

STRATEGIC WEEKEND

“PARIS ACCORDS”

E.R.I.C. BOARD 2018 - 2019

PARIS, JULY 20, 5PM > JULY 22, 1PM

Ben PINTENS – President
Hanna VISSER – Vice-President (Online)
Itziar URIBARRI – Treasurer
François OGER – Secretary
Vedran JAKOPOVIC – IT Officer
Tiina LEHTI – Social Services Officer
Maria Vittoria GARGIULO – Marketing Officer (Online)
Justin HADJILAMBRIS – Past-President (Online if needed)

The following topics were discussed, not necessarily in this order but I organized the minutes in order to make them easier to read. Every idea comes from a situation (context) and leads to a proposition substantiated with an analysis the discussion.

- The E.R.I.C. as an organization and legal entity: people, structure and rules,
- Sharing together: the events,
- E.R.I.C. Financial Fair Play; structure and transparency,
- Inside the E.R.I.C.: supporting services and communication within the team,
- Outside the E.R.I.C.: marketing, public image and social media,
- The heart of the E.R.I.C.: our social projects.

Final version: AUGUST 1, 10 PM

1- The E.R.I.C. as an organization and legal entity: people, structure and rules.

Context

Last Rotary year ('17-'18) we voted for the E.R.I.C. to become a legal entity. This will have an impact on the structure of our organisation. Outstanding work was made by the previous board and other Rotaractors to update our by-laws and make them complete and very precise. In this document, many articles are related to specific guidelines more than by-laws.

Analysis

Creation of the legal entity

A hand-over was done on the preparatory work done by Justin H. and Jan H.. The board seeks to use that information and preparation to move forward at the earliest convenience.

The creation of the legal entity is in its final phase, however upon voting of the legal entity, the costs associated with this project weren't specified. These costs will have an impact on the budget of the E.R.I.C. for the year '18-'19.

By-laws VS. the legal entity

Board members with experience as a Country Representative don't recall a European event without a discussion or voting on the by-laws. A continuous discussion we believe to impact the amount of time and energy dedicated in the organisation itself, its members and its social projects. We believe in a more open approach of certain elements of the current by-laws based on best-practice cases, testimonials and documented examples. Guidance instead of ruling.

Moreover the by-laws of the organisation will change as a result of the creation of the legal entity. Once in force by-laws are legally binding and written in respect of the organisation of the legal entity. Any change to 'by-laws' will be subjected to a cost as well as administration and publication in the Belgian Official Journal.

Proposition

Creation of the legal entity

The board will request quotations on the required cost elements and present them during the Strategic Weekend for Country Representatives. Quotations will include - but not limited to - the following;

- Publication of the creation;
- Publication of yearly annual report;
- Certified accountant according to Belgian law;
- Legal advice on applicable regulations of non-profit associations;
- Directors' liability insurance;
- Civil liability insurance
- Business bank account.

The legal entity - a non profit [*Vereniging Zonder Winstoogmerk (NL)* or *Association Sans But Lucratif (FR)*] - will be created in Brussels, Belgium. It has been confirmed that the non-profit can reside at the address of the headquarters of Rotary BeLux (*Belgium-Luxembourg*).

The non-profit E.R.I.C. will open a Business Pro bank account with KBC, a Belgian bank active in Belgium, Central- and Eastern Europe. Specific policies on payments will be implemented, ensuring double verification / signature on all outgoing transfers.

By-laws VS. the legal entity

The current by-laws are advantageous to our organisation thanks to their completeness. However more specific elements on practises, European events, etc. cannot form part of the by-laws of the legal entity as they are too susceptible to change. We therefore advise on dividing the current by-laws into two documents;

- Legal by-laws;
- European Rotaract handbook.

