



ROTARY BUILDS PEACE

Rotary believes that when concerned citizens work together to create peace locally, we can create lasting change globally.

INTRODUCTION

ROTARY'S HISTORY OF PEACEBUILDING

As a humanitarian organization, peace is a cornerstone of our mission. We understand peace not as an abstract concept but as a living, dynamic expression of human development. By carrying out service projects and supporting peace fellowships and scholarships, our members take action to address the underlying causes of conflict, which include poverty, discrimination, ethnic tension, lack of access to education, and an inequitable distribution of resources.

As early as 1934, we were encouraging conversations to build goodwill within and across cultures through our Institutes of International Understanding. The program brought together community leaders, prominent authors, economists, scientists, politicians, and commentators to discuss issues such as the economy, world peace, and scientific advances.

Rotary was present at the inception of the United Nations in 1945 and was one of only 42 organizations invited to serve as consultants to the U.S. delegation to the UN charter conference in San Francisco, California, USA. Throughout that process, Rotary members served as delegates, advisers, and consultants: guiding agendas, drafting resolutions, and helping resolve disputes between delegates.

Today, Rotary holds the highest consultative status offered to a nongovernmental organization by the UN Economic and Social Council, which oversees many specialized UN agencies.

We launched the Rotary Peace Centers program in 1999 to train new generations of peacebuilders, and the inaugural class of Rotary Peace Fellows began their studies in 2002. Alumni work around the world as leaders in governments, nongovernmental organizations, educational institutions, media, the arts, and at international organizations like the UN and the World Bank. We approach the concept of peace with cohesion, inclusivity, and a broad scope to find more ways for people to get involved.

[Learn more about Rotary's peacebuilding history.](#)

ROTARY AND PEACE TODAY

Rotary invests in peace education and capacity building, fosters strategic relationships, and integrates peacebuilding into all of Rotary's programs and service.

We refuse to accept violence as a way of life. That's why peacebuilding and conflict prevention is one of Rotary's [areas of focus](#). By engaging in community-based programs and supporting our fellowships and scholarships, Rotary members take action to end violent conflict and create environments of peace around the world.

During the past 20 years, The Rotary Foundation has committed more than US\$125 million toward community grants, scholarships, and initiatives led by Rotary members that promote peace around the world. Through these investments, we leverage our community relationships and take collective action to create lasting peace — across the globe, in our communities, and in ourselves.

Rotary's peacebuilding initiatives rely on local and regional people of action who seek to create environments where lasting peace is possible. We do this by investing in

- Education and capacity building including youth programming and community-based skill acquisition and education
- Network building and convening including developing regional ecosystems of action for peace
- Integrating peace frameworks into Rotary service projects

As we expand these efforts in an increasingly complex world, our goal is to empower Rotary members to address existing and emerging issues in peacebuilding. This is made possible through strengthening cross-sectional networks and working together to create healthy communities that can build peace and sustain it into the future.



ROTARY PEACE FELLOWSHIPS

Every year, Rotary selects some of the world's brightest and most dedicated professionals to study at the Rotary Peace Centers, located at leading universities around the world. Through academic training, practice, and global networking, the peace centers program develops the individual and collective capacity of peace and development leaders to become effective catalysts for peace.

The Rotary Peace Fellowship is awarded through a highly competitive selection process and pays for tuition and fees, room and board, round-trip transportation, and internship and field-study expenses for either a master's degree or a professional development certificate. The Rotary Peace Centers provide customized curricula and experiences that equip fellows with advanced skills and knowledge in peacebuilding.

Rotary and Rotaract members have an important role in recruiting and recommending Rotary Peace Fellowship candidates from their communities. Rotary clubs and districts also include peace fellows in meetings and events and partner with them on peacebuilding projects.

[Learn more about the Rotary Peace Centers.](#)

[Refer potential candidates.](#)



MASTER'S PROGRAM

Fellows study peace and development issues with research-informed teaching among a diverse student body. The programs last 15 to 24 months and include a two- to three-month field study, which participants design. We partner with these universities:

- Duke University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, USA
- International Christian University, Japan
- University of Bradford, England
- University of Queensland, Australia
- Uppsala University, Sweden



CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

During the one-year program, experienced peace and development professionals gain practical skills to promote peace within their communities, their regions, and across the globe. Fellows complete field studies and design and carry out a social change initiative. We partner with these universities:

- Bahçeşehir University, Türkiye
- Makerere University, Uganda



ROTARY PEACE FELLOWSHIP ALUMNI

ElsaMarie D'Silva is the founder of Red Dot Foundation and [Safecity](#), a platform aimed at ending sexual harassment and domestic violence in India and around the world.

