

Rotary District 5110 Youth Exchange FAQs for Youth Exchange Students 2024-25

What are the programs?

Long-Term Exchange (LTE) is for a school year (usually mid-August to late June or early July). The student is hosted and supervised by a Rotary Club in the host country, stays with at least 2 families, and must go to school while abroad. For ages 15 to 18 ½ at the time of departure. This is a more intensive exchange program and requires often hard decisions and planning regarding whether/how to take classes abroad for credit.

Short-Term Exchange (STE) is a “home-to-home” summer program linking a US student with a student/family in the country where they choose to exchange. The US student goes overseas to stay with the student/family they matched with for ~3-4 weeks and then that student comes to the US student’s home for ~3-4 weeks. For ages 15-18 ½. This is an easier exchange option which for many students allows them to “get their feet wet” on being in another country without making the full school year commitment.

Who is eligible?

Students must have good grades, demonstrate good citizenship and be going on exchange for the right reasons and with the right expectations (i.e. it’s got to be their decision and not just their parents!) They must have the support of their parents, be endorsed by their local Rotary Club, and LTE applicants must complete Rotary Youth Exchange training and orientation - about five sessions held from January through June.

What countries are available?

For Long-Term Exchange, our typical countries are Argentina, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Norway, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and Thailand. We ask the students for preferences and, if possible, we match them with their preferred country. However, we make the final assignments based on our experience with cultures and situations.

For Short Term Exchange, more than 80 countries are certified for this opportunity. Country selections are based on the student’s request and the countries that are available (i.e. have students that want to come to the US). Here in Bend, there is also the “Bend-Belluno” option which is like an enhanced STE where 4-6 Bend students travel as a cohort to Belluno, Italy and although staying in separate households, they do a number of functions as a group both in Italy and back in Bend.

What is the cost?

Long-Term Exchange

For 2024-25 the LTE fee will be \$8,000, with a possible surcharge of up to \$250 if airfares exceed our budget. The fee covers round-trip airfare, visa costs, insurance, an official blazer and shirt, application costs, a badge, business cards, and training. Students receive a small monthly allowance from their host Rotary club but should plan on additional personal expenses throughout the year of at least \$100 per month. However, every student and every country is different. Most countries also offer optional trips that are outside the basic fee, and usually range from \$1,500 to \$2,500.

Short-Term Exchange

For Summer 2024, the STE fee is \$500, which covers paperwork, coordination, materials, and training. Families are responsible for airfare and other costs (i.e. you are expected to treat the foreign exchange student as a family member when they are staying with you in the US). There is no monthly allowance from Rotary clubs during short-term exchange.

How do I apply?

For either exchange program, you start by connecting with your local Rotary Club and they will guide you through the application process. All applications are submitted online.

Long-Term Exchange

- The long-term exchange application can be accessed at <http://yehub.net/W11-obapp>
- The long-term application is a more comprehensive process since it entails submitting grades and medical records, things which are not as relevant for short-term exchange which takes place over the summer. Because the LTE application is more complicated and requires more work on the part of the applicant, we have broken the application process down into two parts – club level and District level.
- **The preliminary (club level) application deadline is October 27.** It requires students to submit some basic information, a letter from you and another letter from your parents on why you want to go on exchange/why you would be a good candidate, and upload a few pictures. You and your parents will be asked to come in for a brief 20-minute “vetting interview” before the end of October.
- Once you have been vetted at the local/club level, and assuming we think you are a good candidate for exchange, you will be invited to submit a full long-term application to the District which includes additional items like grades, medical records, personal references, etc. You and your parents will be asked to drive down to Grants Pass for the actual District-level interview on Saturday, December 9.
- **The full (District level) application deadline is November 20.**

Short-term Exchange

- The short-term exchange application can be accessed at <http://yehub.net/W11-stapp>
- The short-term exchange application is simpler than long-term exchange in some ways and more complex in others (e.g. since your family will be hosting a foreign exchange student you need to be vetted for both going abroad and hosting at home).
- **The full (District level) application deadline is February 15, 2024.**
- Note - if you are able to get your application completed sooner, this will significantly increase the likelihood of getting the country of your choice and a better match because we try to make matches as soon as applications have been received (and if they are turned in late, the pool of potential matches can be much smaller or nonexistent in the country of your choice).
- The process for those interested in pursuing the Bend-Belluno option is similar to regular short-term above with an earlier deadline **to apply of December 1, 2023.**

For more information

For additional information, contact your local Rotary club or Bruce Abernethy at abernethy9@aol.com