ROTARY'S PROGRAMS OF SCALE GRANT COMPETITION HANDBOOK

CONTENTS

1. About Programs of Scale

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

Our Programs of Scale approach builds on the scope, impact, and sustainability of successful Rotary service projects in our [areas of focus](#) by supporting larger and longer-term undertakings. This gives Rotary members the opportunity to work with experienced partners to implement large-scale, high-impact programs that aim to bring the benefits of already successful projects to new settings, such as a different community or group of people. The partners involved in Programs of Scale share the knowledge they've gained so that all Rotary clubs and districts can benefit from the experience and use the practices in their own local and international service activities.

Rotary has a distinct 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. Rotary members contribute to expanding these projects through their ability to innovate and their presence in communities 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; and ultimately increase Rotary's global impact.

Programs of Scale Annual Grant Competition

The Rotary Foundation may award one US$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 outside Rotary. Each grant helps a proven program scale over three to five years.

The competitive application process requires a concept note first, and then selected applicants are asked to submit a proposal with a detailed program design.

In their **concept notes**, applicants will show that their project is ready to scale by:

- Including a description of how the program has already demonstrated success in achieving measurable results and why it is ready to scale.

- Demonstrating that the proposed program is relevant, is in demand in the planned location, and will be implemented successfully in partnership with relevant local groups, including Rotary and Rotaract club members and Rotary district leaders, people who will be affected by the program, and the institutions required to support longer-term change

- Showing why Rotary is essential to the change process and how Rotary members will directly participate in the program's success

- Incorporating sustainability into the concept so it's clear how the benefits of the program will continue beyond the duration of the grant

- Including a letter of intent showing a commitment from at least one implementation partner that will share the responsibility for achieving successful outcomes and supports the long-term impact of the program. Each letter of intent should clearly outline the partner's role and responsibilities.

- Documenting cash contributions totaling at least US$500,000 from one or more program partners outside Rotary. Having partners invested in the program outcomes from the start increases the likelihood of further scaling beyond the Programs of Scale award because the partners are involved and understand how to further support the initiative. A letter of intent from each of these partners needs to clearly state their specific financial commitment if the program receives the US$2 million grant award.

Applicants with the most competitive concept notes will be invited to submit a proposal to compete for the US$2 million grant award. Those who are invited to submit a proposal have three months to solidify the details with all of their partners.

In the **proposal**, applicants need to include a full implementation plan that includes:

- All of the elements listed above that are required in the concept note

- A detailed budget

- Monitoring, evaluation, and learning plans

2. Programs of Scale Terminology

Impact — The positive, long-term change resulting from the program These are measurable improvements that wouldn't have occurred otherwise. In your application, describe the program's intended impact, or the planned, measurable effect of the program on people or communities, both while it's being implemented and afterward.

Program participants — The people the program works with directly during the three to five years of implementation to achieve its impact. Examples:
- Business owners
- Community health workers
- Doctors
- Local government officials
- Microlenders
- Parents
- Students
- Teachers

Those who will benefit — The people and places that will experience the positive change or impact of the program. The people may or may not also be program participants. For example, they may be businesses, community members, patients, students, or institutions that have better health, environmental, learning, or organizational outcomes because of the program.

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

A program can be scaled by expanding:
- Its geographic coverage (extending it to new locations)
- The breadth of coverage (reaching more people in the areas and groups currently served)
- Its target population (serving new groups of people)
- The definition of the problem (applying an existing innovation to different issues)

Sustainability — The capacity for outcomes to be maintained locally and to serve the continuing community needs after the grant funding is spent. 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 people who benefited from the program 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
- Nurses in rural areas
- Owners of businesses with fewer than 10 employees
- Pregnant women

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, consider the current situation, Rotary's advantage over other organizations, the program inputs, the program activities, the short-term or early changes, the medium- to long-term changes, and the assumptions you're making regarding the program design. **Current situation (also called a situational analysis or problem analysis):**

- What is the nature and the extent of the problem you plan to address? You can 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 effect the change you're aiming for?

Program inputs or resources:
- Who needs to agree to the program?
- Who needs to be involved in implementing the program?
- What resources are needed?

