



Prospective Applicants for the Xicotepec Project Should Read This Entire Document Carefully Before Applying

Important note: The information in this document pertains to Rotary's rules, requirements, and guidelines for participants in the Xicotepec Project. University of Iowa service-learning students may be subject to additional requirements.

Conditions of Participation

All applicants must read and agree to these Conditions for Participation in The Xicotepec Project (the "Project"). The Project Coordinators reserve the right to impose additional conditions, restrictions or rules at any time prior to or during the execution of the Project whenever they deem necessary.

1. I understand and agree that, as a participant in a Rotary program or project, I am subject to the appropriate and legal conduct of the United States and of the country of the program. I understand that I am also subject to the directions of the Project Coordinators concerning my conduct.
2. I agree to participate fully in the Project as programmed by the Project Coordinators and agree that any deviation from programmed activities must be approved in writing by a Project Coordinator.
3. I agree that the Project Coordinators may terminate my participation in the program if:
 - a. I engage in actions that endanger myself or others, or
 - b. my conduct is considered to be detrimental or incompatible with the best interest of the Project.

I further agree, if expelled from the Project Team, to be responsible for all ordinary and extraordinary expenses incurred in returning to the United States.

4. I understand that I am subject to the laws of the host country and agree to abide by those laws. It is further understood that Rotary and its agents may be limited in their ability to provide assistance in the event of arrest and reserve the right to conduct disciplinary proceedings on their own.
5. I am aware of the nature and the cost of the program and will guarantee that all financial obligations related to my participation in the Project will be met.
6. I understand that individual travel during the Project is not permitted. I will provide the Project Coordinators with details of any travel undertaken before or after the Project. I understand that any such travel is undertaken at my own risk.



7. I understand that Rotary District 6000 reserves the right to cancel the Project in the case of insufficient participation or for other reasons deemed appropriate. Rotary District 6000 also reserves the right to make changes to the Project or alterations in the Project's proposed schedule and itinerary. I further understand that should the Project, or any portion of the Project, be canceled, Rotary District 6000 shall have no responsibility beyond the refund of all deposits made and monies paid to Rotary District 6000 by participants. Minor alterations in the Project's programs are not grounds for refunds.
8. I understand that by participating in the Project I am agreeing to learn about the host culture and adapt to it to the best of my ability and not to judge new or unfamiliar ideas and practices by the standards or criteria of my own culture. I am aware that it is both inappropriate and culturally insensitive to use Project time to promote religious or political agendas and that such behavior can cause offense and potentially place me or other members of the Project Team in harm's way. I understand that I should not expect to change the culture I am visiting and that as a member of the Project Team that I should not engage in such activities. I understand that while the USA respects certain rights such as the right of freedom of expression that these are not universal rights and may not be protected by law in some countries. I will conduct myself with respect for the host culture even though I may not agree with every practice or custom of that culture, and I understand that behavior that is inconsistent with this statement may lead to my removal from the Project.
9. I understand that in order to participate in this program, that I must be vaccinated for Covid-19 as recommended by the CDC and that I will be subject to CDC rules and those of the Mexican government regarding masking, social distancing, etc.
10. I have read the U.S. State Department travel conditions/warnings for Mexico in preparation for this trip (see <https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country/mexico.html>). I have read and understand the conditions governing my participation in The Xicotepec Project, and I understand the possible actions that may be taken should I act in a manner that is inconsistent with these conditions.

In order to be considered, an applicant must check the box on the online application form that indicates that s/he has read and agrees to and accepts the foregoing Conditions of Participation.



Basic Information for all prospective team members:

Trip Dates: March 10 – 18, 2024

The Xicotepec Project is a humanitarian, community-development project sponsored by the Rotary Club of Xicotepec and Rotary District 6000 of Iowa. The project began in 2002 and has involved not only Rotarians and their families, but also many high-school and university students. Project team members should have a commitment to humanitarian service and should be prepared to participate enthusiastically throughout their week in Xicotepec.

The main purpose of the trip to Xicotepec is to work on selected community projects sponsored by the Xicotepec Rotary Club. You may be asked to perform several different jobs during the week. You may or may not be assigned to the job(s) of your choice, but you are expected to perform the assignments that are given to you. University of Iowa service-learning students enrolled in the International Perspectives course will divide their time between service activities and related academic endeavors according to a pre-established plan.

Other purposes of the trip include experiencing, enjoying and learning about a culture different from your own, promoting fellowship and friendship among people with different cultural, economic, educational, racial and religious backgrounds, and learning more about Rotary in an international context. University of Iowa service-learning participants will also have specific academic goals which they will have developed together with faculty members and each other.

