

Rotary Youth Competition Guidelines for Rotarians

2026 –2027

For ROTARIAN USE ONLY

IMPORTANT – PLEASE READ

This is additional information for
Rotarians only

and should be read alongside the
Information Packs and other materials for
each of the Rotary Youth Competitions

Please destroy any earlier versions of these guidelines and ensure you are using only the 2026-27 information packs, entrance forms and all other materials

Rotary Youth Competition Guidelines for Rotarians 2026-27

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AND ENSURE YOU ARE USING
THE 2026-27 INFORMATION PACKS, ENTRY FORMS
AND ALL OTHER RELATED MATERIALS**

Introduction

These Guidelines are for **Rotarian use only** and apply to all Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland (Rotary GB&I) Youth Competitions for 2026-27.

Rotary Youth Competitions provide valuable opportunities for young people to develop their skills, grow in confidence and share their talents. These Guidelines are intended to support Rotarians in delivering those opportunities well, by promoting good practice and setting out important legal and procedural requirements. Rotarians are also encouraged to make the most of these competitions as an opportunity to showcase Rotary's commitment to young people, raise Rotary's profile in local communities, and highlight the wider work of Rotary.

These Guidelines should be read alongside all other materials for each competition, including the relevant Information Pack. If there is any conflict between the Information Pack and these Guidelines, the Information Pack takes precedence.

Please refer to the members' area of the rotarygbi.org website for each competition, where all related materials are listed clearly, showing which are for Rotarian use only and which are available to the public on the public facing website competition pages.

Important: The entry forms for each competition are only available in the members' area. This is to ensure that members of the public make contact with Rotary to find out what is happening in their area, including local arrangements and deadlines.

These Guidelines and Information Packs will be followed at national level, and all clubs, hubs, districts, and clusters are strongly encouraged to follow them too. However, processes may be adjusted to suit local circumstances, provided that any changes are clearly communicated to everyone involved.

Editable resources available for each competition

- Customisable poster
- Certificate for winners, runners-up, participants and others as required.

These can be downloaded from the members' area of the rotarygbi.org website (login required).

Publicity and the wider work of Rotary

Clubs, hubs, districts and clusters should actively promote their involvement in Rotary Youth Competitions, taking every opportunity to showcase the wider impact of Rotary.

Why Local Publicity Matters

Local media are often more interested in stories about local young people than in larger Rotary events taking place in the area. Highlighting stories about individual competitors, teams or groups is therefore more likely to gain coverage and strengthen Rotary's profile in the community.

Working Together

Organisers are encouraged to collaborate with:

- District Youth Leads
- Public Image and Membership Teams
- Rotary GB&I Specialist Adviser Teams (Humanitarian Service, Public Image and Membership)
- The Rotary GB&I Competition Team – see below

These Rotarians can provide ideas, support and help with outreach before, during and after the competitions.

Who Can Enter

Competitions are open to all young people, who meet the criteria, as set out in the relevant Information Pack. Entrants may:

- enter independently
- take part through a school, college or youth organisation, including:
 - home educated students
 - RotaKids or Interact members
 - Scout or Guide groups, etc.

However, **all entries must be submitted through a Rotary club or hub**, as outlined in the relevant Information Pack.

Creating a Positive Experience

Our competitions aim to encourage young people to develop and showcase their talents. Rotary formalities should be kept to a minimum.

Priority should be given to the experience of the young people, their families and supporters, rather than to Rotary formalities or the preferences of Rotarians.

Publicising Results

Rotarians, clubs, hubs and districts are encouraged to share the achievements and participation of young people involved at all stages of the competitions, while ensuring that all necessary GDPR, safeguarding and other compliance requirements are met. This may include:

- publishing results, photographs or short videos on websites and social media
- sending news items to local newspapers, community newsletters or broadcast media
- letting all entrants, their families, schools or other organisations know when publicity is being arranged

This inclusive approach helps build community support, highlights Rotary's engagement with young people, and encourages future participation.

Using the official Rotary Youth Competition entry forms, and where applicable image consent forms, helps ensure that all necessary permissions for publicity, including the use of names and images, are in place.

Venues

Venues selected for any stage of a Rotary Youth Competition should be appropriate to the specific event and supportive of the needs of both the young participants and their supporters.

Venues must meet all legal and ethical requirements for accessibility and safety. They should provide a welcoming environment in which young people can perform or present their work confidently and comfortably.

Additional Considerations

- If the event will last more than three hours, light refreshments should be provided or made available for purchase.
- Consider seeking sponsorship or donations to help cover costs. For example, programme sales may help offset some of the expense.
- Be mindful of travelling times and ease of access when selecting the venue.
- Consider practical arrangements such as parking, toilets, waiting areas and accessible facilities for disabled participants and supporters.

