

Rotaract Club Berlin International By-Laws

Updated: November 9th, 2022

ARTICLE I. Name, domicile and foundation

The name of this organization shall be the **Rotaract Club Berlin International**. Until receipt of the official Charter-Certificate this organization shall be called „*Rotaract Club Berlin International in Gründung (i.G.)*“. The club is domiciled in Berlin, Germany and was founded on **October 25th, 2017**.

The official club address is:

Rotaract Club Berlin International
C/o Margaux Reiter
The Social Hub
Alexanderstr. 40
10179 Berlin, Deutschland

ARTICLE II. Purpose and Goals

The purpose of Rotaract is to provide an opportunity for young men and women to enhance the knowledge and skills that will assist them in personal development, to address the physical and social needs of their communities, and to promote better relations between all people worldwide through a framework of friendship and service.

The goals of Rotaract are:

1. To develop professional and leadership skills;
2. To emphasize respect for the rights of others, and to promote ethical standards and the dignity of all useful occupations;
3. To provide opportunities for young people to address the needs and concerns of the community and the world;
4. To provide opportunities for collaboration with sponsoring Rotary clubs;
5. To motivate young people for eventual membership in Rotary.
6. To emphasize the cooperation between Rotaract Clubs worldwide.

ARTICLE III. Self-understanding

1. We as Rotaractors would like to strengthen our club by
 - a. encouraging the retention and strengths of the membership base;
 - b. implementing successful service projects at home and abroad;
 - c. fostering a good and active contact with the sponsoring Rotary club and Rotarian family;
 - d. facilitating active professional and leadership development
2. In everything we say and do, we are guided by the Rotarian ethics and remember the 4-Way Test:
 - a. Is it the truth?
 - b. Is it fair to all concerned?
 - c. Will it promote goodwill and better friendships?
 - d. Will it be beneficial to all concerned?
3. We are voluntarily committed to and enjoy Rotaract. We want to help and further develop Rotaract.
4. We are part of the Rotarian family!
5. We recognize and appreciate our leadership role and the responsibilities that this involves.
6. We represent Rotaract and thus more than 180,000 friends world-wide!
7. We do our job professionally and reliably. We know that communication is key and strive to respond promptly.
8. We do our job consistently and promptly. We strive to set new and high standards in what we do.
9. We want to actively support and also make friends with our neighbor clubs, our Rotaract district and the Rotaract Germany Committee.

ARTICLE IV. Activities, Events and Projects

1. This club shall be responsible for planning, organizing, financing, and conducting its own activities and shall itself supply money, manpower, and creative imagination necessary thereto, except in the case of joint projects or activities undertaken in cooperation with other organizations; such responsibility shall be shared with such other organization(s).
2. This club shall undertake among its activities at least two major service projects annually, one to serve the community and the other to promote international understanding, and each shall involve all or most of the members of the club.
3. This club shall provide a professional development program for its members. Additionally the three pillars of Rotaract „**Leadership development**“, „**Community Service**“, and „**Friendship**“ should be reflected in the program in a balanced way.
4. It is the responsibility of the club to raise the funds necessary to carry out its program.
5. The club intends to encourage its members in a long-term and sustainable manner.
6. International twinning friendships are to be maintained annually by mutual visits and joined social projects or events.

ARTICLE V. Sponsorship of Rotary Clubs and Club Character

1. The sponsors of this Rotaract club is are **Rotary Club Berlin International** and the **Rotary Club Berlin Platz der Republik**, who, represented by its **Rotaract Delegate(s)**, shall provide guidance and have a supportive responsibility for the Rotaract Club. The continued well-being of this club shall depend on the continued active personal participation of the sponsoring Rotary clubs.
2. Rotaract Club Berlin International is not a part of, and neither this club nor its members have any rights or privileges with respect to the sponsoring Rotary club.
3. This Rotaract club is a non-political, non-sectarian organization.
4. Termination of the club partnership between Rotaract and Rotary can be undertaken by either the Rotary or the Rotaract club. In the event that the sponsoring Rotary club partnership is terminated, the governor of the Rotary district will seek to install another sponsoring Rotary club as soon as possible.