The migration to a non-profit forces us to revise the nomination of the current 'by-laws'. Certain elements of the current by-laws will be reused in the by-laws of the legal entity as it is required by Belgian law, other elements are required by the Rotary Code of Policies. These elements will form the new and 'published' by-laws of our organisation - the non-profit. A document - a set of elements - less subjected to change and based on proven policies and law. An example of elements to be included in the by-laws;

- The organisation's structure with an appointed board of directors. Directors being the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, etc.;
- The business address of the non-profit;
- The policy on voting, number of votes, second-round voting, etc.;
- Details on the annual General Assembly, requirements and purpose.

The remaining elements of the current 'by-laws' will be redone in a new 'European Rotaract Handbook' including a detailed explanation on the organisation's operations; Country Representatives, assistant, task forces, event management, ...

The handbook will consist of testimonials (*former board members, members of host organising committees, E.R.I.C. alumni, etc.*), best practise cases and documented analysis of (un)successful events. This information should support future members, organising committees and others.

The European Rotaract Handbook is to be considered be a memorandum of understanding on how the E.R.I.C. is run and events are organised. It does however not contain any mandatory requirements to be met by one of the parties involved in the E.R.I.C.. It is created to offer guidance, no ruling.

Context

Other M.D.I.O.'s outside of Europe increasingly ask for help in improving their organisations, proposing joint social projects, etc. collaboration, help needed... The appointment of someone to coordinate the external relations could be interesting (*the idea of an international director*).

Analysis

The board does not deem our current organisation mature enough to appoint an international director and wishes to focus on our pan-European identity, organisation and operations.

Proposition

This year's program will focus on our European operations. No International Director will be appointed. The board will continue to gather all requests received by other M.D.I.O.'s to which it will reply. However we will not actively engage in an international project without prior consent of the Country Representatives, nor actively seek international collaboration.

Context

During European events, we see an important participation of Rotarians and former Rotaractors that still want to be involved in the network of Rotaract Europe. The idea of the E.R.I.C. alumni emerged last year to create the possibility for them to get involved once again in our organisation.

Analysis

Rotaract alumni - among which some are full Rotary members - carry vast experience in different fields of Rotaract Europe's projects. Their valuable knowledge is of great importance to Rotaractors in Europe. The board wishes to investigate what means are required to bring together this group of people and benefit of their knowledge.

Proposition

Based on previous work and proposals, a documented project proposal will be formulated which shall be presented during the Strategic Weekend for Country Representatives. The outcome of the presentation and discussion may lead to the creation of an alumni task force. Proposals may include - but not limited to - the following;

- Appointment of an alumni coordinator, as an assistant to the E.R.I.C. secretary;
- Creation of an alumni membership allowing these members to enjoy normal rates of participant packages on European events, instead of an elevated 'Rotary / non-Rotaract' participant package;
- Alumni advisory panel advising future host organising committees;
- A business-oriented approach on alumni, creating opportunities for Rotaractors.

Susana S. created a proposal last year. The board has contacted Susana with the request to have her lead the task force on this topic. Susana is prepared to make a presentation based on last year's proposal.

Context

Both in Rotaract and Rotary, on different levels of our organisation, leadership is chosen / elected well ahead of the period of leadership. This allows the elected leadership to prepare the year to come, orient on the desired goals and assemble a well-balanced team.

Furthermore current by-laws leave blank on the number of assistants on certain positions.

Analysis

An election of the position of President prior to the General Assembly during the annual European Conference allows the elected person to form its team and present its budget and policy to the Country Representatives. Moreover it allows the current board to offer a complete hand-over during the European Conference in a face-to-face encounter.

Currently a secretary or treasurer is allowed to uphold its own team of assistants, despite the large set of responsibilities they are accountable for.

Proposition

The board proposes to move forward the election of the position of President to the Winter Rotaract European Meeting. After election the elected President is asked to open a call on the different positions of the European board. The candidacies are then put up for approval / voting during the General Assembly of Country Representatives.

We wish to extend the possibility of an assistant to all board member - except for the position of President and Vice-President. We could opt either to put a fixed number of assistants per position (*e.g. two per board member*) or a maximum total number of assistants to which the board can decide how many to allocate per board member. The maximum number of assistants would be a compensation to future host organising committees in projecting the total cost of a participant package for a board member / assistant.