Rotary GB&I Policies and Procedures to be followed

These are the official Rotary GB&I policies and procedures that apply when organising any stage of a Rotary Youth Competition. Local organisers should ensure they are familiar with these requirements and apply them to any related events or activities as appropriate.

Child Protection/Safeguarding:

- The [Rotary GB&I Safeguarding Guidelines](#) **MUST** be followed at all times.
- Local organisers should consult their Club and/or District Safeguarding Officer for advice and support.

Health and Safety:

- Rotary GB&I [Health and Safety procedures](#) must be followed.
- A [Rotary Event Plan](#) and [Risk Assessment](#) must be completed for all events.
- Clubs should liaise with their Club and/or District Health and Safety Officer to ensure compliance.

Insurance:

- Organisers must refer to the [Rotary GB&I Rotary Club Insurance Guide](#), which is updated annually and available in the members' area (login required).
- For Rotary Year 2025-26, Bartlett & Company Ltd, Rotary's Insurance Brokers, have confirmed that all Rotary Youth Competitions are covered, and no additional notification is required. It is anticipated that this will also be the case for 2026-27.
- Organisers are still advised to check the [2025-26 Rotary insurance policy](#) (member login required) relevant to their jurisdiction and to check again after 1st July 2026 for the 2026-27 Insurance information
- Organisers must still complete the [Rotary Event Plan](#) and [Risk Assessment](#) as outlined in the [insurance guidance](#) for any events being held.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR):

- All personal data must be collected, held and administered in compliance with GDPR.
- **The official entry form and procedure are GDPR compliant and must not be altered.**
- Key GDPR requirements:
 - A compliant privacy notice covering all Rotary Youth Competitions/Awards **must** be used and adhered to
 - Each official competition specific entry form is GDPR compliant and is the only one that should be used. Districts and clusters should ensure that all entrants for District and Cluster stages are using the official competition specific entry form
 - The parental/guardian consent section on the form must be completed, including the photo/video permissions within it
 - If any photos or videos of people under 18 or adults at risk are included with the entry, signed consent form/s **must** be submitted for them with the entry
 - Ensure that consent for media use, including traditional and social media, (local, national, international) is highlighted to nominees and, where applicable, their parents/guardians if under 18 or not legally able to give consent
 - No photographs of entrants should be collected in advance of any stage of a Rotary Youth Competition. Images of National winners may be used in the event programme for the national final of face-to-face competitions
 - In accordance with the Rotary privacy notice for all Rotary Youth Competitions & Awards, all data, including spreadsheets and databases **must** be securely destroyed within 3 months of the national event for face-to-face competitions or within 3 months of the announcement of the winners of the non face-to-face competitions

- Rotary GB&I will retain only the names and official images of the winners of the national competitions for future publicity. No other details will be retained unless further specific consent is obtained.

Competition Contacts

For general queries relating to these Guidelines, or to the Information Packs and other materials for individual competitions, please contact the Rotary Youth Competitions Enquiry Team in the first instance at: Competitions@rotarygbi.org.

The Enquiry Team will refer any competition-specific or technical queries to the appropriate specialist team for that competition.

Details of the members of each competition team, along with other internal Rotary information, will be available in due course in the members' area of the rotarygbi.org website under [Rotary Youth competitions](#).

Dates for National Finals and other stages of each competition

The Rotary Youth Competition timetable should be planned backwards from the dates of the National Finals, allowing sufficient time for each stage. **Late entries will not be accepted.**

National Final Deadlines

- For **all non face-to-face** competitions, districts must submit winning entries to the Rotary Support Centre by **Thursday 30th April 2027**
- The **face-to-face National Finals** for Rotary Young Chef and Rotary Young Musician will take place as a combined event with the Rotary Young Citizen Awards on **Saturday 24th April 2027** at a venue to be advised.

Cluster Finals – Face-to-face Competitions

Each Cluster will set the date and venue for its Cluster Final, ensuring that the event takes place on or before Sunday 14th March 2027. All necessary information about the winners progressing to the national finals must be submitted by **Tuesday 16th March 2027**.

Cluster Final organisers must notify districts of their chosen date as soon as possible.

District Finals – all competitions

District organisers must:

- notify clubs of District Final dates for face-to-face competitions
- notify clubs of the submission deadline for non face-to-face entries (Rotary Young Artist, Environmentalist, Photographer and Writer)
- allow enough time for District winners to progress to the next stage (Cluster final for Face-to-face and National Final for Non Face-to-face competitions).

Club/Hub competitions

Clubs/Hubs must plan for their local heat/s to ensure that:

- winners of face-to-face competitions can advance to District finals on time
- winners of non face-to-face competitions meet the district submission deadlines.

