



## CONVENTION NEWS - MARCH 2023

Hello to everyone who has registered for the 2023 Rotary International Convention! We're just a couple of months away from gathering in Melbourne, Australia, 27-31 May. Here's the latest news about the convention. You'll also receive our final email, Know Before You Go, in May.

### What's new?

We've updated the [Program Highlights page](#) with details about events, locations, and timing. We've also added two pages. On the [Environment and Sustainability page](#), you'll learn about how RI and our convention facilities are taking steps to protect the environment, and you'll find a list of related convention programming. Go to the [Health and Safety page](#) for information about health protocols and guidelines for your travel and

your time at the convention.

### **Our first speakers have been announced!**

You'll want to make sure to catch the inspiring speakers who are coming to our convention. Here are two of them. Leymah Gbowee is a peace activist, a women's rights advocate, a 2011 Nobel Peace Laureate, and the founder of the Gbowee Peace Foundation Africa. Nakeeyat Dramani Sam is a young Ghanaian poet and environmental advocate. [Visit the Speakers page](#) often to get the latest updates.

### **Pack your banners and pins**

We're bringing back a favorite tradition and introducing a new one! The Rotary Resource Center in the House of Friendship will feature a banner exchange wall *and* a pin exchange wall, where you can leave a banner or a pin and take one to expand your own collection. We can't wait to see what everyone brings!

### **COVID-19 protocols are updated**

The RI Board of Directors has ended the requirement that participants provide proof of full vaccination against COVID-19 and a negative test result to attend the convention. We still encourage everyone to take appropriate precautions against COVID-19 and other communicable illnesses, and the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre will have a testing facility. Other protocols may be enacted closer to the convention, based on advice from local public health authorities. Learn more about [our health and safety precautions](#).

### **Events**

Join us for a **convention orientation webinar** on 9 May at 17:00 Chicago time (UTC-5). All convention attendees are welcome. You'll learn about:

- How best to experience the Rotary International Convention
- Program highlights, including the general sessions, breakouts, and host committee events
- What to pack and what to wear
- How to find your way around Melbourne and the convention venues
- How to use the Rotary Events mobile app
- Ways to connect with new friends and project partners
- Other resources that can help you before and during the convention

More details on how to register for the webinar will be on [convention.rotary.org](https://convention.rotary.org) soon.

**Rotaract Australia** will offer amazing social events and tours for Rotaractors and young Rotary members who will be in Melbourne for the convention. [Learn more and register!](#)

**Unofficial affiliate events** are opportunities to meet with members from your zone, your district, or the whole Rotary community. Find a link to the latest schedule of events on the [Program Highlights page](#). Check back often for updates.

Have you bought tickets yet for the exciting **Host Organization Committee** events and tours? Don't delay. Find out what's available, from special events and host hospitality in Melbourne to tours of Sydney, Uluru, and the Great Ocean Road, on the [host committee website](#).

Online registration for **donor events hosted by The Rotary Foundation** is open through 15 May. Attendance is by invitation only, and eligible participants will receive invitations by email. For current information about these events and to register, visit the [Donor Events page](#).

### **Celebrate Melbourne's Indigenous culture**

Melbourne, also known as Naarm in local Aboriginal language, stands on the traditional land owned by the people of the Kulin nation, which is made up of a collective of five Aboriginal clans: Wurundjeri, Boonwurrung, Wathaurung, Taungurung and Dja DjaWrung. They have been living in the region for at least 40,000 years. Immerse yourself in Melbourne's ancient culture with a guided [Aboriginal Heritage Walk](#) in the serene inner-city greenery of the Royal Botanic Gardens. Learn more about the cultural stories, arts and agricultural practices of the Kulin nation at Melbourne Museum's [Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre](#).

The [Koorie Heritage Trust](#) is located at Federation Square, a modern-day meeting place on the banks of the Birrarung Marr (the "river of mists", also called the Yarra). Three times a week, you can join a walking tour of the Birrarung Wilam ("river camp"), to learn about the land's significance to the Kulin peoples and how the area has changed over time. The trust has a large collection of Koorie artworks, artifacts, photographs, and oral histories. Its shop offers authentic art, clothing, housewares, jewelry, and more designed or crafted by Koorie artists. All purchases support Koorie artists and designers.

**You'll receive our next email in May**, but remember that you can always find the latest news at [convention.rotary.org](https://convention.rotary.org). Be sure to visit the [2023 Rotary International Convention Facebook event page](#) and tell us you'll be there!

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