The latter is up for discussion during the Strategic Weekend of Country Representatives, and will - upon decision - form part of the European Rotaract Handbook.

2- Sharing together: the events.

Context

There is a seven months gap between the previous European Conference and the next Rotaract European Meeting in Cyprus. Country Representatives are asking to meet prior to the month of November so they get a chance to know the other Country Representatives.. Moreover since the start of the new Rotary year it will take us four full months prior to a first gathering during the first Rotaract European Meeting.

Analysis

Waiting till the beginning of November to meet would compromise some of the objectives set by the board. The task forces would not be able to get started prior to the Rotaract European Meeting. We consider online meetings not to be a worthy replacement to bridge till November 1st. A physical meeting is much needed.

Proposition

We decide on the creation of a new format called the Strategic Weekend for Country Representatives. A weekend organized to gather the board, assistants and Country Representatives. A two-day event existing of trainings, panel discussions, presentations and team building activities.

The Strategic Weekend is scheduled for **Friday the 21st of September till Sunday the 23rd of September 2018**. The location of the first meeting will be **Rotaract District 2041, Milan, Italy**. The following planning is drafted;

- Friday 21st: Arrival and welcome gathering.
- Saturday 22nd: Weekend program and team building activity in the evening.
- Sunday 23rd: Final word and lunch.

The weekend will be about content and team building. No fancy accommodation, nor parties or gala. Basis accommodation, good food and hard work!

A save-the-date email will be send to all Country Representatives on the 22nd of July 2018.

The Strategic Weekend package will include accommodation, meals and transportation. We strive to a max cost of €85,- to a €120,- per person for two nights of accommodation, meals and transportation (*similar to the cost District Conferences*). Milan has been chosen as a location due to its close proximity to multiple (low-budget) airports and connectivity to the European rail network. We advise Country Representatives on filling the cost of the Strategic Weekend to your respective Rotary District or national M.D.I.O.. The Strategic Weekend is of great importance to this year's European operations

The hostel accommodation is located in the city centre of Milan. Youth Hostel AIG Piero Rotta, Viale Angelo Salmoiraghi, 1, 20148 Milano MI, Italy.

Context

We received the feedback that it happens that a host organising committee doesn't not receive the required support and assistance. The E.R.I.C. requires a host organising committee to comply to a great set of requirements without offering any support in return.

Analysis

We believe the E.R.I.C. has the moral obligation to support and advise future host organising committees in their endeavours to organise an European event. The contributions made by participants should benefit these participants.

Proposition

The board investigates the creation of a booking tool designed to the needs of the E.R.I.C. and its host organising committees allowing the E.R.I.C. to trace sales and participant data, collect the E.R.I.C. fees upon booking and offer the host organising committee a reliable and complete tool to register bookings and payments.

The E.R.I.C. should push for a mandatory debriefing of host organising committees after an European event has passed. This would allow us to form a knowledge base with best-practise examples, do's and don'ts and other valuable information on organising an event.

On August 1st 2018, a check-list will be sent to the host organising committee of the Rotaract European Meeting in Cyprus (*Constantinos K.*) regarding the requirements we have on :

- Capacity of the location for the E.R.I.C. meeting;
- Location for a CR diner, price per person;
- Full description of the social project of the European meeting;
- Contact details of a company able to provide a possibility of livestreaming the meeting.

We will continue to use this questionnaire for next European events for the year '18-'19. The questionnaire might be enlarged if need be. This questionnaire will help the host organising committee identify who will be the key contact or assignee to every one of the task.

Context

During each European event a diner is organised by the host organising committee for the Country Representatives. It gives the opportunity to meet new people. Each representative can bring an extra person. The diner is limited in capacity. Can this diner be opened to more people?

Analysis

The expenses of the diner are fully covered by the budget of the E.R.I.C.. The purpose of the diner is giving Representatives, board members and assistants the opportunity to connect in a casual manner.