ARTICLE VI. Membership Becoming a Member and Membership Guidelines

1. Club members are young men and women of good character and leadership potential who became members of the club between the **ages of 18 and 30**.
2. Club members are men and women residing, employed, or studying anywhere in the vicinity of the Rotaract club.
3. Member candidates should have proven engagement, friendship and regular presence. An interested member that has participated in at least 8 meetings/events (at least one of these meetings must be a community service project) and fulfills the membership requirements listed above, can become a member. The board will decide with a majority of $\frac{3}{4}$ of its members when to start the process of membership. The board can also decide if the number of attended events can be reduced or increased on a case by case basis. The President will then approach the potential candidate and inquire if the potential member would like to become a member.
4. The membership application is to be made in written form (email or letter) and addressed to the board. The day of the membership request is to be included in the meeting minutes. Other members view the membership application upon request.
5. After the membership application is received by the board, active members will be informed in written form about the possible new member. Every active member can express potential concerns in written form within two weeks of receiving the information about the new potential member. If **one** active member takes issue with the potential membership candidate, the acceptance of the new member will be determined by vote amongst the active members. This vote will take place at the next membership meeting. Acceptance of the candidate is successful if $\frac{3}{4}$ of the members agree

to it. If **zero** members take issue with the potential candidate, the new member will be informed in written form about the successful application from the board. A vote amongst the members is then not required.

6. Every member should attempt to find interested members that can join the club. All guests should have the intention of joining the Rotarian family.
7. Every member of the club, by acceptance of membership, thereby accepts the principles of Rotaract as expressed in its purpose and goals and agrees to comply with the constitution of this club, and on these conditions alone is entitled to the privileges of the club.
8. Our goal and ambition is to achieve a quota of **50% members with international roots**.

Types of Membership

1. **Active Membership:** Active members of the club are young people who became members between the ages of 18 and 30. Each active member of this Rotaract club shall attend **at least 60%** of the club's regularly scheduled meetings.
2. Members who can no longer follow the obligations that are required of an active member can apply to become a **past member**. This application is to be completed in written form and given to the board. The past member agrees to ensure that their information is correct in the Rotaract directory. Past members do not have a right to vote and cannot take on a board position. It is possible to re-active the club membership. This request must be written in written form and $\frac{3}{4}$ of the board must agree to a reinstatement as an active member.
3. In special cases, **honorary membership** might be granted to good friends, Rotarians and other people that rendered outstanding services to the club. It is not possible to be an active and honorary member at the same time. A potential honorary member can only be nominated by an active member. Honorary membership is not restricted to any age and is free of any membership fees. Honorary members do not have the right to vote or any other rights within the club, such as holding a board position. Honorary members can participate in all events organized by Rotaract Club Berlin International. An honorary member does not have any rights in any other Rotaract clubs, except to attend another club as a guest. Honorary membership is decided upon at the member meeting. An absolute majority is required. The duration of an honorary membership is to be decided upon by the board.

Termination of Membership

1. The active membership shall terminate:
 - a. upon failure to meet attendance requirements, unless excused by the board of directors of this club for good and sufficient reason, or
 - b. upon failure to pay the membership dues after being reminded 3 times, or
 - c. by termination of the club, or
 - d. the member dies, or
 - e. the member announces his/her leave in written form.
2. If the member announces his/her leave in written form, this notice must be handed in to the board and include a reason for the termination. The termination will go into effect at the end of the month where the termination is received by the board. The terminating party will not receive the dues that were paid in advance for the year.
3. A member can be terminated if he/she fails to adhere to the club constitution and/or by-laws. The board of directors will decide when/if this termination process is to begin. The termination of a membership will be decided upon during a member meeting, after the disputed party is heard. Active members are invited to this meeting two weeks in advance in written form. The invitation shall include the agenda of the meeting. A decision regarding the termination of the membership will be decided with a $\frac{3}{4}$ majority.
4. An honorary membership ends automatically when the previously determined time period ends. The membership meeting can decide to extend the honorary membership or to end the membership early.

