



Rotary Fellowships and Rotarian Action Groups

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Background:

Rotary Fellowships and Rotarian Action Groups belong to the newly introduced grouping within Rotary known as Rotary Networking Groups, which is defined as "groups of individual Rotarians organised to focus on shared topics of interest on an international basis". These give individual Rotarians the opportunity to experience service, contact and fellowship at the local, national and international level.

Rotary Fellowships bring together Rotarians who share common interests in worthwhile recreational activities such as music, flying, yachting, in various health and medical topics such as Medicine, Pharmacy, Nursing or are in the same professional field such as Law, Police or share a common interest such as fishing, football, doll collecting or dog owning.

Fellowships are based primarily on promoting global friendship and networking. However, many Fellowships, particularly the Vocational groups, also have significant service activities such as international projects involving volunteering.

Purpose:

From July 2006, all the Fellowships (currently there are 94 Fellowships) will belong to one of two categories, depending upon the major emphasis and activities of each Fellowship. Fellowships with a recreational and vocational focus will remain under the current title of "Rotary Fellowships," while those with a service focus such as HIV Relief will be referred to as "Rotarian Action Groups". The latter is a voluntary association of Rotarians formed for the purpose of conducting international service projects that advance the object of Rotary.

Why should I join?

1. It is recognised that both groups will give opportunities for global networking and promotion of friendship through Rotary.
2. There are opportunities to undertake vocational or recreational visits to another country or region.
3. Local or area meetings and rallies are enjoyable. Such meetings can count towards attendance credit.
4. Many District Conferences and the RIBI Conference have Fellowship Booths where you can share experiences. You can also share your experience with many other international members of your Fellowship, particularly during the RI Convention. Many Fellowships organise their Annual General Meeting and/or take booth space in the House of Friendship, at the RI Convention and publicise their activities to members and non-members. These often form the basis of long term friendship.

Who should join?

To be eligible, you have to be an active Rotarian (not a past Rotarian) and have a wish to share fellowship and service with Rotarians with common vocation/interest. Some Fellowships welcome spouses and Rotaractors.

How do I join?

1. Review the complete list of Fellowships at the RI website: www.rotary.org/programs/fellowships/index.html
2. Obtain background information about the Fellowship(s). Sources of information include existing members, magazines, websites etc. If necessary, write to the International Chair/President, whose address will be in the current RI Directory. Some Fellowships have officers' addresses also in the RIBI Directory. Some Fellowships charge a small joining, annual or life membership fee.
3. Fill in an interest coupon, obtainable as a download from the RI website, complete it and return to the addressee.

This is generally the Intercultural Programs Section of RI (address on the form), who will forward your application to the Officer responsible for the Fellowship. If there is undue delay after the application, please communicate with the contact person for the Fellowship mentioned at the website.

Can I start a Global Networking Group?

If your vocation or interest is not represented in the published list of Fellowships, you can start a new group. It is not an easy task, but can succeed if there is a need and proper procedures are followed. You will need approval from at least three District Governors from three different countries. The details are given in the Rotary Fellowships Handbook – this can be downloaded from the RI website.

Contact for further Information:

A number of Fellowships (about 20) have as officers, Rotarians from within Great Britain & Ireland. Their details are published in the RIBI Directory and some District Directories and updated every year. It is often easier to approach these individuals for further information and discussion.

If you require further information or assistance in relation to the Global Networking Groups, then please contact your District International Committee Chairman in the first instance, or contact a member of the RIBI International Service Committee.