Proposition

The invitation to the diner will only extent to Country Representatives, board members and assistants. The costs are covered by the budget upon approval of the quotation of the diner by the E.R.I.C. board.

Context

The new price by-laws open the possibility to create a self-determined price per participant package. No restriction on the price of a package. The element of hotel accommodation is a major share in determining the package price. Other Rotary conference events apply a different approach to the composition of a participant package.

Analysis

A participant package to a Rotary Convention is limited to the costs of the conference, meetings and seminars. The cost of hotel accommodation is separated from the cost of hotel accommodation, de facto all packages sold without accommodation with focus on costs relating to the convention program. Leaving participants free to book any hostel or hotel they might want. The host organising committee can opt to arrange booking deals with some of the hotels creating benefits to participants when booking at these specific hotel accommodations.

This approach could be an alternative to the current fixed package content including, hotel accommodation, transportation, etc. However a change in the current by-laws would be required as it is prescribed hotel accommodation in required.

Proposition

By-laws will change with the creation of the non-profit to legal by-laws and an European Rotaract Handbook, the above explained approach can be added as a possible package composition. The organisation of the Hamburg Rotary Convention is a great example. Focus on content of the event, avoiding the logistics and problems that come with organising hotel accommodation.

3- E.R.I.C. Financial Fair Play; structure and transparency.

Appointment of assistants

Current by-laws do not allow a treasurer to hold assistants, in anticipation of a change in the guidelines, Itzy called upon to Country Representatives to aid her on financial matters and the E.R.I.C. budget. The selected Country Representatives are;

- Fatima SULTYGOVA – CR Russia – Rotaract Saint-Petersburg District 2220 (Russia).
- Robbin PRUIJN – CR the Netherlands – Rotaract Amsterdam District 1580 (the Netherlands).

Context

Each year the E.R.I.C. budget starts from zero because there is no history, trends and exact information about what we receive and what we spend. With the legal entity, there is a serious need to rethink budget control, budget forecasting .

Furthermore the non-profit, once created, does not have to maintain a complete bookkeeping due to its low annual turnover (*less than €250.000,- excluding VAT*). A simple balance with ins and outs would suffice according to Belgian law.

Analysis

Same as the above.

Proposition

This year's budget will include the reconciliation of the past years based on the information available. This will allow the E.R.I.C. to better anticipate the future financial situation of the E.R.I.C..

At the end of each quarter an update will be communicated on what has been received and spent. This information will be evaluated based on the budget forecast.

The bank account of the E.R.I.C. is located in Luxembourg and not linked with the E.R.I.C. but with the treasurer. We will need to transfer first all the money to another personal bank account in the Eurozone where we are more flexible in transferring funds. This bank account will serve as a suspense account - Tiina agreed on opening up her unused savings account in Finland - pending the creation of the legal entity. Once created it will have its own (Belgian) bank account. We will transfer the money to the E.R.I.C. bank account and clear the Finnish bank account.

All financial details could be posted on-line or forwarded request. It is up to the E.R.I.C. board to choose either one of these possibilities.

The board wishes to comply to the highest possible standards of financial transparency and accountability, as such it will proceed with the implementation of a full bookkeeping ran by a certified accountant in Belgium, publishing a detailed annual report.

Context

Today an important part of the income that the E.R.I.C. receives is paid cash. Moreover, most Rotaractors are unknown with the use of the E.R.I.C fee and what purpose it serves.

Analysis

Same as the above.

Proposition

In view of the creation of a legal entity, the E.R.I.C. board confirms its commitment to a no-cash policy. All payments from and to the E.R.I.C. will be made by bank transfer. In case of bank charges the buyer will be requested to activate its network of Rotaract friends enabling payment of the purchase. Payments in cash on location will no longer be accepted.

Participant packages could be sold directly via the booking tool of the E.R.I.C., via its website. An unique registration for all European events and merchandising sold by the E.R.I.C .

