



Gold Coast Passport Rotary Club

Launching a new era of Rotary membership

Conversation, camaraderie and cabernet flowed freely at the Karma Collab Hub on June 25, when community-minded Gold Coast millennials gathered for the first official meeting of the country’s newest membership development tool – the Gold Coast Passport Rotary Club.

*By Jayde Purnell
Charter Member, Gold Coast
Passport Rotary Club*

Born out of a conversation between District 9640 governor elect Andy Rajapakse and regional membership officer Barbara Mifsud, the Gold Coast Passport Rotary Club is modelled on similar passport clubs in the US. Ignited by the opportunity to connect Rotary with a different demographic, Andy soon realised the benefits of bringing similar clubs to Australia.

The concept of a Rotary passport club is to provide a flexible platform for millennials to connect with Rotary and create international impact.

Gold Coast Passport Rotary Club upholds the traditional values and

constitution of Rotary, while operating within a framework that appeals to the time poor. This flexibility encourages otherwise-occupied individuals to experience Rotary’s friendship and give back to the community, both locally and on an international scale.

Nestled in the bustling backstreets of Miami on Queensland’s Gold Coast stands a creative co-working warehouse that hosts the excited voices and minds of this independent, stand-alone Rotary club. Members come together at Karma Collab Hub on the last Tuesday of each month to share ideas, build networks and take action to support the community. Like any other Rotary club, members pay full Rotary International and district dues and must live or work on the Gold Coast.

Acting as a feeder club to support other Rotary clubs in the vicinity, this structure facilitates high levels of community engagement across a variety of projects. As a club, they need not engage in projects of their own, unless they so desire, with their individual community service requirements totalling 30 hours annually. Members are also welcome to collaborate with other Rotary clubs and local charities in their pursuit of community involvement.

As co-owner of Karma Collab Hub and a seasoned traveller, charter president Candice Olivier saw the benefits of a flexible Rotary platform for nomadic entrepreneurs like herself.

“The Gold Coast Passport Rotary Club connects the heart-centred travellers of the world with like-minded people and community projects globally,” Candice said. “We’re giving people the chance to create change, and do so with a sense of belonging.”

Following a series of information nights, the club was chartered on June 5 with 20 members, as the 25th passport Rotary club in the world. The club now has 24 members – all under the age of 45, with 21 under 35 – and intends to reach 30 members by the end of August.



ABOVE: Echoes of enthusiasm circulate at club meetings from 6-7:30pm each month, where ideas and bonds are formed over a mutual appreciation of wine, cheese and community.

CENTRE: Gold Coast Passport Rotary Club charter president Candice Olivier says the club connects heart-centred travellers with like-minded people and community projects across the globe.

BELOW: The club's meeting place, Karma Collab Hub, serves as a collaborative office and creative space by day, and is regularly alight with community activities and sustainability movements at night.

(Photos: @rhysmartinphotographer)

A keen presence surrounds the club, with a very apparent eagerness to assist Rotary in its pursuit to serve the greater community.

"This action-focused, flexible club structure is set to enable incredible reach for Rotary, with the potential to attract a diverse range of new skills and ideas, new leaders, and spirited young people engaging with Rotary clubs across the world," president elect Ryan Tarrant said.

One of the projects currently underway involves the Rotary Club of Southport, the Gold Coast's oldest club. Passport Rotary club members are helping the 73-year-old club through a social growth and business development event series called EVOLVE Networking for Business to help Southport attract younger members. Both clubs are excited to see

how their growth-inspired dynamic evolves to help the Southport club and the greater Rotary organisation.

A passport Rotary club is not a solution to a problem within an existing Rotary club. A new club such as this offers new opportunities for growth and diversity; the beginning of rapid generational expansion within Rotary to connect with the world.

For more information on the Gold Coast Rotary Passport Club, or to discuss establishing a new passport Rotary club, contact District 9640 governor elect Andy Rajapakse via andyrajapakse@gmail.com.

