



Youth Leadership Development Competition 2026/2027

Information & Application Form for Schools & Colleges

“Rotary is committed to offering young people opportunities to unlock their potential, develop their skills & broaden their horizons” – Rotary Ireland.

The Rotary Ireland Youth Leadership Development Competition, run in conjunction with the European Parliament Liaison Office in Dublin, will take place again in 2026/2027. Rotary Ireland has been organising this event for several years and we see at first-hand the opportunities and benefits it gives to the young leaders of today and tomorrow. It is an opportunity to enhance their personal development and improve their communication and teambuilding skills. Students learn life skills, as well as gaining confidence in public speaking and debate. Every year great friendships are formed that last for years.

The **Euroscola programme** in Strasbourg brings together students from all EU Member States, applicant countries and former Member States to debate, take sides, negotiate, amend, vote and finally adopt resolutions on real European issues. The students get an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the workings of the European institutions, to discuss democracy, fundamental rights, European values and to express their personal opinions on the decisions taken at the European Union level.

Submission dates for the various stages of the competition will be decided through your local Rotary club. As a general rule, Stages 1 & 2 will normally happen before Halloween. Stage 3 normally happens in November.

Your local Rotary Club will confirm submission and interview dates in advance of deadlines. They may also advise on the preferred method of receipt of completed applications.

The Competition: Stage 1:

Rotary Clubs will invite local schools to encourage their students to enter the competition. This involves completing an application form and then attending an interview with Rotary members. Interview questions are based on the application form, and also on leadership, students' knowledge of Rotary and EU, their involvement in their local community and current affairs. At the end of this stage a **school winner** will be selected from each school.

The Competition: Stage 2:

All school winners will attend another interview to determine the **Rotary Club winner**. Similar questions may be asked, but it is expected that students would display a deeper knowledge of the topics. The interview panel is again Rotary members.

Interviews for Stage 1 and Stage 2 are normally held during October.

The Competition: Stage 3:

All **Rotary club winners** now move into the Zone Final. There are 11 Rotary Zones and each zone has between 4 & 8 Rotary clubs. Again, students attend an interview. The interview panel at this stage are non-Rotarians. They are experts in the field of Leadership, working with young people and in adjudication. After the interviews, 1- 3 students will be selected as **Zone winners**, from each zone.

Interviews for Stage 3 are normally held during November.

The Prize:

The trip will take place in late Jan or early Feb 2027 (depending on EU allocated dates) and will be made up from:

Day 1 Visit to Parliament Buildings at Stormont in Belfast. Here you will have a chance to meet and chat with elected members of the NI Assembly, known as Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), take a tour of the building and have an opportunity to sit in the public gallery to listen to MLAs discussions – this may be subject to availability of MLAs!

Please note that, subject to availability, a visit to Belfast City Hall may also be included.

Day 2 Visit to Europe House in Dublin. The building is the European Union Liaison Office and includes the Europa Experience, the aim of which is to educate visitors in relation to the EU's work. This interactive experience includes multimedia stations and a 360-degree cinema which will allow visitors to participate in a plenary session of the parliament or take part in a role-play game as a Member of the European Parliament.

Day 2 Visit to Dáil Éireann (Leinster House) & Seanad Éireann in Dublin. The visit will include a tour of the buildings which will give an insight into the history of Irish Politics coupled with a short visual tour showcasing the leaders who helped shape Irish politics down through the years. In addition, it is hoped that the visit will include an opportunity to sit in the public gallery to oversee debates taking place and also to meet Teachtaí Dála (TDs) in person.

Day 3 Travelling to Strasbourg

Day 4 Visit the European Parliament* in Strasbourg, to take part in Euroscola. Here you will become an MEP for a day! The Euroscola programme brings together students from all over Europe for a hands-on experience in parliamentary democracy.

See details from last year's event at <https://youth.europarl.europa.eu/more-information/euroscola.html>

Visit to European Court of Human Rights * – the day concludes with a visit to ECHR and a personal meeting with its coordinator.

Day4/5 Return journey

In advance of the trip, students will be informed of the various topics which they will debate at the European Parliament. Students will need to research these topics and then work with other winners to prepare the topics for presentation at the Parliament. Students will meet other young people from various European countries on their visit to the Parliament and will have opportunities to debate the topics with them.

* This is subject to availability on the date

The following are some quotes from winners of the competition:

- *The highlight for me was meeting other young people from different European countries who were taking part at the Euroscola event in the European Parliament.*
- *This competition provides a truly outstanding opportunity to young students. You learn so much about politics in your local area but also across the EU. I would definitely recommend taking part in this competition as it is a once in a lifetime opportunity and you make lifelong friendships.*
- *The interviews push you to learn about EU democracy and the work of Rotary. All students should learn about politics.*
- *I have learned interview skills and have made progress in my endeavour to finetune my speaking skills.*
- *The Youth Leadership Development Competition taught me the importance of upholding a presence in a room of people.*

NOTE TO SCHOOLS/COLLEGES

All entrants must be over 16 years of age on 1st January 2027 and under 18 years of age on 31st March 2027

PASSPORTS

The competition is open to students from Northern Ireland who hold a UK or EU passport.

