

# Guidance for Completing your Application to be a Rotary Youth Exchange Scholar

Before you begin your application, read these instructions carefully as well as the instructions attached to the online webpage. This may be the most important and life changing document that you have completed in your life-so far. It will be great practice for other applications you will write in the future for other very important opportunities (college, internships, jobs )

**Your application must be completed online.** We will not accept hand written applications. The only parts of the application that should be hand written are signatures and dates of the signatures on uploaded supplemental documents. **All signatures on these documents must be in blue ink.**

**What information do I need to know before I fill out this application?** You need to know:

- The name of your Sponsor club (the club that is sending you out on exchange)
- Your Sponsor District (District 5020)

## **Where do I find this information?**

The information about your Sponsor club should come from your club's Youth Exchange Officer. That is the individual who arranged your club-level interview.

For information about the District: Go to the District youth Exchange Website: [rye5020.org](http://rye5020.org)

## **Who will be reading this application and making important decisions about your future as a RYE Scholar?**

As part of the interview and application process your written application will be read by

- The Youth Exchange Committee and Interview Panel for your Club
- The District Youth Exchange Committee
- The panel of interviewers at your District Level Interview in December

If you are chosen to be a RYE Scholar, your application will be read by:

- The Youth Exchange Chairperson in your Host Country
- The Youth Exchange Committee in your host club
- The Principal, Counselor and your teachers in Your Host School
- Your Host Families

## What kind of decisions will be based on this application?

Your **selection** as an RYE Scholar will be based in large part by this application. Did you clearly put time and effort into this application? Are there typos or misspellings? **Did you demonstrate that you read and can follow directions?** Is it complete? Are **all the signatures in blue ink** as directed? What are the quality of the photos?

Your **country placement** will also be significantly based on the information that you share with us in your application.

**Your community, club and host family** placement will also be significantly based on your application. Since your host district will not meet you before you arrive, your application is the **only** information and the **only** impression they will have of you.

### Section A

#### Your Photo:

Your photo is the first introduction to many people who are going to be making big decisions about your exchange. This digital photo needs to be a crisp, clear close up of you with a huge smile on your face. This is the first and very important impression you will make on people making very big decisions about your exchange.

Make sure it is a great first impression!

#### Applicant Information:

- Your **legal name** needs to be the name as it appears on your passport or your birth certificate (which you will need to apply for your passport.) Your family name (your last name ) needs to be in all uppercase letters).
- Your **email** needs to be one that is befitting an ambassador. [Hotsstuff@gmail.com](mailto:Hotsstuff@gmail.com) is not appropriate. ***It needs to be an email that you will keep active for a very long time.*** This is how our district will communicate with you to keep you involved in the Youth Exchange program as alumni. It is how your host families and your host club will stay in contact with you. For the near future, it is how our district will communicate with you as you prepare to go out and while on your exchange. Whatever email you put on this application you must keep as your email.

There will be serious consequences and lost communications if you change your email after submitting your application. You will need to check this email on a very frequent basis.

#### Personal background:

Answer these questions honestly

#### Languages:

Ask your language teacher for their honest opinion. Ask them if you were to take an international standardized test fluency test at this moment, where would you fall?

**Secondary School Information:**

You will need to check with your school registrar or your school counselor to get your class ranking.

**Parent's Letter:**

This is an opportunity for parents to speak heart to heart with the family that will be caring for their child. What is it that you want your child's host parents to know about your child? If you were hosting someone else's child, what would you want to know about them from their parents?

**Student Letter:**

This is a critically important part of your application. The first impression that they will have of you is your photo on the first page of your application. They will deepen their impression of you with this letter. While you were given a list of questions to respond to, your answers will be in letter form. You don't have to answer them in order. Think about what makes sense. Be sure that you have addressed all of the questions. Have an organized logical flow to your letter as you answer the questions. Don't jump from topic to topic. Imagine that an exchange student was coming to live with your family what kind of things would you want to know about them? Think about that as you are writing this letter.

