



2015-17 PILOT GUIDELINES: INNOVATIVE AND FLEXIBLE ROTARY CLUB

Innovative and flexible Rotary clubs are fun, dynamic, diverse, resilient, tolerant, interested in trying new things, proactive, member driven, results oriented, resourceful, inspirational, and relationship rich. They support and strengthen their membership, focus and increase their humanitarian service, and enhance their public image and awareness. The RI Board of Directors has approved expanding the Innovation and Flexibility pilot from 200 to 1,000 clubs, effective **1 July 2015 through 30 June 2017**.

These Innovative and Flexible Rotary Club pilot guidelines include purpose statement, demonstrated results and measures, implementation plan, eligibility, selection, terms of reference, and frequently asked questions and answers.

PURPOSE STATEMENT

Feedback from numerous Rotary surveys and focus groups has repeatedly shown that members and prospective members wish for more flexibility to become or remain involved with a Rotary club.

The Innovative and Flexible Rotary Club pilot will

- Authorize clubs to make changes to the *Standard Rotary Club Constitution* and to their *Rotary Club Bylaws* in any area other than RI membership dues requirements.
- Let clubs self-determine their operations to fit better with the needs of their members and community.
- Try out different meeting logistics and designs.
- Improve club leadership and oversight.
- Develop relevant and creative membership qualifications and requirements.
- Shift the focus from meeting attendance to member engagement.

DEMONSTRATED RESULTS AND MEASURES

The success of clubs participating in this pilot will be evaluated in the following areas:

Increase in

- Effectiveness of leadership and club administration
- Member satisfaction and engagement
- Total membership number
- Membership recruitment
- Membership retention for new members and existing members
- Membership diversity (gender, age, ethnicity, and classification)
- Reciprocity between club and community
- Support to The Rotary Foundation (program participation and fundraising)

Balance in service projects and social activity profile

Decrease in

- Average age of club members
- Negative perceptions related to meeting fines, singing, and missing meetings for family, personal, or professional reasons

Improvement in club website and club brochure

Promotion of Rotary's core values

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Overall Timeline

1 July 2015 - 30 June 2017

2014-15

- January 2015: District governors and governors-elect are advised about the expansion of the pilot and asked to encourage clubs in their districts to participate. Clubs are sent pilot information and application.
- 31 March 2015: DEADLINE for clubs to submit an application form and voting certificate
- 31 May 2015: General Secretary advises club and district officers of clubs selected to participate in the pilot

2015-16 First year of pilot expansion

- 1 July 2015: Clubs begin implementation of pilot program actions
- December 2015: Clubs confirm membership data is up to date with RI
- February 2016: Clubs not demonstrating +1 membership growth advised of potential pilot participation termination unless growth of +2 members is demonstrated by July 2016
- May – June 2016: Year-end report request from RI

2016-17 Second and final year of pilot

- August 2016: Clubs not demonstrating +1 membership growth advised of potential pilot participation termination unless growth of +2 members is demonstrated by January 2017
- November 2016: Report to the Rotary International Board of Directors
- December 2016: Clubs confirm membership data is up to date with RI
- February 2017: Clubs not demonstrating +1 membership growth advised of potential pilot participation termination
- May – June 2017: Year-end report request from RI
- 30 June 2017: Completion of pilot
- November 2017: Final report to the RI Board

CLUB ELIGIBILITY

- Chartered before 30 June 2010
- Is in good financial standing with Rotary International
- Has a minimum membership of 20 members
- Is not currently participating in any other membership pilots (Associate or Corporate Members, Satellite Club)

SELECTION

Approximately, sixty to seventy Rotary clubs will be selected from each of the following areas¹:

1. Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands
2. Central and Eastern Europe
3. Central and Southeast Asia
4. India
5. Japan
6. Korea
7. Latin America
8. Middle East and North Africa
9. Philippines
10. Sub-Saharan Africa
11. USA, Canada, and Caribbean
12. Western Europe

Selection Process

An equitable representation of Rotary clubs and proposed innovations from each of the 34 Rotary zones will be selected to participate in the pilot, with the total number of participating clubs not to exceed 1,000.

¹ Rotary clubs in RIBI are operating under the direction of the General Council of RIBI and the Constitution and Bylaws of RIBI. All clubs in RIBI are allowed to participate in this and other membership pilots in RIBI; contact cds@ribi.org for more information.