District Entry to Cluster or National Finals

A competitor or team may only compete at District level if they have taken part in a club or hub competition or, under exceptional circumstances, have been assessed as being of an appropriate standard by the District Youth Lead (or their representative).

Only District winners will progress to:

- Cluster finals for face-to-face competitions
- National finals for non face-to-face competitions.

Cluster Final for face-to-face competitions only

The following are the Cluster groupings for the Rotary Young Chef and Rotary Young Musician. Once details of Cluster finals for these competitions have been agreed, districts and clubs within the Cluster should be notified as soon as possible.

Cluster	District
Central & Eastern England	1080, 1090, 1240, 1260
London & The South	1110, 1120, 1130, 1145
Midlands	1060, 1070, 1210, 1220
North of England & North Wales	1030, 1040, 1180, 1190, 1285
Scotland & Ireland	1010, 1160, 1320

Southern Wales & South West	1100, 1150, 1175, 1200
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Organisers are encouraged to rotate Cluster Final venues where practical, recognising that some districts may have more suitable facilities for specific competitions. Collaboration across districts is key to ensuring high-quality and inclusive Cluster finals.

ROTARY GB&I NATIONAL FINALS

RECOGNITION, PRIZES AND AWARDS

At National Final level for 2026/27, recognition will be given to all participants, with certificates of participation for all entrants and certificates for winners and runners up

If clusters, districts, clubs and hubs include prizes at their stage of the competitions it is recommended that these are vocationally relevant. For example, this might include a master class or work experience with an expert in the relevant field such as a professional musician or renowned chef, or another prize that supports further development of the entrant's skills.

Originality, Use of Artificial Intelligence, Plagiarism or Close Copying

Entries must be entirely the competitor's own original work and must match the theme of the competition. Plagiarised, copied, traced, close-copied, or AI-generated work is not permitted in any Rotary Youth Competition.

It is important that we protect the work of creative individuals. While we are all inspired by the work of others, competitors must not use generative artificial intelligence (AI), or any app, tool or platform that creates, rewrites, edits, enhances or generates any part of the submission. The entry must be created solely by the competitor.

For the purposes of these competitions, "close copying" means that, to a reasonable person, the entry appears remarkably similar in significant respects to work created elsewhere.

Rotary reserves the right to investigate any entry where plagiarism, close copying or use of AI is suspected, and to disqualify any entry found to be in breach of this rule.

Competition organisers and judges should remain vigilant to ensure the integrity of each submission.

Entry forms for all Rotary Youth Competitions

All entries must be submitted through a Rotary club or hub. It is the responsibility of the club or hub to provide entrants with the correct unaltered 2026/27 official entry form for the relevant competition.

Rotarians must access the Members' area of the rotarygbi.org website, navigate to the relevant competition page, and download the entry form for that specific competition.

Using the official entry form ensures that all legal and data protection requirements are met.

Submission of Entries for non face-to-face competitions

When submitting entries for non face-to-face competitions the following requirements must be met:

- Entries must not be photocopied or photographed without permission from the competition organiser

- Judges' comments from previous rounds should not appear on the entries themselves
- Entries must not display names or other identifying information, but should clearly be linked to the corresponding official entry form
- Any necessary consent forms for photographic or video images used must be included
- For District submissions to the National Final, winning entries should be named clearly, with the district and competition category in the file name.

Entry Form Requirements

- The official Rotary GB&I entry form must be fully completed and submitted by the entrant
- For non face-to-face competitions, the entry form must be submitted separately from the competition work, but be clearly linked to it
- The same official entry form must be used at all stages of the competition. It should be passed on to the next organiser as an entrant progresses to the next stage
- Use the "Official Purposes Only" box on the Entry Form to record each stage.

Submitting to Rotary GB&I

Winning entries at District level for the non face-to-face competitions should be submitted to Rotary GB&I for the National Final to the Rotary Member Services and Events Team by emailing them at cds@rotarygbi.org.

File Size Limits

IMPORTANT: Each email must **not exceed 15MB**. Emails over this size will not be received.

If your files are too large:

- split them across multiple emails
- or contact Andy Smith at cds@rotarygbi.org to arrange an alternative file transfer method.

Judges

National Level

At National level, judges will be appointed by Rotary GB&I and will not be Rotarians. A Rotarian with relevant expertise will act as the liaison/advisor to the judges, providing logistical support and context where needed.

Club, Hub, District and Cluster stages

To ensure fairness and transparency at earlier stages, it is recommended that:

- Rotarians are not used as judges
- A Rotarian with appropriate experience acts as liaison/advisor for the judges, but does not influence decisions
- Different judges are used at each stage of the competition, so that no judge serves at a later stage involving any of the same entrant or entrants.