“The Rotary Peace Fellowship program came at a point in my life where I wanted to validate my work. Some of the skills I took back from the fellowship include better communication in the nonviolent space. I feel supported by this community and can reach out to any peace fellow in the world.”

Patrick Bwire is a regional liaison officer for 16 countries with the Center for Conflict Resolution (CECORE) in Uganda. He coordinates projects that prevent youths from being re-radicalized after conflicts and that transform them into champions of peace.

“With my passion for peace, it gives me great joy whenever I am able to apply the peacebuilding skills I have today to transform the life of a person or community and contribute a piece of peace in this world. The Rotary Peace Fellowship granted me a great stepping stone in this journey.”

ROTARY PEACE FELLOWSHIP ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

The [Rotary Peace Fellowship Alumni Association](#) connects peace fellows for networking and facilitates engagement with Rotary to promote peace around the globe.

ROTARY FOUNDATION GLOBAL GRANTS

Global grants support large-scale international service projects, vocational training teams, and graduate-level scholarships that have sustainable, measurable outcomes in Rotary's areas of focus. Activities that are eligible for a global grant in the peace and conflict prevention area of focus need to align with the Foundation's goals for promoting peace:

- Enhance the capacity of individuals and communities to transform conflict and build peace
- Train community members in peace education, peace leadership, and conflict prevention and resolution
- Provide services that help integrate vulnerable populations into society
- Improve dialogue and community relations to determine how to best manage shared resources
- Fund graduate scholarships for career-minded professionals related to peacebuilding and conflict prevention

COMMUNITY-BASED PEACEBUILDING PROJECTS

A global grant-funded project in Abuja, Nigeria, aimed to build resiliency and peacebuilding skills in youth. It focused on increasing young people's confidence and mediation skills and reducing youth recruitment into criminal activity and groups of violent extremists.

Forming a football-for-peace program created a network of youth ambassadors who now promote peace in their communities. As part of the program, they learned team building, leadership, and resiliency skills. They also became aware of the dangers of being recruited by extremist groups and learned strategies to deter that. A mentorship component helped those who completed the program use football to share their stories, engage with a wider network of their peers, and use social media to raise awareness about the benefits of taking part in the program.



Yi-Yu Lai Rotary global grant scholar

Yi-Yu Lai is an anthropology PhD candidate at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, USA, focusing on Indigenous politics and political violence in the Philippines. He has also worked on Indigenous affairs in Taiwan. He uses both academic and social practices, actively participating in research groups and service organizations.

Yi-Yu believes that if we are to be truly effective in bringing about change, we must rely on research as well as action. Yi-Yu hopes that his research can promote Indigenous equality and inclusion and bring about social reform.

GLOBAL GRANT SCHOLARSHIPS

Since 2013, an average of 50 students a year receive global grant scholarships in the peacebuilding and conflict prevention area of focus.



Mina Chiang Rotary Global Grant Scholar

Mina Chiang completed a master's degree at the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex, England.

"With classmates from more than 50 countries, this diverse and inclusive environment constantly blew my mind and widened my horizon," she says. "The experience transformed me into a global talent that will have a lot to contribute to the world."

After finishing the program, Mina worked as an independent consultant specializing in ending modern slavery. "There are still [about] 40 million people today in modern slavery, including situations like human trafficking, forced labor, and forced marriage," she says.

In 2020, Mina became a board member of the Rotary Action Group Against Slavery, where she worked alongside Rotarians and Rotaractors who are also passionate about this issue.



Rotary global grant scholar Mina Chiang addresses the issue of modern slavery in Sri Lanka.

"The Rotary Action Group Against Slavery was the natural place for me to connect with Rotarians Rotary not only provided the scholarship to empower me with skills and knowledge that I can utilize today to end modern slavery, but [it's] also a pioneer on this social issue that I care [about] dearly. How amazing."

PARTNERS IN PEACE

“True peace is not merely the absence of tension ...
it is the presence of justice.”

~ Martin Luther King Jr.

