



WCS DONATIONS - IN - KIND

Donors: Planning for Success

DETERMINE THE TYPE AND SCOPE OF YOUR PROJECT

Begin by evaluating your resources, considering such factors as time, volunteers, and availability of goods and funds. If this is your club's first donations-in-kind effort, it's wise to be conservative in your estimates. Next, choose a coordinator to organize your efforts, monitor progress, and serve as the contact person. Keep your World Community Service (WCS) district chair and district governor informed of your plans; they may be able to provide helpful insight and assistance.

Early in the planning process, contact international freight carriers for estimates of shipping costs and investigate the possibility of receiving matching funds from a Rotary Foundation grant. A freight forwarder can help you navigate the shipping process (see appendix B). If you already have the intended donation, make sure that it's in prime condition, the operating manual is available, and the beneficiary will be able to maintain the item. If you don't have items to send, your club should consider sending money, which can be sent quickly. In addition, the beneficiary may be able to purchase local goods at a lower cost, with the added benefit of stimulating the local economy.

LOCATE A PROJECT PARTNER

There are several ways to find a beneficiary:

- Review [ProjectLINK](#).
- Attend a Project Fair.
- Ask visitors at your club meetings.
- Network at Rotary International conventions and other meetings.
- Contact [International Service Programs staff](#) at RI.

INVESTIGATE RESOURCE PARTNERS

Consider partnering with an organization or Rotarian-sponsored group with experience in transporting goods and services worldwide. For example, the organization [Global Hand](#) is a matching service that helps corporate and community groups partner with NGOs to transport appropriate goods to parts of the world where they are most needed. Such organizations can offer practical advice in dealing with customs, transportation, and other logistics. In addition to providing assistance with your current project, these organizations may open the door to future partnerships. For a list of resource organizations, go to the [RI Web site](#).

When seeking a major donation, solicit the following groups:

- Manufacturers for excess or discontinued stock
- Publishers for remaindered (unsold) books
- Hospitals, medical clinics, and doctors for older but functional equipment
- Schools for used textbooks that are still in good condition
- Local, state, and national governments for surplus or barely obsolete equipment
- Municipalities for ambulances, fire trucks, and other vehicles

RECRUIT VOLUNTEERS	Volunteers will commit more readily if they understand their roles, including the specific tasks involved, amount of time needed for each, and overall project timelines. Common volunteer roles include soliciting, collecting, and transporting goods; sorting, repairing, and inventorying items; and translating correspondence. For tasks requiring heavy lifting, loading, and unloading, involve members of Rotaract, Interact, and Rotary Community Corps, as well as local schools or sports teams. Appoint a volunteer coordinator to ensure that your project has an adequate number of well-informed volunteers.
PUBLICIZE YOUR PROJECT	Publicity will help attract donors, volunteers, and possibly even new Rotary club members. Spread the word in the local media and industry-specific trade periodicals as well as in club and district newsletters. Press releases should not only include project details and donor appeals but also stress how your project will help the beneficiaries and promote global understanding and Rotary ideals. Contact your club and district public relations chairs for further guidance.
COLLECT AND SORT GOODS	Be selective and only accept items that meet the recipients' needs. You don't want to ship goods that the recipients can't or won't use. Repair or discard items that are not in prime condition or may be inappropriate to the local environment and culture. The type and amount of goods you collect will depend on the availability and size of your storage space, cost of shipping, and feasibility of customs clearance. Once the goods have been gathered, sort them in a way that will be helpful to the recipients. For example, bundle clothes by style and size and group books by subject. When sending dental instruments to several clinics, assemble each clinic's allotment in separate packages.
FIND STORAGE FACILITIES	Someone in your club probably has access to a space — a garage, school or hospital storage room, or company warehouse — in which to store your donation. Make sure that the facility has adequate security and that the temperature, humidity, and level of environmental exposure are appropriate for safe storage of the items. Also consider the facility's proximity to the collection, sorting, and packing point and the shipping destination.
ARRANGE TRANSPORTATION	<p>Although many transportation options are available — international courier, air cargo, maritime shipping, diplomatic pouch, military transport, and even checked luggage — securing cost-effective transportation will be one of your greatest challenges. Some companies offer discounted rates for humanitarian shipments, and businesses with a high volume of international commerce may donate shipping on a space-available basis. When obtaining quotes, note the date and name of the person you spoke with as well as the exact price. See appendix A for more information.</p> <p>Consider discussing your needs with an international freight forwarder who could arrange all of the details of shipping and documentation (see appendix B). Explore some creative and less expensive options as well, such as businesses with an export department that might arrange shipping and documentation free or at a reduced cost.</p>

**PACK AND
INVENTORY ITEMS**

Your choice of containers will depend on the shipping method. A freight forwarder can advise you whether to use heavy-duty corrugated boxes, drums, wooden crates, or 20- or 40-foot (6.1- or 12.2-meter) metal containers. When packing, protect items against water damage, breakage, and theft en route. Palletize and shrink-wrap boxes, shielding items with waterproof sheeting if necessary.

To avoid having your shipment detained in the recipient country, inventory the items specifically and exactly as you pack. When shipping a container to another country, you must provide the recipients with a complete list of its contents so that they can get approval for the shipment to enter the country tax- and duty-free. Inventory control also helps you determine how much material each container can hold. For example, in the United States, a 40-foot (12.2-meter) container will hold 20 4-square-foot (approximately 1-square-meter) pallets, piled 7 feet (approximately 2 meters) high. Therefore, the larger the items, the fewer pallets will fit in the container. Be sure to check the measurements of standard containers for your area. Make copies of each container's contents for customs declarations as well as for each contributing club's records. For instructions on inventorying and sample documentation for the United States, go to the [Rotary District 6110 Medical Supplies Network Inc. Web site](#).