APPENDIX 1

Specific Competition Guidance additional to the details found in the Information Packs

1. Rotary Young Artist

[Information Pack for Rotary Young Artist](#)

National Final

Winning entries from districts are to be sent digitally to the Rotary GB&I Support Centre by **30th April 2027**.

2. Rotary Young Chef

[Information Pack for Rotary Young Chef](#)

The competition requires a two-course healthy meal (main and dessert) for two people with a maximum cost of £18.00.

District Final

Rotary clubs and hubs must notify their District of their intention to submit an entrant by completing any reservation form, or following District specific instructions and paying any applicable fee.

National Final

The Rotary Young Chef Final will be held on **Saturday 24th April 2027** at a venue to be advised.

Knife Skills

Safe and appropriate knife use should be emphasised. Some competitors may need support or reminders in this area.

Tips:

- A sharp knife is a **safe** knife.
- Care & attention are required when working with knives in the kitchen.

DO

- Use a knife suitable for the task and the food being cut.
- Keep your knife sharp with a good sharpener.
- Always cut on a stable surface (chopping board).
- Take your time and stay focused.
- Handle knives carefully when cleaning or storing.
- When cutting fruits or vegetables, create a flat side first and place it down for stable cutting.

DON'T

- Leave loose knives on work surfaces where they could accidentally be pushed off.
- Try to catch a falling knife.
- Use knives improperly e.g. as a can opener.
- Carry knives while holding other items.
- Engage in horseplay with a knife.
- Carry a knife in your pocket.

To illustrate these rules, watch the video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ydc_SaQ_eRQ

3. Rotary Young Environmentalist

[Information Pack for Rotary Young Environmentalist](#)

National Final

Winning entries from districts are to be sent digitally to the Rotary GB&I Support Centre by **30th April 2027**.

4. Rotary Young Musician

[Information Pack for Rotary Young Musician](#)

National Final

The Rotary Young Musician Final will be held on **Saturday 24th April 2027** at a venue to be advised.

Venue

Cluster and Finals often feature performances of an exceptionally high standard. Ideally, chosen venues should reflect the prestigious nature of the competition, offer acoustics that enhance performance and be superior to standard school halls where possible.

A suitable acoustic piano should be provided.

- A well maintained upright piano is preferable to a poor quality grand piano.
- Digital pianos are **not acceptable** at cluster or national level.
- Seek expert opinion if unsure about piano suitability.

Format

This is a live performance competition.

- No recordings are permitted or accepted at cluster and national finals.
- Each competitor performs a selection of works of their own choice, not exceeding 13 minutes.

If a club, hub, district or cluster reduces the maximum time for a performance at an earlier stage from the 13 minutes, this must be clearly communicated in advance to competitors. The maximum performance time at the National Final will remain 13 minutes.

If a competitor is using an electrical instrument, or if a vocal, guitar or percussion entrant is using electrical equipment, they must show the organiser on the day of the competition a current Portable Appliance Tested (PAT) certificate, as set out in the Information Pack.

Performance

Organisers must provide:

- practice areas for competitors and their accompanists
- a suitable piano for performances and accompaniment (see the advice in the Venue notes above).

A master of ceremonies should invite each competitor, in ballot order, to the front or stage to perform. Competitors should briefly introduce their programme before performing.

Licensing

Venues must hold a Performing Rights Society (PRS) licence. If not, organisers must obtain one via www.prsformusic.com.

5. Rotary Young Photographer

[Information Pack for Young Photographer](#)

National Final

Winning entries from districts are to be sent digitally to the Rotary GB&I Support Centre by **30th April 2027**.

6. Rotary Young Writer

[Information Pack for Rotary Young Writer](#)

National Final

Winning entries from districts are to be sent digitally to the Rotary GB&I Support Centre by **30th April 2027**.

7. Rotary Youth Speaks

[Information Pack for Rotary Youth Speaks](#)

National Final

There will be **no National Final** for Rotary Youth Speaks in 2026-27.

Each district and cluster will decide whether they will run this competition at district and cluster level and advise their clubs and hubs accordingly.

If a club, hub, district or cluster alters the suggested timings this must be clearly communicated in advance to competitors.

8. Rotary Youth Speaks: A Debate

[Information Pack for Rotary Youth Speaks: A Debate](#)

National Final

There will be **no National Final** for Rotary Youth Speaks: A Debate in 2026-27.

Each district and cluster will decide if they will run this competition at district and cluster level and advise their clubs and hubs accordingly.

If a club, hub, district or cluster alters the suggested timings this must be clearly communicated in advance to competitors.