INSTITUTE FOR ECONOMICS AND PEACE

Rotary works with the [Institute for Economics and Peace](#), a leader in the study of peace and conflict, to address the causes of conflict and create conditions that foster peace. The partnership focuses on education and training about Positive Peace. While negative peace is usually defined as the absence of violence, Positive Peace looks at the underlying conditions that lead to more peaceful societies, including good governance, access to needed services, a sound business environment, and respect for human rights.

Club members and local leaders have these resources to promote Positive Peace in their communities:

- The [Rotary Positive Peace Academy](#), a free online course
- A [Positive Peace presentation](#) and [facilitation guide](#)
- Our [Positive Peace in Action Guide](#) to support the creation of Positive Peace workshops
- [Positive Peace Activators](#) in the region
- Use our [Positive Peace toolkit](#) to design your next project

Positive Peace in Action

The Positive Peace Activator Program raises awareness about the framework. It offers Rotary members, peace fellows, and others opportunities to learn about Positive Peace and its applications.

Rotary Positive Peace Activators apply through a competitive process and those who are selected train online or in person. During their two-year commitment, they work with Rotary to offer workshops and learning opportunities about Positive Peace and support the program in other ways.

[Learn more about Rotary's partnership with IEP.](#)

ASHOKA

Rotary and Ashoka believe that everyone can act to make a positive and lasting difference in their community. The network of Ashoka Fellows, social entrepreneurs, and change-makers use an approach that examines a society's underlying structures as they find solutions across Rotary's areas of focus.

Lillian Masebenza is an Ashoka Fellow and a member of the Rotary Club of Sea Point in Cape Town, South Africa. The founder of a social entrepreneur network that builds



Jude Chimdi Ohanele

“The Rotary-Ashoka partnership is one of the best partnerships we can have. Rotary is everywhere with good people willing to help, and Ashoka provides systems-change tools. Together, the reach and resources make change possible.”

~ Jude Chimdi Ohanele, a Rotarian, [Ashoka Fellow](#), and former Rotaractor who uses a social entrepreneurship approach in Rotary projects that make lasting, positive change

on traditional models to support women and youth income generation and enterprise development, she continues to identify ways to share her experience and insights with Rotary service activities that seek to address underlying causes of conflict, including poverty, lack of access to education, and an inequitable distribution of resources.

[Learn more about Rotary's partnership with Ashoka.](#)

PEACE CORPS

Rotary and the Peace Corps share a focus on peace and volunteer work and have a global partnership to promote development and volunteer service. We collaborate to support community projects and offer training, education, and networking.

In 2023-24, the Peace Corps in Ukraine and Rotary District 2232 (Ukraine) worked together to create and implement an online mentorship project for youth on ways to adopt and maintain an innovative mindset, despite turbulent times. The Peace Corps facilitated the virtual service engagement, enabling volunteers when in-person engagement was not possible. Rotary members developed and facilitated the online leadership and change management course, which they plan to develop and offer as a longer-term program.

[Learn more about Rotary's partnership with Peace Corps.](#)



SHELTERBOX

Founded by a Rotary club in 2000, ShelterBox provides emergency shelter and essential aid to families who have lost their homes to disaster and conflict. The aid can include tents, tarpaulins, and household necessities such as mattresses and solar lights. Rotary clubs and districts work with ShelterBox by providing support in areas affected by disasters, from assessing community needs to mobilizing supplies to collecting and distributing data on how the aid helped families recover.

In recent years, ShelterBox has helped displaced people inside Ethiopia, Morocco, Pakistan, Syria, Turkey, and Ukraine, among others. The organization also supports families displaced by crisis across the Lake Chad Basin in Central Africa.

[Learn more about Rotary's partnership with ShelterBox.](#)

PEACE PROGRAMS

“Sometimes the best peace projects don’t focus on the conflict itself, but rather initiate communication and cooperation between two parties. ... [I]ntercountry meetings and projects not only lead to better understanding between Rotary and Rotaract members, but can also act as a catalyst for clubs within a country with a longstanding history of internal conflict.”

~ Toni Polsterer, Rotary Club of Wien-Nordost, Austria

INTERCOUNTRY COMMITTEES

Intercountry Committees promote fellowship and intercultural understanding, establish networks across borders, and foster stronger ties between members, clubs, and districts. Begun by German and French Rotary clubs in the early 1940s, about 400 intercountry committees now exist around the world.