Before Applying

Participation in The Xicotepec Project as a Project Team member is open to: District 6000 Rotarians, Rotaractors, Interactors, youth who are endorsed by a District 6000 Rotary Club, and members of their immediate families; and service-learning students enrolled in the University of Iowa's "International Perspectives: Xicotepec" service-learning course and course faculty.

Before completing the online application form, prospective applicants may want to prepare a *Statement of Purpose* and a *Brief Bio*, both of which must be 75 words or less and provided in the application. The questions from the application are:

Statement of Purpose: Please provide a brief statement of why you wish to participate in The Xicotepec Project. What hopes, expectations or goals do you have and how will your participation in the Project help to fulfill them? In what way do you think you can contribute to the Project?



Brief Bio: This will be your first introduction to many of the other team members and to those in Xicotepec – what would you like them to know about you? This brief bio will be used in a Project Team Directory that will be distributed to the rest of the project team and to our Rotarian hosts in Xicotepec. **Note: You may not ask that we use prior years' entries. Please write a new one.**

Applying for the Project Team

Application forms are filled out online by visiting <https://xicoproject.org> and clicking on Apply. Those who complete their applications early are more likely to be chosen for the project team if there is a surplus of applicants.

In order to be considered, the applicant must pay a \$200 deposit. If an applicant is not accepted as a member of the Project Team or if the applicant withdraws his/her application before s/he is accepted, the deposit will be returned in full. Once an applicant has been accepted the deposit becomes non-refundable.

An application will not be considered complete until the \$200 deposit has been received. All deposits will be paid online.

The deadline for submitting applications (including the required \$200.00 deposit) is midnight, November 12, 2023.

Applicants will receive notice of their acceptance via email by early December, 2023.

For those applicants who are **not** part of the Service-Learning team from the University of Iowa, there are limits to the number of participants who can be accommodated in Xicotepec at one time. If there is a surplus of applicants, preference will be given to:

- a. early applicants
- b. first-time applicants
- c. applicants from D6000 Rotary Clubs that have never had one of their members go to Xicotepec
- d. applicants with well-developed project plans

---Please apply early if you want to go to Xicotepec in March 2024---



Communication prior to the trip

E-mail will be the primary means of communicating with applicants and project team members. Applicants and participants must have an e-mail account that is checked regularly and that will not fill up or be unavailable. Xicotepec Project news and announcements of general interest are widely distributed by e-mail; non-applicants or non-participants who would like to be on the distribution list may send an e-mail with their request to info@xicoproject.org.

Travel and Costs

It is your responsibility to have the appropriate passport and arrange for all other travel documentation you may need for air entry to and from Mexico.

- US Citizens
 - A US passport book that does not expire within 6 months of the March 18, 2024 return date is required for this trip.
 - You must have a valid passport by no later than December 31, 2023.
 - A "passport card" is not acceptable for air entry into Mexico and is not accepted for this trip.
 - Upon arrival in Mexico City, the group will go through the standard immigration arrival process.
 - If there are unique situations that require you to have additional documentation, please arrange this on your own.
 - More information can be found here:
<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports.html>
- Non-US Citizens
 - You are responsible for obtaining all the required travel documents according to your citizenship and situation. This may include obtaining a VISA prior to travel or other requirements.
 - You must have a valid passport and all other documents required for your travel by no later than December 31, 2023.

Flight itineraries may vary from one person to the next due to seat availability; there is no assurance that you will travel with a particular person, nor at a certain time, nor with regard to the number of connections or the airline(s) you will fly on.



The arrival destination is the Mexico City Benito Juárez International Airport. You will be met at the airport by one or more of the Project Coordinators. Depending on the hour of your arrival, you will either overnight at a hotel in Mexico City or go directly to Xicotepec from the airport by charter bus.

The Xicotepec Project will arrange all essential ground transportation in Mexico on your behalf. All food and lodging while in Xicotepec will be provided. Lodging while in Mexico City will be provided; you will pay for your meals while in Mexico City and on travel days.

You must travel with the rest of the project team unless you have made alternate arrangements which have been approved by the Project Coordinators prior to the beginning of your trip. While in Xicotepec you must participate in the scheduled work or other activities as directed by the Project Coordinators or other leaders; you may not travel or sight-see on your own during the week you are in Mexico with the project team.

Trip costs are based on the actual costs for airfare, lodging, meals, etc. and may change from year to year. The cost for the 2024 trip for youth participants is \$2050; adults over 30 years of age will have a base cost of \$2200 (see "Information for Rotarians and other adults" below). These charges include double occupancy in a Mexico City hotel - single occupancy will cost an additional \$60. Please contact one of the Project Coordinators if you have questions about the cost of the trip.

