected.

7. Reporting Requirements

Programs of Scale sponsors submit regular reports to The Rotary Foundation, including but not limited to those listed in this table.

Report Type	Purpose	When
LEARNING AGENDA	Documents the learning goals that will inform monitoring, evaluation, reflection, and dissemination of findings; it can be revised after it is approved	90 days after the grant agreement is signed
QUARTERLY CHECK-IN	A brief meeting, which can be held by phone or online; the sponsor sends notes on program progress and on any difficulties to the Foundation before the meeting; the Foundation may offer support if needed	Quarterly (and as needed)
MID-YEAR REPORT	A written update on program progress and implementation challenges; it may be shared with the Foundation Programs Committee, Trustees, and others	Six months after grant signing and then annually for the duration of the program
ANNUAL WORK PLAN	Details the expected program activities, achievements, and spending for the next program year; this will guide the discussion at the quarterly check-ins	90 days after grant signing and then annually; the final work plan will include a sustainability plan
ANNUAL REPORT	A comprehensive report on the program, what has been learned, etc.; it may be shared with the Foundation Programs Committee, Trustees, and others	Annually starting one year after grant signing
ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT	A record of expenditures, variances, and co-funding	Annually starting one year after grant signing
FINAL PROGRAM REPORT	A comprehensive report on the program from beginning to end and what was learned from it	90 days after the program ends
ROTARY MEMBER BRIEFINGS	Provides information and advice to other Rotary members who want to implement similar programs or are interested in scaling or other topics related to the program	Periodically, as agreed to during quarterly check-ins

8. Branding, Marks, and Use of Logos

The Rotary Foundation expects awardees of Programs of Scale grants to comply with Rotary International policies for branding the program.

- All grant agreements for Programs of Scale will include The Rotary Foundation's standard terms on indemnification, insurance, and privacy.
- The Programs of Scale awardee will receive special recognition within the Rotary world, and the program name will be localized into Rotary languages; therefore, the final program name is subject to Rotary review and approval.
- All Programs of Scale awardees, where possible, must include identifiers of the club, district, multidistrict group, or other Rotary entity when using the Rotary Mark of Excellence, Masterbrand Signature, or Simplified Signature. Such identifiers must be used in a lockup with the official program name and in conjunction with program implementation, including, but not limited to, on merchandise, signage, and other visual recognition of the Programs of Scale award. For more details and further guidance on the use of the Rotary trademark, see section [34.040.14](#) of the Rotary Code of Policies.



9. Stewardship, Monitoring, and Audits

The Rotary Foundation expects sponsors and everyone else involved in Programs of Scale to steward funds responsibly. If you are awarded a Programs of Scale grant, you, as the program sponsor, will be expected to follow these rules and to ensure that those you work with do, as well:

- The Rotary club president or the District Governor will sign the grant agreement on behalf of the sponsoring club or district.
- The sponsor will comply with the Conflict of Interest Policy for Program Participants in section 30.040 of [The Rotary Foundation Code of Policies](#).
- The sponsor will receive all grant funds, not to exceed \$2 million, at intervals as agreed with The Rotary Foundation. The first disbursement will not exceed \$1 million. The sponsor will be responsible for disbursing funds as needed and maintaining proper records of all expenses. If the sponsor is located outside the US, they are responsible for confirming that they are able to [receive donations of foreign funds](#). The Rotary Foundation will disburse the grant funds by electronic funds transfer to a mutually-agreed upon program account that is controlled by the sponsor.
- Grant funds cannot be used to reimburse expenses that were incurred before the effective date of the grant agreement.
- The sponsor is responsible for all acts and omissions of employees, subcontractors, contingent workers, or any others who assist with the program and for ensuring that they comply with the terms of the grant agreement.
- The sponsor will ensure that anyone whose travel is paid for by Rotary Foundation grant funds has been informed of the [Rotary Travel and Expense Policy](#) and understands that they are responsible for obtaining travel insurance.
- The Rotary Foundation may at any time monitor the use of the grant funds, the performance of the program, and compliance with the grant agreement. This monitoring may involve on-site visits to assess the program's governance, management, and operations, to discuss finances, or to review relevant financial records or other materials. The Foundation may also conduct audits, including on-site audits, at any time during the term of the grant agreement and for five years after it receives the final program report. Any on-site visits or audits will be conducted at the Foundation's expense, and the sponsors will be given written notice.
- If, during the term of the grant agreement, implementing partners are audited by an internal audit department or by a third party, the sponsor should be prepared to provide the audit report to the Foundation on request, including the management letter and a detailed plan for remedying any deficiencies that were found. The plan must include target dates for correcting deficiencies.
- The sponsor will ensure that implementing partners keep systematic records of all expenditures related to this grant, including bills, invoices, canceled checks, and receipts. These records will be retained by the implementing partners for five years after the final program report, and the sponsor will ensure that the implementing partners will make them available for review within a reasonable period if asked. The Rotary Foundation or its representatives may, at the Foundation's expense, examine or audit the sponsor's and implementing partners' records related to activities supported by this grant.
- The sponsor shall maintain commercial general liability insurance with a limit of US\$1 Million per occurrence and appropriate Product Liability cover. Where allowed, said policies shall include an indemnity to principal clause or include Rotary International and The Rotary Foundation of Rotary International as additional insureds.