

GSE Frequently Asked Questions

- **What is Group Study Exchange (GSE)?**

The Group Study Exchange program is a unique cultural and vocational exchange opportunity for business and professional men and women in the initial years of their careers. The program is designed to develop professional and leadership skills among young people to better prepare them to address the needs of their communities and an increasingly global workplace.

- **What constitutes a GSE team?**

1 Rotarian team leader who is not the current DG, immediate PDG, or the DGE *and*

4 non-Rotarian team members who are:

- Between the ages of 25-40
- Currently employed, with 2 years of experience in their chosen profession
- Not lineal descendants or spouses of Rotarians

- **How can club-level Rotarians get involved in GSE?**

Rotarians can promote GSE in their communities by identifying qualified team member candidates or businesses that may have potential applicants. Rotarians can offer to host visiting GSE team members in their homes and participate in the local host itinerary for the team. Rotarians should invite GSE alumni to speak at Rotary club meetings so that the club can learn about the program and meet local participants. Rotarians with leadership and international experience may be qualified to lead a GSE team.

- **Where can I find GSE team member and team leader applications and other program details?**

All GSE program information (including brochures, program guidelines and applications) can be found on the Rotary website under “GSE materials for download”. District GSE Chairs also have a limited number of handbooks, brochures and applications on hand.

- **Who pays for this exchange?**

Every other year, regardless of a district’s financial contributions to the Foundation, districts may apply to The Rotary Foundation for a World Fund Award to cover the cost of sending a GSE team. To find out in what program year your district may apply for a World Fund Award, check the “World Fund Availability List” on the Rotary website under “GSE materials for download”.

- **If my district is not eligible for a World Fund Award in a given program year, can we still participate in a GSE?**

Yes. Districts may allocate district designated funds (DDF) in the amount of US\$11,000 in any program year to cover the cost of sending a GSE team. The DDF cost of sending a GSE team to a neighboring country is US\$6,000.

- **My district is not eligible for a World Fund Award and we do not have enough DDF to cover the entire cost of sending a GSE team. Are there any other methods for funding a GSE?**

Districts with no available DDF for GSE may receive a donation of DDF from their partner district. All donations must be negotiated independently: the Foundation does not solicit DDF donations on behalf of districts to cover GSE costs. Districts may choose to donate the full DDF cost of a GSE to their partner district, or exactly half the DDF cost (with the receiving district allocating the remaining funds). Contact your GSE coordinator at the Foundation for details on how to arrange a DDF donation. Personal funds and/or checks are NOT accepted to pay for GSE teams.

- **My district has not taken advantage of a World Fund Award for GSE in recent years. How much money is now available to my district from the World Fund?**

World Fund Awards for GSE are not accumulable. In other words, if your district has not applied for a World Fund Award during the most recent two-year program cycle, funds are NOT carried over into the next

two-year program cycle. Check the “World Fund Availability List” on the Rotary website to determine the next program year in which your district is eligible to apply for a World Fund Award.

- **What expenses are paid for by the World Fund Award or by a district’s DDF allocation?**

A World Fund Award or DDF allocation for GSE covers the least expensive transportation for each team’s travel from the sending district to the hosting district. Subsidies are available for language training for the GSE team and for expenses related to a GSE team’s attendance at the District Conference. The hosting district is responsible for covering the cost of meals and lodging for the team (usually through Rotarian host families) and logistics within the district.

- **What type of financial assistance is available to low-income districts?**

Low-income districts are eligible for a travel subsidy of up to US\$600 to help defray the intra-district travel expenses of the visiting GSE team. Multi-country low-income districts are eligible for additional travel funds. To determine whether or not your district is eligible for a low-income district subsidy, consult the Rotary website.

- **How do partner districts decide when their GSE teams will travel?**

If both partner districts are using a World Fund Award to send their GSE teams, the GSE must be carried out over two separate but consecutive program years. At the International Assembly each year, Governors of partnered districts determine which team will travel in which program year. If one or both of the partner districts has allocated DDF to send their GSE team, the GSE may take place in the same program year. Governors of partnered districts determine together the dates of travel for each GSE team.

- **What are the advantages of a “neighboring country” GSE?**

In addition to the reduced DDF cost of sending a GSE team to a neighboring country (US\$6,000 instead of US\$11,000), districts can build relationships with nearby nations and share successful methods of addressing common social concerns and regional issues. Neighboring country GSEs can take on the same focuses as standard GSEs: cultural, single-vocation, traditional or humanitarian. If you have questions about whether your district qualifies as a neighboring country with a certain partner district, contact your GSE Coordinator at The Rotary Foundation for assistance.

- **What are Centennial GSE teams?**

To commemorate the 100th anniversary of Rotary, every GSE team that travels in the 2004-05 Rotary year will carry the special designation of “Centennial GSE Team”. Districts are encouraged to recruit special focus GSE teams that represent Rotary’s 100 years of service. GSE team members that travel in the 2004-05 Rotary year will receive a unique Rotary Foundation Alumni Certificate bearing the Centennial GSE seal. Centennial GSE teams are funded in the same way as teams traveling in any other program year: through the World Fund or a DDF allocation. If districts are not eligible to apply for a World Fund Award to send a Centennial GSE team in 2004-05, they may wish to allocate DDF in order to send a team in that year.

- **What happens if safety or health concerns prevent my district from sending its GSE team?**

If there are valid and documented safety or health concerns about travel to certain regions of the world, districts may request postponement of GSE team travel. If such a concern arises, districts should immediately notify their partner district and their GSE Coordinator at The Rotary Foundation. If the Foundation determines at any point in the GSE process that the safety of GSE participants in the host country is or could be at risk, the Foundation may require that the GSE itinerary be modified, cancelled, or indefinitely postponed.

- **Who can I contact if I have questions or concerns about the GSE program?**

Call the GSE Department at The Rotary Foundation at **847-866-3330** and ask to be connected with the GSE Coordinator for your district. Email inquiries may be sent to gseinformation@rotaryintl.org