

# Starting an Interact Club

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## Resources for Rotarians

Organizing an Interact club is one of the most rewarding activities a Rotary club can undertake in its community. The Interact program gives Rotarians the opportunity to mentor dynamic young men and women who want to help the local and international community.

Rotarians serve as resources for Interactors, who will become tomorrow's parents, professionals, and community leaders. An Interact club can bring new energy to a Rotary club, inspiring fresh ideas for service, increasing support to projects, and spreading knowledge of Rotary into other sectors of the community. Interactors, with the experience they've gained through this Rotary-sponsored program, make exceptional future Rotaractors and later Rotarians.

Interact Clubs can be school based or community based. Consider when making this decision that school based clubs have a captive group of potential new members annually.

- Once the Rotary club board approves the sponsorship of an Interact club, choose a club member who is interested and enthusiastic about starting an Interact Club. Form a committee with that member as chair.
- Meet with school officials to explain the program and its advantages. Rotarians and school officials should continue to work together to determine membership requirements, the time and location of the Interact club's meetings, and other policies
- Identify a teacher, counsellor, or Principal who will champion the idea of Interact at the school. Hopefully they will also either agree to be the School Interact Advisor, or recommend a suitable candidate. Rotarians or young people attending the school who want to start an Interact Club will often help to identify the right champion.
- Advertise an Interact interest meeting in the school. Ask school leadership to attend and to talk about it to their networks. Use Facebook as a means to get the message out. (Or ask the students to do that)!
- At the interest meeting discuss Interact, Rotaract and the Rotary family. Describe what Interact is and what can be accomplished by the students working together. Talk about potential projects the Interactors could support. At the end of the meeting, have interested people write their names on a signup sheet.
- Invite those on the sign up sheet to bring a friend to a second meeting about 1 week later. Rotarian mentors can help set the stage at this meeting. It's important to remember that young people need to be interested and motivated to attend the meeting. They may be driven by their peer group, by food, by the excitement of working on a specific project. Whatever can be done to generate enthusiasm will help move things forward. Usually the students will be able to identify the best way(s) of motivating their peers.

- Once a group of prospective Interactors has been assembled, you can begin to hold organizational meetings to plan the club's activities. Keep the enthusiasm level high by holding the meetings no more than two weeks apart, and be sure to keep a record of the names and phone numbers or e-mail addresses of those who attend so you can invite them to future meetings. Encourage them to invite friends.
- When you have achieved a strong base of members, 15 plus, you will be ready to proceed with applying for official RI certification. The procedure for this is in the Interact Handbook with all required forms.

## **The Details**

- The Interact Club handbook has generic Interact Club Constitution and By Laws which are adopted and kept by the Interact club secretary.
- The Secretary is also responsible for completing and sending the Interact Organization List to Rotary International. The Rotarian mentor can help facilitate this process as it has to be signed by the President of the sponsoring Rotary Club and District Governor and faxed to Rotary International.
- Charter Certificates are usually received by Interact Clubs within a month.

**Interact Clubs cannot be merged with existing service clubs in the school. Interact Clubs stand alone.**

**The Rotary Interact Advisor should attend all Interact Club meetings where possible to help ensure that there is some Rotary content included every time.**

## **Provided by the sponsoring Rotary Club:**

- **At least one Rotarian who will attend Interact meetings on a regular basis to offer support and ideas.**
- An Interact Handbook, Interact Membership application form, and Interact Club Organization List.
- Interact Club banner, gavel and gong, officers and membership pins including the Interact Advisors pin.
- Induction Ceremony for the Chartered members and Officers of the Club can be jointly managed by the Interactors and the Rotary Club. It can be at the school at lunch time or at a club meeting or in a restaurant, etc.
- The sponsoring Rotary Club should budget approx. \$1,000 for the club items and the induction ceremony.
- Interactor's families can be welcomed to the Induction ceremony, it's a great way to spread awareness about Rotary and possibly gain new members.

The following are some resources to assist Rotarians in starting an Interact Club in their community:

## **Interact Brochure**

[\*The Interact Brochure\*](#) can be used to promote Interact to potential sponsor Rotary clubs or Interact club members.

## **Interact Faculty Adviser Guide**

Advisers play key roles in supporting Interact clubs. The [\*Interact Faculty Adviser Guide\*](#) (PDF), a Web-only publication, explains how Interact fits into the family of Rotary, suggests adviser responsibilities, outlines risk management, supplies additional resources, and offers effective and successful ways to fulfill the faculty adviser role.

## **Interact Handbook**

[\*The Interact Handbook\*](#) can serve as a comprehensive guide to the program.