ARTICLE VII. Meetings

1. The club shall meet **weekly**, but not less than twice per month at a time and place suited to the convenience of the members. RAC Berlin International meets Wednesday evenings. The board of directors can declare a summer or winter break.
2. All meetings and written communication (texts/email/etc.), including the meeting minutes shall be conducted in the **English** language.
3. The board of directors shall meet at least **once a quarter**.
4. The sponsoring Rotary club shall designate one member ("**Rotaract Delegate**" /"Rotaract Beauftragter") of its club to be the single point of contact. He/she should attend the meeting(s) of its Rotaract club(s) when possible.
5. Minutes of the meetings of the Rotaract club shall be provided to the Rotaract-Delegate of the sponsor Rotary club within two weeks after each meeting is held to share those minutes to all members of the sponsoring Rotary club.
6. **Guest, friends and Rotarians** shall be invited to join all meetings except internal member meetings.
7. Internal member meetings shall be conducted at least on a **bi-annual basis**.
8. Guests that went through a member admission process with negative result shall be excluded from the meetings.

ARTICLE VIII. Meeting Attendance

1. The active members shall attend the meetings/events of the club on a regular basis, which constitutes at least 60% of regularly scheduled meetings. When possible, this attendance can also be achieved through the help of technology and thus does not always require a physical presence at the meeting. Up to 25% of the attendance can be achieved through participating at the following events outside of the regular club events:
 - a. a meeting of another Rotaract club
 - b. a meeting at a Rotary club
 - c. any community service projects that are supported by Rotaract but not part of the normal program
 - d. participation in the Germany Conference (DeuKo), district conference (DisKo), European conference (EuCO), European regional meeting (REM), Rotary Youth Leadership Award Seminar (RYLA), etc.
 - e. charter parties of Rotaract or Rotary clubs
2. In case a member is unable to attend the meetings for a longer period of time, a "**leave of absence**" can be granted by the board of directors for a period of **up to 12 continuous months**. During the leave of absence a member still keeps his/her full voting and member rights while he/she does not account for the quorum in case of absence. While he/she keeps this status he/she is not obliged to fulfil the presence quota. This member will be seen as a "passive member". The dues are still to be paid. Reasons for a leave of absence include, but are not limited to, employment related situations, going abroad, prolonged sickness, etc.
3. Members who are not able to attend a meeting because they are not in Berlin should see if it is possible to attend a meeting at a local Rotaract club. This is a great way to build bridges to other clubs. Otherwise, technological means may be used to attend the RAC BI meeting virtually.

ARTICLE IX. Fees

1. The sponsoring Rotary club ensures the payment of the RI Rotaract organization fee equivalent to US\$50 with the "Rotaract Club Organization List" upon organization of a new Rotaract club.
2. An admission fee can be suggested by the board of directors. This will be taken to a vote at the next membership meeting. $\frac{3}{4}$ of members must agree to this.

3. The annual fee for active members is **60 EUR**. The amount can be increased or decreased with a vote of $\frac{3}{4}$ of active members at a membership meeting. The new amount will go into effect at the beginning of the next club year.
4. The annual membership fee will be paid before the new club year begins on July 1st. If new members join Rotaract throughout the club year they will pay the amount required proportional to the number of months left in the club year. All fees and dues must be paid within **2 weeks** after request for payment.
5. Past members will pay 30 + X EUR per year (an additional amount can be paid if desired).
6. In extreme financial circumstances the board can choose to reduce or waive the annual membership fee.
7. Members can choose to either pay via bank transfer or to give the club a direct debit mandate.

ARTICLE X. Member Meetings

1. Member meetings are the internal club meetings for members. Guests are not allowed to attend internal member meetings.
2. Topics at member meetings may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a. The board of directors is determined by a vote.
 - b. The board gives the members a verbal report on what happened since the previous member meeting.
 - c. Important club-related decisions are made, for example the admittance of new members.