The Nigeria-Great Britain and Ireland Intercountry Committee supported a Positive Peace Activator Training, offered through Rotary’s partnership with the Institute for Economics and Peace.



Summer camp for Ukrainian children affected by the conflict in their country; organized and funded by the Poland-Ukraine ICC.



[Learn how an ICC can help your club.](#)

FRIENDSHIP EXCHANGE

Rotary Friendship Exchange allows Rotary and Rotaract members and their friends to explore new cultures and discover diverse perspectives while staying in the homes of international hosts. Exchanges are reciprocal and can include cultural experiences, vocational activities, and hands-on service projects. Participants often discover new partners for lasting change through their exchanges. More than 200 Rotary Friendship Exchanges are organized every year.

The idea for the Indus Peace Park on the border of India and Pakistan came about after a Rotary Friendship Exchange group from Canada visited Pakistan in 2015 and participants learned that because of security considerations, they couldn’t attend a changing of the guard ceremony on the border with India. Group leader Kees van der Pol, a Rotarian from British Columbia who’s a director of the Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park on the U.S.-Canadian border, suggested creating a new park. Once the park is finished, the goal is for the park to be a place where Indians and Pakistanis can celebrate and share their cultures through dialogue, literature, religion, dance, music, history, and art.

[Learn more about Rotary Friendship Exchange.](#)



ROTARY FELLOWSHIPS

Rotary Fellowships are international, independently organized groups that form around a common interest, vocation, or recreational activity. They also foster international connections, friendships, and understanding across cultures and geographies. These groups, such as the International Rotary Fellowship of Healthcare Professionals or the Rotary Fellowship for Global Development, give people a chance to explore issues they’re committed to, make connections around the world, and create more peaceful societies.

[Learn more about Rotary Fellowships.](#)

International Rotary Fellowship of Healthcare Professionals

The International Rotary Fellowship of Healthcare Professionals uses their professional skills and the global network of medical workers in Rotary to help people with albinism in Tanzania who are marginalized and discriminated against.



Rotary Fellowship for Global Development

Through learning and networking opportunities, the Rotary Fellowship for Global Development encourages Rotary members and others to support global development in the context of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The fellowship organizes seminars and learning events, maintains a newsletter/blog about various aspects of global development, and organizes networking opportunities for its members. It collaborates with other Rotary-affiliated organizations.



ROTARY YOUTH EXCHANGE

Each year, [Rotary Youth Exchange](#) gives thousands of students the opportunity to experience life in another part of the world. During their exchanges, students develop new skills, build lifelong friendships, and gain a new perspective on themselves and the people around them that fosters an understanding and appreciation of different cultures. Rotary Youth Exchange inspires young leaders to serve as catalysts for peace and social justice in their local communities and throughout the world, long after their exchanges end.

ROTARY REPRESENTATIVE NETWORK



Rotary works closely with the [United Nations](#) and other international institutions toward the goal of a more peaceful world. Members of the [Rotary Representative Network](#) maintain Rotary's relationship with several UN agencies as well as key international and regional bodies and nongovernmental

organizations, including the World Food Programme, the World Bank, the European Union, the African Union, and the Arab League. By developing connections within specific organizations, the representatives help Rotary succeed in its endeavors around the world. They also serve as a resource to clubs and districts that want to collaborate with international institutions to develop sustainable and meaningful projects.

ROTARY DAY AT THE UNITED NATIONS

Each year, members of the [Rotary Representative Network](#) organize [Rotary Day at the United Nations](#) events. These conferences highlight our long-standing relationship with the UN and its specialized agencies and focus on the actions we can take together to achieve the [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#).



Lorelei Higgins

[Lorelei Higgins](#) credits her year as a Rotary Youth Exchange student for developing her passion for community peacebuilding. She is also a Rotary Peace Fellow alumna. She now leads anti-racism and development projects for the city of Calgary, Alberta, Canada, that are centered on Indigenous relations, cultural mediation, and community-based anti-racism strategies.

SUPPORTING PEACE

GLOBAL PEACEBUILDER DISTRICT RECOGNITION

Your district can get involved in Rotary's peacebuilding initiatives by becoming a Global Peacebuilder District. This program recognizes the generous contributions that districts make to our peacebuilding work. Districts that contribute at least US\$25,000 in District Designated Funds or district cash to support the Rotary Peace Centers or the peacebuilding and conflict prevention area of focus are honored as Global Peacebuilder Districts. The program recognizes contributions that go to the Endowment as well as those that are for immediate use. Being a Global Peacebuilder District means your district is part of a Rotary network dedicated to supporting peace and development activities, while also helping dedicated scholars become catalysts for peace around the world.