TERMS OF PARTICIPATION

By submitting an application and accepting an invitation to participate, each of the clubs selected to participate in this pilot agrees in writing to the following terms:

1. The club is in good financial standing with Rotary International and will continue to pay RI membership dues and other fees as required by RI Bylaws. *Clubs failing to pay dues will be automatically terminated from pilot participation.*
2. The club has a membership base of at least 20 members. The club expects to demonstrate net membership growth of at least +1 member each billing period: 1 January 2016, 1 July 2016, and 1 January 2017. Any club failing to demonstrate net +1 growth in one period will be advised that membership must show a minimum net increase of +2 members at the next period. *If the club fails to demonstrate that growth the club will be automatically terminated from pilot participation.*
3. Two-thirds of the members of the club have voted to participate in the pilot project for the full duration of the pilot period: 1 July 2015 – 30 June 2017.
4. The club has selected a pilot coordinator who will be the main liaison for the exchange of information about the pilot between RI and the club.
5. Each club will be required to report to RI at least twice a year on various trends, programs, and activities of the club. The club agrees to comply with report requests from the general secretary. *Clubs failing to reply to report requests within 45 days will be automatically terminated from pilot participation.*
6. The club is registered with and will maintain records through Rotary Club Central and My Rotary on www.rotary.org.
7. Other than the alterations allowed for the pilot, the club agrees to abide by all RI policies, procedures, and constitutional documents.
8. Clubs will verify current club data and respond to club performance benchmark requests prior to the start of the pilot project.
9. If, at the end of the pilot project period, no changes are made to Rotary International's constitutional documents, the club will revert to RI's current constitutional documents.
10. The club agrees to not implement any membership types or operational changes currently tested by other pilot clubs, namely associate and corporate membership, alternate satellite club meetings or different meeting frequencies

ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

If your question isn't answered on the following pages, please contact ripilotprograms@rotary.org for more information.

What can we change?

Attendance requirements?

Yes, clubs are permitted to establish different attendance requirements.

Membership types?

Generally yes, however, clubs are not permitted to establish Associate or Corporate Membership already tested by 400 pilot clubs. Irrespective of the club's defined membership types, every member must be reported to RI as active members, and pay full RI annual dues. All members will appear in RI membership reports as active members.

Club leadership changes?

Yes, clubs are permitted to make changes in club leadership structure.

Flexible meetings?

- a) No, clubs cannot modify their meeting schedule because these have been tested by other pilot clubs for more than 12 years.
- b) Yes, clubs can alternate or rotate their meeting locations, but not the number of times per week that the club meets.
- c) Yes, clubs are permitted to establish alternate meeting formats including combinations of online and in-person meetings or a combination of service activities, social events, and weekly club meetings.

What if the changes we make in some way harm the club, can we make changes to our proposed club innovations?

Yes, pilot clubs can test out new innovations and if the policy innovation is having a harmful impact on the club, the club should revise or revoke the policy. Please advise pilot administration staff if the club makes any changes to the innovations being tested.

What can't we do? What bylaws and constitutional rules do we need to continue to follow?

Clubs must continue to function according to the 12 guidelines that define a functioning club.

Each pilot club must:

- 1) Pay its per capita dues to RI
- 2) Meet regularly
- 3) Ensure its members subscribe to a certified Rotary World Magazine Press publication (*The Rotarian* or Rotary regional magazine)
- 4) Implement service projects that address the needs in the local community and/or in communities in other countries
- 5) Receive the visit of the governor, assistant governor, or an officer of RI

- 6) Maintain appropriate liability insurance as provided in Rotary Code of Policies section 72.050.
- 7) Act in a manner consistent with the RI Constitution, RI Bylaws, and Rotary Code of Policies*
- 8) Pay its RI membership and district dues without outside assistance
- 9) Provide accurate membership lists to the general secretary on time
- 10) Resolve club disputes in an amicable manner
- 11) Maintain cooperative relations with the district
- 12) Cooperate with RI by not initiating or maintaining litigation against Rotary International, The Rotary Foundation, the associate foundations, and the international offices of the RI Secretariat (RCP 2.010.1.)

** Other than the alterations allowed for the pilot, the club agrees to abide by all RI policies, procedures, and constitutional documents.*

Reports, information requests, Rotary Club Central, My Rotary?

Pilot clubs are to submit to RI any requested information or reports. Pilot clubs are also to maintain and update member information on a monthly basis.

Notify RI of members joining in newly created types of membership?

Yes. If your club creates a new type of membership and you have new club members in that type of membership, pilot clubs are required to notify RI of these members in the new membership type by completing an online form. Depending upon the new membership type, these persons may be listed as members of the Rotary club on RI documents.

Club visits from governor, assistant governor, or other officers of RI?

Pilot clubs must still accept visits from the governor, assistant governor, and other RI officers.

Financial matters?

- a) Clubs must continue to remain in good financial standing with RI to remain in the pilot.
- b) RI dues are payable for each active, official club member as stipulated in RI Bylaws 17.040.
- c) District dues remain payable at the same rate -- unless the pilot club and district come to an alternate agreement.

The Rotarian or Rotary regional magazine?

Clubs are not permitted to cancel their relevant RI magazine subscriptions. Club members must continue to subscribe to the relevant RI magazine.

At the end of the pilot, what happens with the club's innovative changes?

If, at the end of the pilot project period, no changes are made to Rotary International's constitutional documents, the club must revert to RI's current constitutional documents.