Do not use any abbreviations; spell out the whole word: Junior Varsity, Advanced Placement, etc. Remember that most of the people reading this will have English as their second language. You do not need to dazzle them with your vast vocabulary. Write from your heart with simple eloquence. This is actually rather hard to do. Be prepared to do many drafts of this and get feedback from your parents and your language arts teachers at school. There should not be one typo or spelling mistake.

As a letter, it should start out with "Dear Host Family and Host Club", and have a warm follow up with something like "Thank you for inviting me into your home and community". Introduce yourself and tell them something about your name: who you were named after or a nick name that people call you, perhaps something about the origins of your first or last name.

**Where do you live?**

The next most logical thing to tell them about you is where you live. Help them find you on the globe. Write it as if you were zooming in on Google Earth. "I live in Western Canada in the Province of British Columbia. My home is on a large Island off of the British Columbia Mainland. Vancouver Island is often mixed up with the city of Vancouver which is on the mainland. The Capitol of British Colombia is located on Vancouver Island. My town is \_\_\_Km from Victoria. If I were to visit the city of Vancouver I would need to drive \_\_\_\_\_ km to a ferry terminal and then take a ferry ride \_\_\_\_\_ hours to arrive in Vancouver. Describe the population of your town, and the three or four most important industries that employ people. Describe it physically. What makes it beautiful? What do you love most about living there? Where is the first place you would take a new visitor and why? What kinds of things would you want to know about the city/town that you will be going to? Share that information about where you live.

After introducing yourself and explaining where you live, answer the rest of questions in a conversational style. What follows are some ideas for several of the topics:

### **School:**

How big is your school? Is the building new?. Describe it a little. How do you get there every day. When does school start and end? Explain that you have some choice in the classes that you take. Describe the classes that you chose and why. How many periods are in your school day? What are your favorite classes and why? Do not bore them with the details of the start and ending time of each class period. What extracurricular activities are you involved in . Most schools in the rest of the world do not have extracurricular activities as a part of school. Sports and the arts are community sponsored activities. What do you like most about your school or being in your school? What is your school best known for?

### **Your Home:**

How old is your home? What is the architectural style. One floor or More? Single family home of apartment? Right in town, just outside of town? Or out in the country? Do you have a big yard? A garden? Animals? What is your favorite room in your house and why?

### **Parents Occupations:**

This is always of great interest. Don't just give their job title. To say your mom is a "sales representative" does not give very much information. Give some detail about their job and what it entails. What does she sell and who is she representing?

### **Interests and Accomplishments**

There are two questions about interests and accomplishments. One asks about school and the other outside of school. Often these overlap. For example, you might do music or sports both in and out of school. You can combine these two questions. Be sure to talk about any roles of leadership or initiative you have taken. Be sure that you also talk about any volunteer or service projects that you have been involved in. Remember – the focus of Rotary is service.

**What do you feel are your strong and your weak characteristics?** If you are having a hard time thinking about your strengths, ask some people who love you for their opinion. Ditto for your weaknesses. When you identify your weaknesses, tell the readers what you are doing to turn them into strengths.

**What do you hope to accomplish as an exchange student both during your exchange and when you return?**

When you answer this question, write not only about what you hope to learn and gain and do, write also about what you hope to contribute, how you hope to give back for the privilege of having this amazing opportunity.

You can have up to 2000 characters. Remember to make your letter easy on the eyes, This is especially important for second language readers. Use white space to make it less intimidating.

**Photos:**

If your parents are not together and you have two homes, You can have a second photo page that describes and honors your family constellation. Let your club YEO if you need a second page.

Make sure that your digital photos are clear and crisp.

The photo of your family should be as up close as possible. If you include a photo of you with a group of friends, be sure that it is enough of a closeup to be able to recognize you in the group.

The photo about your “special interest” and “something important” to you should be mentioned in your letter.

**Section C: Medical History and Examination (Supplemental Form)**

**Important Note:** It is critical that you are totally honest and upfront about your medical history and health status. Your health and well-being while on exchange is our primary concern. We want to make the best placement possible for you taking into consideration your health issues.