European Union passports are mandatory for students who are living in the Republic of Ireland.

As Ukraine has been granted "Application Status" by the EU, students from Ukraine are eligible to enter this competition.

Passports need to be in date (valid) up to six months from date of trip.

Application Forms for this competition will be available from your Rotary Club from September. We hope you will include this competition as part of your extra curriculum projects for your school year.

Age restrictions: All entrants must be over 16 years of age on 1st January 2027 and under 18 years of age on 31st March 2027. Please note that the age range must be as detailed above. The age of the applicants will be checked at all levels of the competition, if the applicants age is not as detailed above, they will be disqualified. Please note that family members of Rotarians are eligible to participate in the competition.

Rotary Clubs undertaking YLDC will adhere to all compliance policies relating to Health and Safety, Child Protection and Equality and Diversity. See details about these on the RGBI website at <https://my.rotary.org/en/privacy-policy> and at <https://my.rotary.org/en/knowledge-and-resources/resources-and-reference/youth-protection>

Rotary Youth Leadership Development Competition coordinator is:

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ROTARY Youth Leadership Development Competition 2026/2027-Application Form

Rotary Club
name

School/college
name

Name (as per your passport)

Date of birth dd/mm/yyyy

Age

NOTE: ALL entrants must be over 16 years of age on 1st Jan 2027 and under 18 years of age on 31st March 2027.

Parent/Guardian Name

Parent/Guardian Mobile

Parent/Guardian Email Address

Personal Achievements

What do you think have been your most important personal achievements over the past 5 years?

Work experience

(if you have undertaken any work experience, please give details)

Name of employer:

Nature of business:

Experience gained:

Leadership

Leadership is the ability to guide others to achieve an objective. What leadership positions or experiences (if any) have you had in either your school or your outside interests in the last five years?

Experience / Position held	Responsibilities / Nature of activity

Planning and Organisation

Describe a situation where you have used your own personal planning and organisation skills to achieve a personal or group task.

Applicant's Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian signature

Teacher signature

Contact No.

School/college name

Note: At all stages of the competition the judges' decision is final.

PRIVACY STATEMENT

(Rotary Youth Leadership Development Competition)

Introduction

Rotary is a voluntary organisation that works in the community.

In order to run the Youth Leadership Development Competition, we need to collect personal information from applicants.

Rotary is a “Data Controller” and as such has a legal responsibility to ensure that you are aware of why it collects information and what it does with this information.

Rotary seeks to comply with its obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) by keeping personal data up to date; by storing and destroying it securely; by not collecting or retaining excessive amounts of data; by protecting personal data from loss, misuse, unauthorised access and disclosure and by ensuring that appropriate technical measures are in place to protect personal data.

What information do we collect?

Unless otherwise agreed with you, we will only collect personal data about you such as your name, address, telephone number, age and email address.

We may collect information such as medical conditions and details of next of kin.

We always ask for your consent to collect and store this information on a registration form.

Why we need it?

In running the competition, we need to know basic personal data in order, for example, to let you know when events take place or ensure that you are assigned to age-appropriate groups. In order to ensure your personal safety while attending this Rotary event, we may collect basic medical information such as information on allergies and medical conditions. We collect information on next of kin so that we can make contact with them in emergencies.

We will always seek your consent to store personal information on you, as well as your parent/guardian.

What do we do with the data?

All the personal data we hold about you will be processed by our staff either manually or using cloud-based computer systems. Currently Upshot software is used to process your information. No other third parties will have access to your personal data unless there is a legal obligation for us to provide them with this or unless you have given us your express consent to share this information with them.

Please be aware that your personal information may be stored on a cloud-based system whose servers are located within the EU or in secured cabinets.

We take all reasonable steps to ensure that your personal data is processed securely.

How long do we keep it?

This will vary depending on the type of information that is collected. The organisation has a data retention policy which provides a basis for deciding how long we store personal data and how we delete this information. A copy of our retention policy is available on request.

What are your rights?

You have the right to request access to personal data which Rotary will have collected from you. You have the right to request Rotary to correct or update or delete any or all of your personal data where this is based on consent. You can withdraw or change your consent at any time by contacting the President of your local Rotary Club

Please note that all processing of your personal data will cease once you have withdrawn consent, other than where this is required by law, but this will not affect any personal data that has already been processed prior to this point.

When will consent be required?

Whilst some of the personal data provided to our organisation is required for us to comply with our legal obligations, most information is provided on a voluntary basis through consent from a parent, carer or guardian.

Note – a young person aged 13(NI) or over is considered capable of giving consent themselves to process their personal data and does not require express agreement from a parent/carer/guardian.

How can you find out more or make a complaint?

If you have any questions about this privacy statement or how we handle personal data, please contact

The President of your local Rotary Club who will deal with your query.

You have the right to make a complaint at any time.

A copy of the Rotary Ireland Privacy Policy (GDPR) can be found at <https://www.rotarygbi.org/privacy-policy/>