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

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?
- How would you expect the target group of people or institutions to change (e.g., change what they do, change the environment where they operate, etc.) 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 the long-term results?

Assumptions:
- What are the key circumstances, conditions and events needed for you to achieve the intended impact?
- Why do you believe certain actions will lead to long-term outcomes? What evidence supports this?
- What are you assuming about the needs, capacities, and behavior of the relevant local groups, including relationships between key people or institutions critical to the success of your program?

Your theory of change should detail the assumptions of your program. 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.

3. Required Elements of Programs of Scale

Programs of Scale concept notes and proposals need to:
- Explain how the program aligns with at least one of Rotary's areas of focus
- Include an implementation timeline of three to five years
- Include at least one implementation partner that shares the responsibility for achieving successful outcomes and supports the long-term impact of the program. Include a letter of intent or commitment for each partner that clearly outlines their roles and responsibilities.
- Include the authorization of the district Rotary Foundation chair
- Request US$2 million in funding from The Rotary Foundation
- Demonstrate additional investment of at least US$500,000 cash from organizations other than Rotary clubs and districts to be used alongside the Foundation funds. In detail:
  - Letters of intent from the outside organizations should detail their specific financial investment and clearly state their roles and responsibilities.
  - Cash or in-kind contributions from Rotary clubs or districts do not meet the requirement. Program sponsors can accept cash or in-kind donations (but not District Designated Funds) from other clubs or districts to further the program goals, but these aren't considered outside funding.
- In-kind contributions from external organizations are similarly welcome, however, the value of these goods and services won't be considered as part of the US$500,000 outside cash requirement.

Programs should demonstrate that they are ready to scale, built for sustainability, promote learning, and represent Rotary.

READY TO SCALE

A program that can be scaled:
- Benefits a significant number of people in a community or population
- Is based on a clearly articulated theory of change
- Has already been implemented successfully with proven, measurable results. Include this evidence of success in the concept note. But if the program hasn't yet been implemented in the setting where you intend to scale, we suggest you implement a pilot to establish how well the model works there *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 the involvement of relevant people and groups
- Follows a program model that could be adapted by others who have similar needs
- Includes commitments from implementing partners, relevant local groups, and outside investors, 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's sustainable:
- Is designed in collaboration with the relevant local groups who represent the communities and institutions that will implement the program and sustain its impact after the Foundation grant funding is spent
- 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
- Includes an explanation of how the long-term outcomes will be sustained
- Demonstrates sensitivity to the culture, traditions, and language of the people who will benefit from the program
- Promotes gender equity and the inclusion of vulnerable or marginalized groups
- Obtains materials, technology, and labor locally whenever possible

PROMOTES LEARNING

A program that promotes learning:
- Allocates 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 relevant community group)
- Presents relevant baseline data at the proposal stage
- Is led by sponsors who are willing to learn together with their implementing partners, relevant local groups, and The Rotary Foundation during and after implementation, and to share what they learn more broadly
- Includes indicators to demonstrate its potential to be sustained and expanded beyond the Programs of Scale award
- Considers and communicates what, beyond program-specific outcomes, Rotary and Rotary members can learn through the implementation of the proposed program

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 the program, and participate directly in implementing the program on-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 (a nongovernmental organization, government entity, or private institution) that has experience successfully managing large-scale efforts similar to the proposed program. Note that:
  - No international Rotary sponsor club is required.
  - The Rotary sponsor needs to be in good standing with The Rotary Foundation and qualified to participate in grants.
  - The roles and responsibilities of all participating clubs and districts need to be clearly outlined.
  - The Rotary sponsor club needs authorization from its district Rotary Foundation chair, in consultation with the governor.
- Has one or more program managers based in the community or region for the duration of the program to ensure that the program is implemented effectively, respond quickly to any risks or problems, and report to relevant people and groups in a timely manner about the program's progress
- Uses prudent financial management and stewardship practices, including financial systems and controls that are adequate to responsibly manage US$2 million over three to five years
- Ensures that sponsors and implementing partners use similarly trustworthy financial practices

4. Resources

A major component of Programs of Scale is sharing what we've learned. The knowledge gained from each program is communicated so that all clubs and districts can benefit from the experience and apply successful practices to their own local and international service projects. Many resources are available about designing and scaling effective service projects, attracting partner support, and measuring the impact.