[Learn more about the Global Peacebuilder District recognition program.](#)



YOUR LEGACY FOR PEACE

The Rotary Foundation accepts contributions through outright gifts as well as through estate or bequest plans for the Rotary Peace Centers, peace fellowships, and the peacebuilding and conflict prevention area of focus.

People who want to provide everlasting support for peace activities through Rotary's Endowment can establish a named fund to carry their message of peace forward. Donors receive personalized reports about their endowment and an annual report of activity, and those who fund individual peace fellowships receive personal messages from the fellows who receive support from the fund.

Contact your local Rotary International office to be connected with the best person to discuss your philanthropic support for a more peaceful world.



PEACE EVENTS

ROTARY PEACE CONFERENCES

Rotary periodically organizes peace conferences, which can occur in conjunction with the Rotary International Convention or on their own. At these gatherings, Rotarians, Rotaractors, Rotary Peace Fellows, and others share their experiences in peacebuilding and conflict prevention and discuss solutions to current and emerging issues. The conferences offer an opportunity to collaborate on ways to build peace in communities around the world through Rotary.

Some recent Rotary peace events include:

- [2025 Rotary Presidential Peace Conference: Healing in a Divided World, in Istanbul, Türkiye](#)
- [2022 Rotary Presidential Conference Houston: Serve to Bring Peace, in Texas, USA](#)
- 2019 Rotary Peace Symposium, in Hamburg, Germany



ROTARY ACTION GROUPS

Rotary Action Groups are independent, international, Rotary-affiliated groups whose members have experience in a particular topic. Action groups collaborate with clubs and districts on humanitarian service projects by offering technical expertise and support in planning and implementing projects and helping them find partners, funding, and other resources. Action group officers need to be Rotary members or Rotary Peace Fellows, but anyone can join.

All of Rotary's 25 action groups act to promote peace by assisting with projects that create environments where marginalized communities are more empowered. These projects create peaceful communities by increasing people's economic opportunities, expanding their access to health care and education, bringing clean water and sanitation to communities, and advocating for environmental equity.

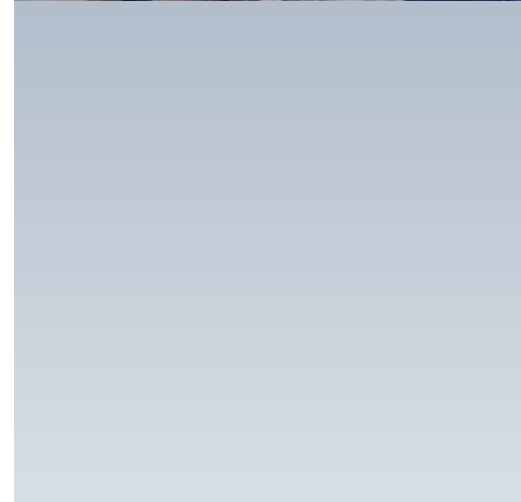
Some action groups have a particular focus on peace.

ROTARY ACTION GROUP FOR PEACE

The [Rotary Action Group for Peace](#) provides technical advice, resources, and suggestions to clubs and districts to further their peace efforts around the world. The group advises clubs on their global grant applications and helps identify partners and funding resources. The group's Peacebuilder Club program encourages clubs to learn about peacebuilding and initiate dialogue and peace projects in their communities. The clubs use resources provided by the action group and learn to make an impact with peace activities.



The Rotary Action Group for Peace map denotes members throughout the globe.



ROTARY ACTION GROUP FOR REFUGEES, FORCED DISPLACEMENT, AND MIGRATION

The [Rotary Action Group for Refugees, Forced Displacement, and Migration](#) advises clubs, districts, and other organizations about service projects that can improve the lives of refugees, internally displaced people, and vulnerable migrants. The projects may include providing relief, shelter, food, or education. The group also offers learning and networking opportunities.



ROTARY ACTION GROUP AGAINST SLAVERY

The [Rotary Action Group Against Slavery](#) provides guidance to clubs and districts on projects that address modern slavery and human trafficking. The group focuses on preventing and detecting slavery and trafficking and supporting survivors through access to services and a safer, healthier future.





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