

Steps for Applying for a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship

This scholarship is the chance of a life-time. I was the lucky recipient of a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship to France several (OK, many, many) years ago. It changed my life. I would be a completely different person had it not been for my decision to apply and my good fortune in being selected. Do not pass up this opportunity!

Most people apply when they are a junior in college so that if they win the year abroad will begin following completion of their senior year. If that is the case then the timeline set out below would be a good one to follow.

The steps are fairly easy. Read the resources about the scholarship below to make sure that it is what you want. Also, those resources provide everything you need to know about it. The most important thing you can do is start early. If you spend the Christmas break of your junior year reading about the scholarship and making contact with the club you would like to sponsor you then you are off to a good start. Do not wait to ask for or get your recommendations and transcripts after the end of your junior year! All of your professors may be away on vacation or teaching abroad and your ability to pull everything together will be difficult. And, if you so, it can make like difficult for your sponsor as well. And, remember if you want to study in a country where the native language is not English, then certain minimum language courses may apply and you could be asked to undergo a language examination to confirm your ability in that language. All of this takes time.

So, get started early!

1. December of Junior Year: First, you have to apply to a Rotary Club in your hometown, or perhaps where you go to school. For those applying to hometowns in south Alabama, click on this hyperlink for a [Rotary Club](#) and then click on the club. That will give you the contact information for that club to contact about the process to sponsor you.
2. December of Junior Year: Send a letter to the Rotary Club with your resume and some information about what you would like to study, where and why. Ask for a commitment of sponsorship and for the club to designate a particular member who will serve as your sponsor on the application. Remember, you are asking this organization to send you abroad for a year to be its goodwill ambassador to that country. Learn a little bit about the purpose, history and accomplishments of [Rotary International](#) and [The Rotary Foundation](#) and you will impress your local club and improve your chances. Each club may sponsor as many applicants to the District competition as there are scholarships which can be awarded by the District. This varies from year to year but has been as few as one or as many as three in the past, depending on funding.
3. January of Junior Year: Your selected Rotary Club (or its board of directors) meets and decides between applicants who will be sponsored at the District level competition. If you are not selected for sponsorship for whatever reason, your application may be endorsed and sponsored by another club who had no applicants, so not to worry.
4. February of Junior Year: Follow Up with the Rotary Club to confirm sponsorship and the name and contact information of the member who will sponsor you.

5. February of Junior Year: Call your designated sponsor and ask for the best phone, mailing address and email for that person. This is the person who will receive confidential recommendations from your professors and others. Ultimately, you will send your completed application to your sponsor and he or she will submit it to the District Committee on Ambassadorial Scholarships.
6. February of Junior Year: Review the application and decide where you want to study and what you want to study.
7. March of Junior Year: You begin completing your application. You write letters to your current and prior schools requesting transcripts. You write letters to those people who you want to write a letter of recommendation for you. Follow the guidelines in the form, but be aware that some of these may have to be sent directly to your sponsor to attach to the application for confidentiality purposes. Arrange for any foreign language test that must be taken.
8. Spring Break Junior Year: Take one day and complete your first draft of the essays that are required in the application. Send them out to your sponsor for comments. Send them to others for comment.
9. April of Junior Year: Review and edit application and essays. Call and ask sponsor to confirm what transcripts or recommendations have been received. Follow up with people who have not sent sponsor recs or transcripts.
10. May of Junior Year: Review and edit application and essays. Call and ask sponsor to confirm what transcripts or recommendations have been received. Follow up with people who have not sent sponsor recs or transcripts. Edit application and reviews based on comments from friends and sponsors
11. June 1 of Summer after Junior Year: Final Review and edit application and essays. Call and ask sponsor to confirm what transcripts or recommendations have been received. Follow up with people who have not sent sponsor recs or transcripts.
12. June 15 of Summer after Junior Year: Submit application and essays. Confirm with sponsor that all transcripts and essays have been received.
13. June 25 of Summer after Junior Year: Sponsor submits application and essays to District Committee.
14. June 29 of Summer after Junior Year: Call Sponsor to confirm complete application sent to District Committee
15. July 1 of Summer after Junior Year: Deadline for receipt of applications by District Committee
16. July 1 of Summer after Junior Year: Call District Committee Chair to confirm receipt of your application and essays (District Website at www.rotary6880.org should have name and contact information.
17. Fall of Senior Year: Interviews with District Committee (probably in Montgomery)
18. Fall of Senior Year: Winner announced

If you are reading this and you have already missed some of the suggested “deadlines” (as long as it’s not the July 1 deadline) then do not despair. You may still have time. Call the Rotary Club you want to sponsor you and see if you still have time. Plenty of these have been put together in less than two months (but it’s a little crazy!).

Helpful Sites and Links:

1. About the Scholarships:
<http://www.rotary.org/en/StudentsAndYouth/EducationalPrograms/AmbassadorialScholarships/Pages/About.aspx>
2. A Two Page Flyer about the Scholarships Explaining the Highlights:
http://www.rotary.org/RIdocuments/en_pdf/132en.pdf
3. How to Apply :
<http://www.rotary.org/en/StudentsAndYouth/EducationalPrograms/AmbassadorialScholarships/Pages/Howtoapply.aspx>
4. Application: http://www.rotary.org/ridocuments/en_pdf/139en.pdf
5. District Information : <http://www.rotary6880.org/education/non-rotarian/ambassadorial-scholarships>
6. Program Guide for Rotarians: http://www.rotary.org/ridocuments/en_pdf/012en.pdf
(including potential questions for candidates (p. 21), candidate evaluation form (p.22), guidelines for candidate interviews (p. 23), language proficiency requirements (p.24), profile of ideal candidate (p. 25) and countries where applicants are encouraged to study (p. 26)
7. Handbook for Ambassadorial Scholars:
http://www.rotary.org/ridocuments/en_pdf/133en10.pdf

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July 1, 2011

Assistant District Governor: 2011-2012 (District 6880, Zone 9)

Former Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar 1979 (France)