**ASSEMBLE
DOCUMENTATION**

Documentation requirements vary from country to country. Contact the recipient country's consulate for assistance with each shipment to a new country. Most countries require a complete commercial invoice and packing list. Manufacturers, professional appraisers, or NGOs can provide a third-party valuation if one is required. Don't overstate the value of the goods because import tariffs are based on declared value. The freight forwarder will complete a bill of lading or airway bill, export licenses and declarations, and a certificate of origin and help you obtain insurance if the commodities have a high value.

The freight forwarder may also refer you to customs brokers in the recipient country if your partner club does not have one. Customs brokers assist with determining import duties, completing paperwork, and liaising with customs administrators in the recipient country.

**PREPARE AND SHIP THE
DONATIONS**

Label all containers on at least three sides, but never the top. Using dark waterproof ink, write the labels in both English and the language of the recipient country in legible bold letters, 2 inches (5 centimeters) high. Place transparent tape or shrink-wrap over the label for extra protection.

Labels should be made using "blind marks" that do not disclose the contents or recipients of the goods. Include the initials of the recipient; the name, address and contact number of the supplier and distributor; and the full name of the port of entry. Write the supplier's address in smaller letters so it is not interpreted as a "ship to" address. Number the containers (e.g., 1 of 5) and disclose the country of origin of the goods (e.g., Made in Canada).

Keep in close contact with the distributor and keep partners fully informed of the shipment's progress. Let your recipient know the number of parcels shipped as well as how the items are packaged and marked so they can be easily identified at the port of entry.

**ASSESS, CELEBRATE,
AND SHARE**

After the project is complete, assess how well your process worked. Make detailed notes of what you accomplished, what could be improved in the future, and what advice you would share with a new donations-in-kind coordinator. Forward a copy of these notes to the [WCS coordinator at Rotary International](#). Request a follow-up report from your partner (see WCS Donations-in-kind Project Follow-up available via the RI Download Center). Be sure to thank everyone who assisted; let volunteers and donors know how their contributions have helped beneficiaries. Publicizing your success helps raise awareness for Rotary and will make others in the community eager to help on a future project.

SHIPPING ASSISTANCE

With a bit of planning and ingenuity, your club can find free or discounted shipping. For example, if your project meets certain criteria, your club may be able to receive shipping assistance support from [The Rotary Foundation's Matching Grants program](#). To access these funds, apply at least 15 weeks prior to your estimated shipping date because the Foundation does not make grants to projects already in progress. Your project may be eligible for other types of assistance from The Rotary Foundation as well. For more information, go to www.rotary.org.

Personal connections may also help your club find the best deal. Find out if club members have contacts in fields such as transportation, shipping, or logistics. The list below will help jump-start your brainstorming process. When approaching a shipper about reduced fees, be prepared to explain the humanitarian nature of your project as well as how your club will generate positive publicity for this shipper at home and abroad.

Transportation Specialists

- Express mail and courier firms
- Government postal services (they may offer special rates for books and printed matter)
- Military carriers
- Cargo and freight consolidators
- Traditional carriers (airlines, railroad, trucking, and steamship)

Businesses

- Import/export trading companies
- Local businesses with international ties
- Local businesses that rely heavily on transportation services
- Multinational corporations with offices in your region

Nonprofit Organizations

- International agencies
- Local charities that have a global mission or are affiliates of international agencies
- Religious organizations
- Chambers of commerce or business councils

Government

- Local, state, provincial, and national governing bodies or officials, especially those from departments or ministries such as public health, social welfare, education, and international trade
- The [Denton Program](#), administered by the U.S. Agency for International Development, which allows private U.S. citizens and organizations to use space available on U.S. military cargo planes to transport humanitarian goods to countries in need
- Trade missions or trade development offices
- Foreign national tourism bureaus
- Embassies and consulates

Colleges and Universities

- University departments related to your project, such as international development, business development, transportation, or import/export
- Student and faculty organizations

**INTERNATIONAL
FREIGHT FORWARDERS**

Regardless of how your goods are shipped, your project may benefit from the assistance of an international freight forwarder. Freight forwarders arrange all of the details of shipping and documentation. Some are one-person operations; others are large multinational companies. Forwarders typically charge a relatively low flat fee per shipment because they earn commission from steamship lines and air cargo companies.

Forwarders can:

- Offer advice on shipping, packing, and documentation
- Select the most timely and cost-effective shipping method
- Negotiate favorable rates for maritime and air cargo shipping
- Give price quotes
- Package the goods
- Arrange domestic shipping to the port
- Prepare necessary documentation
- Keep all parties advised on the progress of the shipments
- Interact with consulates that need to approve (or “legalize”) documents
- Deliver documents
- Refer you to customs brokers in the recipient country
- Help file any necessary insurance claims

In choosing a freight forwarder, look for four indications of quality and integrity:

1. Financial stability and a proven business record
2. Proof of insurance — ask to see a copy of their errors and omission policy
3. Satisfied clients — ask for references as well as their on-time delivery rate and claim-to-damage ratio
4. Experience in shipping commodities such as yours to your specific destination