Before developing a concept note, applicants should complete the Increase Your Impact learning plan in the Learning Center. Through the courses, 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:
- Management Systems International scaling toolkit
- ExpandNet tools and guides
- Millions Learning project resources

5. The Application Process and Timeline

Concept notes for the Programs of Scale grant competition are due 1 August. We encourage anyone interested in applying to contact potential implementation and investment partners and consider how to best scale their programs well before beginning their application. All concept note submissions go through a rigorous review process conducted by members of The Rotary Foundation Cadre of Technical Advisers and Rotary staff members.

The Programs of Scale Selection Committee, composed of representatives from the Trustees of The Rotary Foundation, the Cadre, Rotaract, and Rotary staff members, will then selects a limited number of concept note applicants to advance to the next phase. These applicants will be invited to submit full proposals. The Programs of Scale evaluators — a group of Cadre members, staff, and external experts in the subject — will review the proposals and share their report with the Programs of Scale Selection Committee. The committee will then recommend an award recipient, and the full Board of Trustees makes the final decision.

Submissions at both the concept note and proposal stages need to include all the requested documentation and information, have all the required authorizations, align with at least one area of focus, request US$2 million from The Rotary Foundation, have an implementation partner, and have arranged the required US$500,000 outside investment. Incomplete concept notes and proposals will not be considered. Applicants that want to reapply with the same program need to provide updated concept notes and updated letters of support.

Due to the competitive nature of this grant, Rotary staff members cannot provide guidance on applications. We encourage applicants to contact the Cadre of Technical Advisers, Rotary Action Groups, or their district's international service chair for assistance designing a 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 sponsor club is located and where the program will be implemented. The long-term nature of these programs means that local Rotary involvement and support is essential.

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

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

6. Reporting Requirements

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

Report Type	Purpose	When
Learning agenda	This documents the goals that will inform the monitoring, evaluation, reflection, and dissemination of findings. It can be revised after it is approved.	90 days after the grant agreement is signed
Annual work plan	This 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 the grant signing and then annually, with the final work plan to include a sustainability plan
Quarterly check-in	This meeting can be held by phone or online. The sponsor sends notes about the program's progress and any difficulties to the Foundation before the meeting, and the Foundation can offer support if needed.	Quarterly (and as needed)
Midyear report	This is a written update on the program's progress and implementation challenges. It can be shared with the Foundation Programs Committee, Trustees, and others.	Six months after the grant signing and then annually for the duration of the program
Annual report	This is a comprehensive report on the program's progress, results, budget expenditures, and what has been learned. It can be shared with the Foundation Programs Committee, Trustees, and others.	Annually, starting one year after the grant signing
Annual financial report	This report provides a record of expenditures, budget variances, and outside investments.	Annually, starting one year after the grant signing
Rotary member briefings	These provide information and advice to other Rotary members who want to implement similar programs or are interested in scaling or topics related to the program.	Periodically, as agreed to during quarterly check-ins
Final program report	This comprehensive report details the program from beginning to end and says what was learned from it.	90 days after the program ends

7. Branding, Marks, and Use of Logos

The Rotary Foundation expects Programs of Scale award recipients to comply with Rotary's brand policies. This means:

- The Programs of Scale award recipient will receive special recognition within Rotary, and the program's name will be localized into several languages. Therefore, the final program name is subject to Rotary's review and approval.

- All Programs of Scale award recipients need to identify, wherever possible, the club, district, multidistrict group, or other Rotary entity that's involved when using the Mark of Excellence, the Masterbrand Signature, or the Masterbrand Signature Simplified. These identifiers need to be used in a lockup logo with the official program name on any merchandise, signage, and other visual recognition of the Programs of Scale award. For more details and guidance about using the Rotary trademark, review the Rotary Code of Policies section 34.040.14. or visit the Brand Center.

8. Stewardship, Protection and Liability, and 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 need to follow specific rules and ensure that those you work with also do so. Three main categories of rules involve stewardship, protection and liability, and monitoring and audits.