Once accepted, failure to pay in full by the due date will result in cancellation of your trip, and you will be responsible for payment of all costs, direct and indirect, incurred by The Xicotepec Project or Rotary on your behalf.

If you withdraw after being accepted, you will be responsible for payment of all direct and indirect costs resulting from canceled tickets, reservations, etc.

Should cancellation be the result of an unavoidable circumstance (health issue, family emergency, etc.), every attempt will be made to minimize your cost; this depends on the timing of cancellation vs. deadlines for payments to airlines and hotels for tickets and reservations.

Once accepted, 50% of your balance is due by December 5, and payment in full must be received no later than January 26. Please plan accordingly.

Safety and Health

Safety and health of the project team are two prime concerns of everyone involved in the Xicotepec Project; you will not be asked to do anything that is unduly risky or to tolerate unhealthy conditions, and you may refuse to do anything that you believe is unsafe or that might damage your health or the health of others. However, participants should acknowledge that there are inherent risks in traveling to and



staying in a developing country and that environmental and sanitary conditions often do not meet customary standards found in the United States.

You must be in reasonably good health in order to participate. In particular, you should be able to walk up to a mile at a time and up to three miles per day and to negotiate uneven terrain on your own. You should be able to perform steady, moderate work under a variety of weather conditions ranging from very hot and humid to cold and damp. You must have health insurance that provides coverage while you are in Mexico (supplemental insurance is available if your normal health care coverage is not adequate in this respect).

Immunizations

In order to participate in the March 2024 Xicotepec Project team trip, you must be vaccinated for Covid-19. Applicants are also urged to obtain booster shots according to CDC recommendations. You will be required to provide a copy of your vaccination card or other document showing the date(s) of your vaccination. If there are any rules in force in Mexico at the time of your visit regarding masking, social distancing, etc., you must observe them.

If your other standard immunizations are up-to-date, nothing else is required for travel to Mexico. If you are concerned about illnesses which are uncommon in the U.S. such as cholera, malaria, etc. you should contact your family doctor or a travel health clinic for advice.

Supplemental Health Insurance

Check with your regular health care insurance provider for details on your coverage while abroad. If needed, special traveler's health insurance is available; for more information, you can visit the websites listed below (the products and/or services offered or described in the websites listed below are *not endorsed* by Rotary International, Rotary District 6000 nor the Xicotepec Project, nor by any affiliated group or individual):

www.bootsnall.com/travel-insurance/travel-medical-insurance.html

www.wallach.com

<https://www.hthworldwide.com/>

www.uhcsafetrip.com



www.hthtravelinsurance.com

www.internationalsos.com

Information for Rotarians and other adults:

District 6000 Rotarians and their families are eligible to apply. Please contact the Project Coordinator before applying if you plan to bring children under 15 years of age. Non-Rotarian adults should contact the Project Coordinator before applying.

The base trip cost of \$2200 for adults (for this purpose, Rotarians and non-Rotarians who are over 30 years of age and not part of the Service-Learning team) includes a \$150 project fee; these funds will go toward project expenses in Xicotepec.

Team members who are not part of the University of Iowa Service-Learning team will be housed in the homes of Rotarians in Xicotepec. Your hosts may not speak English; you may not be allowed to choose the host family you stay with. You should be prepared to adapt to the customs and routines of the household where you are lodged.

Members of the University of Iowa Service-Learning team will be housed in a hotel while in Xicotepec.

Information for Youth Participants:

Youth (high school and college students) are eligible to apply if they:

- a. are **active** members of an Interact or Rotaract Club, or
- b. have been nominated or endorsed by a Rotary District 6000 Rotary Club, or
- c. are enrolled in the University of Iowa service-learning course, or
- d. have obtained prior approval from a Project Coordinator

Note that participants under 18 years of age will be required to furnish a notarized letter, signed by both parents (or legal guardians), that grants the participant permission to travel without a parent.

Interactors, Rotaractors, and youth participants endorsed or nominated by a D6000 Rotary Club (including Junior Rotarians and Rotarians under 30 years of age) are eligible for a **one-time, partial** reimbursement of their trip costs to Xicotepec, provided they fulfill all the other requirements described here and elsewhere.

Other Information:



There are various requirements and restrictions regarding the consumption of alcohol, curfew, conduct and travel procedures, some of which are age-related. These will be presented and explained in detail prior to departure for Mexico.

For more information, please visit the Xicotepec Project website at <https://xicoproject.org>.