When you make your appointment with your physician’s office, let them know why you need the physical exam and let them know that you will be bringing a form for them to fill out. Ideally you will be seeing a health care provider who has known you for some time.

Bring a copy of the downloaded two-page medical history and examination form that has the first part filled out and your name on the second page already entered. Have your provider fill in the history and examination section, and the certification of your health status on one copy.

Important note: Have the office make 3 copies of the original and then **have the health care provider sign all 4 copies in blue ink.**

**Immunization Section:**

One of the major objectives of Rotary International is the eradication of vaccine preventable disease. Rotary will not send out or accept exchange students who are not fully immunized.

If you are from Washington State you may attach your “Certificate of Immunization Status” that you used for school as proof of immunization for school entry requirements.

If you are from Vancouver Island, you may attach your immunization record from the Vancouver Island Health Authority as proof of immunization.

**TB Test:** If the TB test was done on the day of your physical examination, the results will not be able to be determined until several days after the test was administered. It is acceptable to have a separate form documenting the results of the test as an attachment to the medical examination. This is a required test.

### **Dental Examination (Supplemental Form):**

If you have had a dental examination in the last six months, you can use the results of that examination unless your dentist objects.

If you have braces and they will not be removed before you leave, you need to have an orthodontic plan laid out for your year away. This needs to be an attachment to your application. If your braces are recently off, we need to know what the plan is if you lose or break any follow up devices like a retainer.

### **Section E : Student, Parent and Sponsor Endorsements (Supplemental Form GF Endorsements)**

Important reminder! Everything on this page must be typed except the signatures and the dates of signatures which must be written in blue ink.

### **Section F: Host Club, District and School Endorsements ( Guarantee Form from your Host District)**

You only need to be sure that your name is typed into the Applicant Name box at the top of the page. The rest of the form will be filled out in your host country and district.

### **Section G: Rules and Conditions of Exchange (Supplemental Form)**

In essence, this is your contract with Rotary. You and your parents need to read this section very carefully. If you have any questions you need ask your local club Youth Exchange Officer. On the second page of this section type in your name, and your parents' names. You may not know ahead of time who from your club will be the witness, it is OK for them to print their name on the form. Again, **all signatures must be in blue ink**. The information about the emergency contact in your home country must all be typed in. This is the person who would be called in an emergency if your host family or club was not able to reach your parents.

**Important note:** If one of your parents has died you must provide a copy of the death certificate to your club YEO to upload. If one of your parents has sole custody of you, you need to upload a copy of the legal document that states that as a supplemental document. Your host country will not grant you a visa without these documents if there is only one parent named on your application.

### **Secondary School Personal Reference (Email send to Reference)**

#### **Who should fill this form Out?**

You want to send this link to a teacher who knows you very well. If you are at a new school and no one at your new school knows you well, you may give or send the form to a teacher from you previous school.

Contact your teacher and ask their permission to use them as a reference for your application to be a Rotary Youth Exchange Scholar. Ask them if they would be willing to fill out a reference form.

(Remember this step for the future – you always want to ask someone for their permission to be used as a reference.)

**Other Additional Documents:**

- You must upload a copy of your passport. Your passport must be valid for 6 months after your scheduled return from your exchange. If you do not have a passport. Apply for one now. If you do not have a passport, you must include a copy of your birth certificate.
- You must include a copy of your school transcripts. These do not have to be certified copies of your transcripts. Copies of your report cards are not accepted. It must be a transcript. Rotary International requires you to have an above average grade point average (GPA) to be an acceptable candidate. If you cannot manage school in your own country, in a familiar school system, in your own language, how will you manage school in a foreign country, in an unfamiliar school system in a foreign language?

You are applying for a scholarship that is valued at \$24,000 Dollars. We are very selective about who we choose as ambassadors. This application should reflect your understanding of the value of this opportunity. Ask your Language Arts teachers to proof read the letter part of your application. Before they gave you any other feedback in addition to spelling and grammar, have them read the guidance for writing your letter to your host family and club.

When you feel like you have an application worthy of a \$24,000 scholarship, ask your club YEO to provide you with a copy for yourself.

Pat yourself on the back for a job well done!