The E.R.I.C. fee could be transferred before the European event when the list of participants is definitive (*no later than two weeks before the European event in respect of the current by-laws, and no earlier than eight weeks before the European event*). The E.R.I.C. will be able to support the host organising committee by paying the diner for Country Representatives and other fees related to the E.R.I.C. activities, such as conference rooms..

4- Inside the E.R.I.C.: supporting services and communications within the team

Appointment of assistant

- Marin BEGOVIC – Rotaract Club Zagreb District 1913 (Croatia).
Marin used to work with Vedran and has a strong technical background in IT.

Context

Last year the E.R.I.C. agreed to develop a voting tool to simplify the District and Country votes during E.R.I.C. meetings.

Analysis

A price analysis was done by Fatima S. She got a quotation from a team of Russian developers.

Proposition

The E.R.I.C. board has decided to move forward with the project based on last year's approval. We aim to complete the project In less than two months. So the tool is ready and usable in Cyprus!

Context

Last year internal communication was tested via different applications and communication channels Thanks to the work of last year's team we can easily define how we will communicate this Rotary year and which tools to use.

Analysis

Same as the above.

Proposition

Board members are obliged to use their respective professional **e-mail address** for all communication in function. All written communication will be archived for future consultation. General communications will be addressed to

cr@rotaracteuropa.eu. For any official communication to the E.R.I.C. board, the e-mail address board@rotaracteuropa.eu is applicable.

The **Facebook** group and chat are an informal means of communications, used for advertisements, kind reminders and casual chatting.

The application **Slack** will be the core communication tool. Different channels will be created to discuss different topics. Each task force will have its own channel. Country Representative Meetings throughout the year will be held via Slack. The use of different channels allows us to present discussions more transparent and more easy to track. The application **Trello** will help us organize the tasks per specific project. A project on Trello could be related to a channel on Slack. Using Trello requires training and we are currently working on such online training. We schedule on launching that training in September (Strategic Weekend for Country Representatives).

Google Drive will be the core of our documentation. We will use Google Sheets, Google Docs and PDFs to communicate and store our documents.

Context

The E.R.I.C. holds its reputation thanks to the great number of Districts it gathers. However few European Rotaractors know how many Districts and countries are part of the M.D.I.O.

Analysis

Same as the above.

Proposition

We will gather all signed acceptance letters by District Rotaract Representatives and District Governors to the Country Representatives, and possibly Rotaract Europe. These documents show the acceptance of the E.R.I.C. as an organisation.

Context

Last year different task forces / committees were created to follow up on different projects. The results were good, moreover it motivates the team members and creates involvement.

Analysis

Same as the above.

Proposition

New task forces will be created in September, using a questionnaire results, training and formation during the Strategic Weekend of Country Representatives. A task force will be composed of board member(s), Country Representatives(s) and other Rotaractors who want to be involved. Here are some of the subjects that could be managed in a task force,

- Dividing the current by-laws and work on the European Rotaract Handbook; Promotion and support on this year's European social project;
- Development of an affiliation with the European Solidarity Corps;
- An editorial on social media, newsletters, reports, etc.;
- Internal communication (photo competitions, Rotaract trainings, membership, ...).

Context

Throughout the year Country Representatives are confronted with a large number of important dates and deadlines. There is no easy way of tracking those dates.

Analysis

Same as the above.

Proposition

We will share the E.R.I.C. calendar with all meeting dates and deadlines to keep in mind. E.g. When is the last moment to confirm your participant package for an European event? When is the exact date to send the final agenda to my District Rotaract Representatives?

Together with IT we investigate the possibility of subscribing yourself to an E.R.I.C. calendar so you receive automated updates on new or changed dates and deadlines.

