



FAQs About International Projects



Each year, Interact clubs are encouraged to complete at least two service projects—one that benefits the school or community, and one that promotes international understanding and peace. But what makes a project “international?” How can your club make international connections? Below is a list of the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about international projects, as well as project ideas to get your club started. Enlist the help of your sponsoring Rotary club or other organizations, plan carefully, and remember to HAVE FUN!

❖ What is an international project?

Any activity that promotes better understanding of and appreciation for other cultures is considered an international project. Often these projects involve members of your local community, while others can benefit communities halfway across the world. *Project ideas include:*

- Hosting an international festival to increase your school or community’s awareness of different cultures
- Conducting a service project in a neighboring country
- Developing a pen-pal relationship with an Interact club overseas
- Collecting money or supplies to send to needy people in a nearby country
- Volunteering your club’s time and energy for an international celebration or cause
- Supporting a project through Rotary International’s World Community Service Projects Exchange
- Asking a local Youth Exchange student to speak to your club or inviting him/her to join your club in a service project

❖ How does our club decide what kind of international project is best for us?

Consider both your resources and the interests of your members when choosing a project. Brainstorming is a great way to put your ideas into focus. Here are some *BRAINSTORMING QUESTIONS* to help you get started:

- What issues does our club want to address?
- What types of activities will meet those needs?
- Will this project focus on international understanding in our community or benefit a community in another country?
- Does our club need an international contact to assist us in implementing this project? How will we find one?
- Does our sponsoring Rotary club or other Interact clubs in our district have an ongoing international service project with which we can assist?
- How will our club finance the project?
- When do we think the project will be complete? What are the steps we have to take to reach our goals?
- Who will be responsible for each step of our project?
- How will we determine the level of the project’s success?

❖ **What resources are available to help our club with an international project?**

There are a number of resources available to Interact clubs, both at the local and international levels.

- Your sponsoring Rotary club or other Interact clubs in your district are excellent places to search for ideas, assistance and support. Contact your Rotarian advisor or District Interact Chairperson.
- Local libraries, schools, governments, and non-governmental organizations can be useful as you research areas of the world that interest you, help you determine needs, and provide guidance on how to help. The Internet is also an outstanding resource, and using e-mail can greatly speed up communication across borders.
- Use the Interact Correspondence Exchange List to help you establish a connection with Interactors in other countries. By writing to other Interact clubs you can exchange ideas, learn about other cultures, or collaborate on a service project.
- **The Community Projects Database** (on Rotary's web site at www.rotary.org/programs/projectsdb/index.html) represents a collection of project models designed to help you learn from the success of other Rotary and Interact clubs. Also available online is the **World Community Service Projects Exchange** (<http://www.rotary.org/programs/wcs/projects/database.html>), which is a comprehensive database of Rotary and Interact clubs who are requesting financial and material assistance for their local service projects.

❖ **How does our club donate goods overseas?**

Many times, when a disaster strikes a community somewhere in the world, Interactors hope to offer support through donation of goods. While these kinds of "relief" projects are very valuable, they require an enormous amount of communication, planning, and commitment from both Interactors and those benefiting from the project. Collaboration between Interact clubs, their sponsoring Rotary clubs, or other organizations help give these projects the support they need to be successful. Consult RI's ***Donations-in-kind Information Network Resource Guide*** (available on the RI website), which provides several suggestions for planning and implementing donated goods projects, for more information.

International understanding projects truly make Interact special. Be creative, try to involve as many members as possible, and enjoy creating a more peaceful world together! Please contact RI if you have any questions or need further assistance in making international contacts, and don't forget to let us know about your outstanding international service efforts!

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