STEWARDSHIP

In addition to requirements mentioned elsewhere in this document, these rules apply to stewardship:

- The Rotary Foundation will draft a grant agreement specific to the award recipient.
- The club president or district governor who is in office when the grant agreement is ready will sign it on behalf of the sponsor club or district.
- The sponsor will comply with the Conflict of Interest Policy for Program Participants in The Rotary Foundation Code of Policies, section 30.040.
- The sponsor will receive all grant funds, not to exceed US$2 million, at intervals as agreed on with The Rotary Foundation. In addition:
  - The Foundation will send the grant award by electronic funds transfer to a mutually agreed upon program account that's controlled by the sponsor.
  - If the sponsor is based outside the U.S., it is responsible for confirming that it is able to receive donations of foreign funds.
  - The first payment will not exceed US$1 million.
  - The sponsor will then be responsible for disbursing funds as needed and maintaining proper records of all expenses.
- The sponsor will receive a stewardship visit at the start of the program and will provide the Cadre member assigned to the program with access to financial, procurement, and inventory documents. This visit is intended to ensure that appropriate systems are in place to manage the program's finances and assets, or to develop a plan to address any deficiencies.
- Grant funds cannot be used to reimburse expenses incurred before the effective date of the grant agreement.
- The sponsor will ensure that anyone whose travel is paid for by Rotary Foundation grant funds is aware of the Rotary Travel and Expense Policy and understands that they are responsible for obtaining travel insurance.
- 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 program sponsor (the Rotary club or district that signs the grant agreement) is limited to one open Program of Scale award at a time.

PROTECTION AND LIABILITY

In addition to requirements mentioned elsewhere in this document, these rules apply to protection and liability:

- The sponsor needs to have a written policy outlining its procedures for protecting young people who participate in the program and for handling any allegations of abuse, harassment, or other inappropriate conduct.

- All grant agreements with Programs of Scale award recipients will include The Rotary Foundation's standard terms on indemnification, insurance, and privacy.
- The sponsor needs to maintain commercial general liability insurance with a limit of US$1 million per occurrence and appropriate product liability coverage. Where allowed, these policies will include an indemnity to principal clause or include Rotary International and The Rotary Foundation of Rotary International as additional insureds.

MONITORING AND AUDITS

In addition to requirements mentioned elsewhere in this document, these rules apply to monitoring and audits:

- The Rotary Foundation will monitor the use of the grant funds, the performance of the program, and compliance with the grant agreement. In addition:
  - This monitoring may involve on-site visits to discuss finances, review relevant financial records, assess other materials, or assess the program's governance, management, and operations.
  - The Foundation can 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 receive written notice.
- If implementing partners are audited during the term of the grant agreement, 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 needs to include target dates for these remedies.
- The sponsor will ensure that implementing partners keep systematic records of all expenditures related to this grant, including bills, invoices, canceled checks, and receipts. In addition:
  - The implementing partner needs to keep these records for five years after the final program report and 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 and implementing partners' records related to activities supported by this grant.