5- Outside the E.R.I.C.: marketing, image and social media

Appointment of assistants

- Nida PEKCAN – Rotaract Club Istanbul Ataköy District 2420 (Turkey)
Nida was last year's Country Representative for Turkey and participated in the EuCo bidding.
- Karolina Maria SANGRIGOLI – Rotaract Club Reggio Calabria Sud Parallelo 38 District 2100 (Italy)
Karolina is the current Italian Country Representative for the MED MDIO and she already worked with Maria Vittoria. Moreover she is close to being Instafamous which can help our Instagram channel grow!

Context

Our current webpage is too heavy, too slow and not really related to the activity we have on our Facebook page.

Analysis

Same as the above.

Proposition

The webpage of the E.R.I.C. will be cleaned during the summer period and will correspond better with the Facebook and Instagram content. Till February 2019 we can check if we want to change the hosting partner (*end of current hosting contract*).

In view of the General Data Protection Regulation per 25-05-2018 and insufficient legal support and knowledge within the E.R.I.C. team, the current online directory will be suspended. Furthermore the information provided in the directory is outdated and relating to the Rotary year '17-'18.

Context

Facebook activity really increased last year, due to a wonderful job done by the previous board. There is today a threat to loose visibility if we have less activity than last year.

Analysis

Same as the above.

Proposition

We will identify what is needed to maintain activity, content, likes, shares and comments. It is equally the responsibility of the Country Representatives to spread the E.R.I.C. messages by sharing the posts on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. These deserve more attention in order to increase the amount of followers.

Context

The board received information on the confusion arising from the use of both E.R.I.C. (*European Rotaract Information Centre*) and Rotaract Europe.

Analysis

Same as the above.

Proposition

The European Rotaract Information Centre and its abbreviation are the name of the legal entity and official title of the organisation. Rotaract Europe is the name used in public communications, public relations and social media. Both nominations will continue to be used.

Context

In the past years, we had polos and sweatshirts that had different colors, fonts and styles. However, this is sometimes seen as boring and not very original and not always wearable.

Analysis

Same as the above.

Proposition

We are currently working on different styles (*T-shirts, bombers, etc.*) for something that represent **Europe**. Something simple and wearable at many occasions. This year's brand identity should reflect in email signatures and (*if applicable*) business cards.

Context

Rotary and Rotaract clubs and districts show their identity by means of a banner or fanion.

The E.R.I.C. used to have its own banner. However this banner got lost during the Rotaract European Meeting in Bratislava (*confirmed by Jens Christian S. P.*).

Analysis

Same as the above.

Proposition

The E.R.I.C. board will work on the brand identity that we could use for these fanions and banners. The fanions could be an important gift for a club or a district. For the banner we are waiting for an offer from an Italian supplier. Raimondo V. is contacting suppliers.

Context

Rotaract clubs and Districts undertake a great number of events, actions, fundraisers, etc. Many of these happenings are well documented with pictures and video material. However this material is unlikely to reach the European level.

Analysis

The national M.D.I.O. of Rotaract Germany has implemented a photo contest allowing clubs to participate in a 'Best Picture Award'.

Proposition

We encourage Rotaract clubs and Districts to send in promotion material on their projects. The E.R.I.C. investigates the possibility of organising a photo contest and reward system for the best Rotaract in Action picture of Europe. Multiple winners possible. It is great marketing and a motivator to clubs and Districts in Europe.

Online presentations, known as webinars

Context

The previous E.R.I.C. board introduced a great number of interesting webinars. The webinars were broadcasted via the Facebook channel of the E.R.I.C.

Analysis

Despite the offer of qualitative speakers, interesting subjects and entertaining talks, the targeted audience wasn't full reached. The number of online attendees was rather low.

Proposition

The E.R.I.C. board proposes to decrease the number of webinars but promote them more in order to connect with more European Rotaractors and make these selective webinars reaching many more of our members.

6- The heart of the E.R.I.C.: social projects

Appointment of assistants

- Ekaterina YURKOVA – Rotaract Club Kassel District 1820 (Germany).
previously worked for the E.R.I.C. with Tiina in the social committee.
- Hande TURAN – Rotaract Club Istanbul Zekeriyaköy District 2420 (Turkey).
Hande attended several E.R.I.C. events before bidding on the next EuCo.