ARTICLE XI. Elections and voting procedures

1. Votes, member decisions, and elections shall only be conducted after explicit written invitation (by e-mail) to all active and passive members at least 14 days in advance including all major agenda items.
2. Every active member has the right to vote in the member meeting.
3. The quorum of the club is established by the presence of a majority (50%) of the active members; members who are on a leave of absence are not included in this. If not explicitly mentioned in the by-laws, a simple majority is needed in voting. A tie in votes is to be interpreted as a rejection. If an active member requests the vote be held in secret this will be done, unless a secret ballot is already predetermined in the by-laws. It is possible to vote through absentee voting.¹ Delegation of voting rights to another person is **not allowed**.
4. The election of the board of directors and any vote on constitution changes is done by **secret ballot**.
5. Only **full members** can be elected as directors.
6. The by-laws may be added or changed, by **3/4 vote of the active members** at any regular meeting or at any special meeting at which a quorum is present. Prerequisite for such a vote, however, that the intention is made known via e-mail **at least 14 days prior to a club meeting**. Any changes are then subject to approval of the Rotary club(s) acting as sponsor club.
7. Subject to the request of at least 3 active members in important extraordinary cases, the board of directors needs to conduct an extraordinary internal members meeting within 3 weeks to discuss and decide on e.g. potential new elections, new members etc. In case the board of directors does not follow this request, at least 3 members together are free to also officially invite to such a meeting.
8. The Rotaract club year is the Rotary Club year (July-June). The elections for the board of directors and the nomination of officers should take place on a yearly basis **before March 1st**. The elected directors assume their duties on July 1st.

¹ Absentee voting is to occur in written form (email, letter, fax, etc.). If the board does not determine in what written form the voting is to take place, the voter may choose. Members must be informed of the upcoming vote at least two weeks in advance. Absentee voting is to occur at least 24 hours prior to the member meeting and must be sent to the board in advance or the vote will not count.

ARTICLE XII. Board of Directors and Officers

1. The governing body of this club shall be a **board of directors**. The board is elected for the duration of one Rotarian year. The board is to be nominated and elected prior to March 1st at a member meeting. Board members who are elected must be asked if they would like to accept the position. Members who are not present can also be voted as directors.
2. The board is composed of the **President, immediate Past President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Director of Professional Development (German "Clubmeister"), Community Service Directors, and the International Service Director**. The President, the Vice-President, and the Treasurer have the power to legally represent the club and execute contracts with other institutions. All decisions, policies, and actions of the board and of the club shall be subject to the provisions of this constitution and policy established by Rotary International and its members.
 - a. The **Past-President & Officer for Rotary Affairs** supports the entire board with his/her experience, takes care of the on-the-job-training and introduces the new president to the sponsoring Rotary club(s).
 - b. The **President** shall preside at all regular and special meetings of the club and the board of directors. He/she shall, with the approval of the board, appoint all standing and special committees and, in the event of a vacancy in the board of directors, shall, with the approval of the board, fill such vacancy by appointment until the next regular election of the club. Supported by the Past-President, he/she shall maintain communication with the sponsor club(s) and the District Rotaract Representative to ensure they are continually informed of all actions taken by the club. In general, he/she is responsible to invite to the regular meetings while minutes of the last meeting shall be provided within the same e-mail to avoid e-mail floods.
 - c. The **Vice-President** shall succeed to the office of president in the event or removal of the latter for whatever cause, and, in the absence of the president, shall preside at all meetings of the club and of the board. He/She can also take over responsibilities of the president to support him. Together with the President he/she is responsible to organize an exciting, diversified and attractive club program.
 - d. The **Secretary** shall maintain all club records. He/She shall keep minutes of all the members meetings and board of directors' meetings, and ensure that copies of such are also provided to the Rotaract Delegate of the sponsor Rotary club. He/She is also responsible for noting the presence. The secretary shall also receive the email addresses of the guests and add them to the club's mailing list. The secretary ensures that the information in Mein Rotaract is correct. The Secretary shall also inform the board of directors about potential new club members.
 - e. The **Treasurer** shall have custody of all club funds, maintaining all necessary records and depositing all such funds in a bank approved by the board of directors. He/She shall report on the club's financial status at each member meeting and shall hold all records available for inspection by any club member.
 - f. **Director of Professional Development**. This person is responsible for filling the program with activities that help members and guests broaden their horizons and improve their education and leadership development. This includes, but is not limited to, inviting people to hold talks at the club, organizing workshops for personal and professional development, and organizing a RYLA seminar. This board member is also responsible for organizing the lounge meetings.
 - g. The **Community Service Director** is responsible for raising awareness for local and regional issues, and organizing opportunities and concrete possibilities for action in the service of the community. It is his/her responsibility to organize all social activities that should include as many club members as possible. He/she is also responsible for the planning of at least one major activity of the club each year, which includes all or most of the club members. An additional service event should be organized in cooperation with the International Service Director to strengthen the twin club relationship(s).
 - h. **International Service Director**. This person is responsible for establishing and maintaining international relationships, twinning projects and all related affairs for the club. He/she is responsible to promote awareness of global issues, and opportunities and developing concrete action potential in the service of international friendship and understanding between nations.