9. Eligible and Ineligible Activities and Spending

Programs that are eligible for Programs of Scale funding:
a. Align with The Rotary Foundation's mission
b. Align with one or more of Rotary's areas of focus
c. Demonstrate their ability to be scaled based on past results and evidence that the proposed model works
d. Demonstrate that the proposed program is relevant, is in demand in the planned location, and will be implemented successfully in partnership with relevant local groups, including Rotary and Rotaract club members and Rotary district leaders, people who will be affected by the program, and the institutions required to support longer-term change
e. Show why Rotary is essential to the change process and how Rotary members will directly participate in the program's success
f. Incorporate sustainability into the concept so it's clear how the benefits of the program will continue beyond the duration of the grant funding
g. Document investment commitments and implementation arrangements from all partners. The investment needs to include a cash contribution of at least US$500,000 from organizations other than Rotary clubs and districts
h. Benefit communities in countries and geographic areas where Rotary has clubs
i. Cause no harm and comply with the laws of both the United States and the country where the grant will be implemented. (If you plan to sponsor projects in or travel to countries sanctioned by the U.S. Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control, you'll be asked to supply more information.)
j. Protect the safety and well-being of all minors who participate, and follow Rotary International's youth protection policies
k. Are reviewed and approved by the Foundation before they are implemented
l. Demonstrate sensitivity to the traditions and culture of the area where a project will be implemented
m. Comply with the Conflict of Interest Policy for Program Participants as outlined in section 30.040. of The Rotary Foundation Code of Policies and summarized in section 10, Conflict of Interest Policy for Grants
n. Adhere to Rotary's policies for the use of the name "Rotary" and Rotary logos, emblems, and graphics, as outlined in sections 34.040.6. and 34.040.11. of the Rotary Code of Policies
o. Include signage on or near project sites that identify the grant sponsors and The Rotary Foundation, as outlined in section 40.010.2. of The Rotary Foundation Code of Policies and in accordance with Rotary's brand guidelines, which can be found in the Brand Center
p. Adhere to Rotary's Privacy Statement for Personal Data, outlined in section 26.080. of the Rotary Code of Policies
q. May include the building of infrastructure, such as toilet blocks and sanitation systems, access roads, dams, bridges, storage units, fences and security systems, water or irrigation systems, or greenhouses. If your project will access groundwater, you need to complete a hydrogeological survey. The cost of the survey can be covered by the grant budget.
r. May include campaigns to build awareness of and signs alerting people to the presence of land mines

Programs of Scale funded programs cannot:
a. Discriminate against any group
b. Promote a particular political or religious viewpoint
c. Perform purely religious functions
d. Provide continuous or excessive support of any one person, entity, or community
e. Pilot a new approach or method
f. Implement a program that consists only of research to determine evidence for future programming
g. Exacerbate social inequities, political unrest, or environmental degradation
h. Allocate any part of the grant award to an implementing partner for whom that allocation would be the primary funding
i. Fund overhead or administrative costs that are not directly related to implementing the program
j. Fund scholarships only
k. Fund disaster response programs
l. Establish a foundation, permanent trust, or long-term interest-bearing account

m. Create financial liability for The Rotary Foundation or Rotary International that is greater than the grant funding
n. Include fundraising activities
o. Transport vaccines over national borders without prior approval of appropriate government and regulatory authorities in the originating and receiving countries
p. Require anyone to work without pay. (Projects should strive to uphold labor rights and fair wage practices; if the people who will benefit are required to volunteer on the project, their explicit consent is required.)
q. Require work by anyone below the country's legal working age or, if the law doesn't specify, anyone under age 16

Programs of Scale funds also cannot be used to pay for:
a. Expenses that are incurred, or activities that are in progress or already completed, before the grant is approved
b. Contributions to The Rotary Foundation, PolioPlus, or another Foundation grant
c. Purchases of land or buildings
d. Weapons or ammunition
e. Military assistance
f. Expenses related to Rotary events such as district conferences, conventions, institutes, anniversary celebrations, entertainment events, or project ceremonies
g. Public relations initiatives, unless they are essential to completing the project
h. Project signage that costs more than US$1,000
i. Unrestricted cash donations to a person or cooperating organization
j. COVID-19 vaccines
k. Immunizations that administer only the polio vaccine
l. Travel to National Immunization Days
m. Abortions or procedures that are undertaken solely for sex determination
n. Study at a university that hosts a Rotary Peace Center in the same or similar academic program as Rotary Peace Fellows
o. Rotary Youth Exchange, Rotary Youth Leadership Awards, Rotary Friendship Exchange, Interact or Service Exchange programs
p. International travel for anyone under age 18, unless they are accompanied by a parent or guardian
q. New construction of, or additions to, any structure in which people live, work, or engage in any gainful activity, such as buildings (schools, homes, low-cost shelters, or hospitals), containers, and mobile homes
r. Completion of buildings that are partially constructed (including those with only the exterior built) but have never been occupied or operational
s. Programs whose only expenses are for travel
t. Items that would then be owned by a Rotary district, Rotary club, Rotaract club, or member
u. The detection and removal of land mines or the purchase of equipment to remove land mines