



Social Change Initiative Guide

Rotary sees peace not as an abstract concept but as a living, dynamic expression of human development. Our programs, grants and fellowships focus on creating environments where peace can be built and maintained. We are looking to invest in the skills, attitudes and ideas of professionals from all sectors who have identified a change they can lead to contribute to sustainable, positive peace.

Rotary Peace Fellows become effective peacebuilders by designing and implementing innovative, sustainable, locally-led initiatives that alleviate the root causes of conflict. The social change initiative is an opportunity to put training into practice, and serves as a catalyst for new paths to peace.

Possible areas of focus:

- Human rights protection and advocacy
- Promoting peace through media and technology
- Poverty alleviation and economic development
- Interreligious dialogue and cooperation
- Gender equity and women's empowerment
- Public health access and awareness
- Refugee assistance and social cohesion
- Youth programs and conflict prevention
- Climate change adaptation and environmental protection

Timeline and Commitment

Candidates for the professional development certificate program will submit a social change initiative proposal as part of their application. During the 10-week on-site portion of the program, fellows will examine new approaches to peacebuilding, develop an action plan, and prepare to apply their leadership skills and a systems mindset to make their proposed initiative a reality.

At the end of the 10-week session, fellows will return to their jobs or communities and implement their social change initiatives over the next nine months. They will be assisted by a mentor chosen from members of the university's faculty or network of professionals. Fellows will also participate in interactive online learning sessions with other members of their cohort. **Fellows should plan to devote a minimum of 5-10 hours a week to their social change initiative, depending on the nature of the project.**

As the yearlong program concludes, fellows will return to the peace center for a one-week on-site capstone session, where they will reflect and report on their social change efforts to an audience of fellows, Rotary members, and experts in the field. To foster a long-term affiliation with one another and with Rotary, the cohort returning for its final week will overlap with a new cohort starting its first on-site session.

What makes a strong proposal?

Rotary members and alumni volunteers will score each social change initiative proposal based on its feasibility, impact, and potential to promote peace. Here are some tips for developing a strong proposal:

- **Be specific and clearly define the initiative.** What is the purpose? Who will benefit from the social change being proposed? Is your initiative time-bound and measurable within the nine-month implementation period?
- **Build on a current project or idea** to maximize resources and take advantage of an existing network of expertise. Explore creative and innovative ways to expand on or increase the impact of these ideas.
- **Describe your vision of success.** Once your idea has been implemented, how will it contribute to sustained peace? How might this initiative build on Rotary's mission? If your project is successful at the local scale, how will it be continued or expanded after your fellowship ends?

How does the Rotary Peace Fellowship determine relevant experience?

The Rotary Foundation welcomes eligible candidates from all backgrounds. We are looking to invest in early-career candidates for the master's degree program with at least three years of relevant experience, and mid-career candidates for the certificate program with at least five years of relevant experience.



Candidates for the Rotary Peace Fellowship must have relevant professional experience in peacebuilding and/or development prior to application, as well as potential for future growth and impact resulting from their participation in the fellowship. Relevant experience may include work in the planning, implementation, or evaluation of peacebuilding or development initiatives in the following categories:

1. **Government, official diplomacy, or policymaking** as part of a local, national, or international institution.
2. **Non-governmental organizations** that contribute to the analysis, prevention, management, resolution, or recovery from conflict, or that engage in work related to humanitarian assistance or development.
3. **Economic development**, or peacebuilding through the expansion of economic opportunity.
4. **Private citizen diplomacy**, such as leadership of cultural or vocational exchange programs, or leadership through volunteer organizations on causes related to peace and development.
5. **Research and education** initiatives through roles at think tanks, in academia, leading train-the-trainer programs, or as an educator where teaching material primarily covers global or cross-cultural studies, peace studies (including human rights, mediation, negotiation, or dialogue), or conflict analysis/resolution.
6. **Advocacy and activism** on behalf of causes related to peace and development, including legal professionals specializing in related areas such as human rights or the representation of vulnerable individuals or groups.
7. **Leadership in a religious congregation or organization** emphasizing pacifism, sanctuary, nonviolence, or peacebuilding through interfaith dialogue and tolerance.
8. **Media and the arts**, in roles that contribute to peace through the research and spread of reliable information, encouragement of positive social change, and shaping public opinion towards peaceful outcomes.
9. **Law enforcement or military** positions related to peacekeeping, and improving community interactions and partnerships.
10. **Public health** roles related to community development that prevent the spread of disease and improve health outcomes.

Peacebuilding is an evolving field; a candidate with innovative or context-specific experience that does not relate to a category listed above may include it in their application, and Rotary Peace Centers staff will evaluate its relevancy to the fellowship's goals on a case-by-case basis.