He/she is responsible for working with Community Service Director to organize at least one project a year to strengthen the twin club relationship(s).

3. The term of office for all officers and directors shall be one year. Re-election is possible.
4. All incoming Rotaract club officers, directors, and committee chairmen shall be provided with leadership training from the District Rotaract committee, the antecessor, or the president.
5. To support the daily business of the club the members can vote to appoint officers or additional board positions for the regular period of one Rotarian year. For example:
 - a. **Charter Officer.** This officer is responsible for organizing the club's charter partie(s).
 - b. **Officer for Guest Relations.** This officer is responsible to answer all requests from new guests and to maintain a good relationship to all visitors. He/she could organize a mentoring program for new guests, guiding them until they will be elected as a regular member.
 - c. **Officer for Public Relations.** This person is responsible for establishing and maintaining the website and social media profile(s) of the club. Additionally, he/she is responsible for writing reports and articles about projects or events to publish in the local newspaper, Rotaract NEWS or Rotary International Magazine.

ARTICLE XIII. Club Account and Audit

1. The Treasurer of the club has power of attorney for the club account. The President and the Vice-President of the club are the co-representatives of the Treasurer and shall also have access to the clubs' bank account.
2. All disbursements from the club account shall be made by transfer. Transfers under 100 EUR can be completed without authorization. Transfers that exceed this amount must be authorized by at least two of the three representatives. **No kind of credit-taking or contract resulting in a potentially negative financial balance for the club is permitted.**
3. The club's financial year coincides with the club year (1st July – 30th June). **The account representatives are not responsible for disbursements made before or after their term on the board.**
4. The club account is to be audited at the beginning of every club year. Three people are responsible for this, including the past and the incoming treasurers and an additional member of the club. These members will be appointed at the last members' meeting of the club year. A simple majority is required.

ARTICLE XIV. Dissolution of Club

This club shall exist so long as it continues to function in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and policy relating to Rotaract established by Rotary International, or until it is terminated

- a. by this club upon its own determination and action through a unanimous vote at a member meeting,
- b. by the sponsoring Rotary club upon withdrawal of its sponsorship, after consultation with the district governor and district Rotaract representative, or
- c. by Rotary International for failure to function in accordance with this constitution or for other cause.

Upon termination of this club, all rights and privileges relating to the Rotaract name and emblem shall be relinquished by the club and by its members individually and collectively. The Rotaract club shall donate all financial assets to the Rotaract Förderverein for a charity.

ARTICLE XV. Amendment of By-Laws

The by-laws can be amended at a member meeting with a $\frac{3}{4}$ majority vote. See Article XI, point 6 for more information.

ARTICLE XVI. Rotaract-Emblem

1. The Rotaract emblem shall be preserved for the exclusive use and benefit of Rotaract club members. Each member of this club shall be entitled to wear or otherwise display the Rotaract emblem in a dignified and appropriate manner during the period of membership. Such entitlement shall be relinquished upon termination of membership or termination of this club.
2. When displayed by individual club members, the emblem may be used without further information. When the emblem is used to represent a club, the name of the club should appear with the emblem.

ARTICLE XVII. Severability Clause

If any of the arrangements made here prove to be invalid, all other regulations will still keep in full force. Nothing in these by-laws shall contravene any provision of this club's constitution or the general values and rules of Rotary International.

ARTICLE XVIII. Coming into effect

This constitution comes into effect by the resolution of the founding members and acceptance of the Rotaract Delegate of the sponsoring Rotary Clubs at the inaugural meeting on **October 25th, 2017**.