

# RESOLUTION 21R-13

To request the RI Board to consider establishing a Vocational Service Committee

**Proposer(s):** Rotary Club of Kobe-Suma, District 2680, Japan

1 WHEREAS, the practice of vocational service requires that all business be  
2 conducted ethically, with the understanding that it is an opportunity for service to  
3 society, rather than the mere pursuit of profit. This highly spiritual emphasis upon  
4 vocational service is central to Rotary, and sets it apart from other non-profit  
5 organizations. It is a basic principle upon which individual Rotarians conduct their  
6 business and social lives, and a major reason why Rotary clubs and Rotarians are  
7 held in such high regard by their communities, and  
8

9 WHEREAS, the concept of vocational service has developed gradually over time, as  
10 a natural outgrowth of the thoughts and actions of many Rotarians. This  
11 development parallels that of the Rotary movement itself, from its earliest  
12 beginnings in the United States to the worldwide service organization that we  
13 recognize today. In other words, Rotary's model of vocational service, whereby the  
14 establishment and maintenance of an ethical business is a service to the community,  
15 has been well received by professionals worldwide. However, the story of vocational  
16 service's contribution to the expansion and development of Rotary is rarely told by  
17 RI these days  
18

19 IT IS RESOLVED by Rotary International that the Board of Directors of Rotary  
20 International consider establishing and giving necessary authority to a Vocational  
21 Service Committee within RI to explore Rotary's ideal of vocational service,  
22 compile a record of its historical relevance to and influence upon the  
23 development of our organization and disseminate this information to Rotary  
24 clubs and Rotarians as a means of strengthening the Rotary movement.

(End of Text)

## **PURPOSE AND EFFECT**

25 The overall number of Rotarians has remained at or around 1.2 million since the  
26 late 1990s, and this despite an enormous investment of human and financial  
27 resources by RI to increase membership during the same time period. A number  
28 of reasons have been cited for this, but one of the most compelling is that  
29 vocational service has been removed as a central focus of Rotary; Rotary is  
30 deliberately suppressing its own greatest asset. Without vocational service,  
31 Rotary is no different from any other service organization. Membership growth is  
32 an absolute necessity for the survival of the Rotary movement. RI should face up  
33 to the facts of its own history and admit that vocational service has been

1 embraced by professionals all over the world and has contributed to the  
2 extension and growth of Rotary, that it is, in fact, one of Rotary's most attractive  
3 features. RI should also use information about the philosophy and history of  
4 vocational service to explain it at various meetings (e.g., the International  
5 Assembly, district conferences, district assemblies, etc.) and to disseminate it to  
6 Rotary clubs and Rotarians striving to achieve membership growth.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

7 If implemented, this resolution would result in an increase in expenses for RI.  
8 Committee costs are primarily driven by meeting expenses and staff support.  
9 Costs would be dependent on the number of committee members and the  
10 number of times the committee meets in person per year. For example, actual  
11 meeting expenses for a six-member committee would be nominal for a virtual  
12 meeting, or approximately US\$20,000 for an in-person meeting, mainly for  
13 airfare, hotel, and meals. Related indirect cost for additional time provided by  
14 existing staff to support the committee is estimated at US\$30,000.