Context

Last year's social project - the 4 themes- had great impact on Rotaract Europe's social image. Even today we see the results of the tremendous efforts by local clubs and Districts. The total sum of these initiatives prove the big social engagement of Rotaractors in Europe.

Analysis

The team of the previous Rotary year elaborated on ongoing actions of local clubs and Districts. The amount of additional projects organised in view of the European social theme(s) / project was rather low. The year before - with the Buy One More action - the E.R.I.C. proposed a very specific social project.

Proposition

Even if the aim of a MDIO is to inform, we believe in the idea to promote a project and motivate the clubs to follow us. With the Rotary Convention in June 2019 in Hamburg, we need to focus on something we can promote during this event. End Plastic Soup Now is something we want to promote in that way. After the result of Rise Against Hunger in Antwerp, we see the importance to make people act together under the E.R.I.C. identity all along the year and the need for the members to participate to a social project during the event.

Introduction "End Plastic Soup Now"

To create awareness of the plastic problem is the purpose of our new social Eric campaign that we hope will go global; End Plastic Soup Now (ESPN). What started as a local Amsterdam initiative should be embraced by the European Rotaract Clubs; "This is Rotaract at its best"

Why this E.R.I.C. campaign

Source of inspiration for End Plastic Soup Now has been the story of Boyan Slat. Boyan is a 23-year-old Dutch inventor and entrepreneur, who creates technologies to solve societal problems. He is the founder and CEO of The Ocean Cleanup, which develops advanced systems to rid world's oceans of plastic. His persevering efforts with The Ocean Cleanup have resulted in this cleanup system being operational in 2018, collecting in the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, near San Francisco.

What is Plastic Soup

Plastic waste in the oceans is a major global problem. The oceans constitute 72% of the earth's surface and are our primary oxygen suppliers. More and more plastics are floating in our oceans and seas. It comes from rubbish that we throw away on the street, fishnets that are discarded, from washing synthetic clothing, brushing our teeth, etc. All these different types of plastic combined form the plastic soup in the seas. Weathering sunlight and wave action break down large pieces into small bites. This causes serious pollution. And, because plastic non-biodegradable, the plastic soup is lethal for many marine animals. Most of the pollution comes from land. At least 80% of the plastic rubbish in the oceans is dumped by industry and by people on land. It is carried to the sea by rivers, canals, harbours and the wind. So how we prevent plastic from ending up in the oceans is also a question mankind should pose itself.

How to tackle this problem

Plastic waste is not an easy problem to tackle. Creating awareness is the most important challenge; people all over the world should know about the dangers of plastic waste. Secondly, concrete measures have to be taken to clean the oceans, to minimize the amount of waste reaching seas and to reduce the use and production of harmful plastics. As local Rotaract Clubs we may be instrumental to an increase in awareness in our communities. After all, cleaning and prevention measures have to be taken both at a national and international level. That is where our Rotaract and Rotary network comes together.

Create awareness on this issue in your own city, district or country. Spread the ideas in your country and within E.R.I.C.! "Be the inspiration" what the new theme is for Rotary 2018-2019. Put our hands together and make a change. That is Rotaract!"

Award voting

Context

The evaluation forms created last year were perceived as too complex to the Country Representative, more over the overall voting processed lacked transparency.

Analysis

Each year hundreds of Rotaract Districts and clubs undertake life-changing projects, joint initiatives and actions. These accomplishments deserve the highest appreciation, however few can be rewarded with a price. The selection of and voting on award candidates should be objective and unbiased.

Proposition

The E.R.I.C. board discussed the voting procedure on award candidates. The final modus operandi is yet to be decided, however it should include;

- A voting panel consisting of non-European Rotaract representatives with proven track record within our Rotaract community;
- Equal amount of 'space' to all candidates. Excess content will not be taken into account to ensure fair treatment of all applicants.