

# **BEST COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD**

## **SUBMISSION**

ROTARACT CLUB OF AIMST UNIVERSITY

**MUSIC OF HOPE CHARITY CONCERT**

### **PART A – INTRODUCTION**

“Music of Hope” is a charity concert that was organized by 3 clubs, the Rotaract Club, Leo Club and the RED association of AIMST University. RED, short for “Reach out, Embrace, Deliver” is an association unique to our university. It’s purpose is to provide financial and material aid to the underprivileged patients of Sultan Abdul Halim Hospital, Sungai Petani and Sultanah Bahiyah Hospital, Alor Setar. Among their contributions include providing wheelchairs, crutches, glucometers as well as sponsoring minor surgeries such as cataract removals.

The idea for a charity concert was first pitched by our Rotaract Club to raise funds for this noble association. The Leo Club then joined the fray. Planning began in mid-December and the concert took place on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March. Performances included song and dance numbers by our students, as well as other professional artistes such as the Chinese Orchestra and the Arabian Belly Dance group. A total of 1,800 tickets were sold as we successfully raised RM24,300, all of which were given to the RED Association.

### **PART B – OBJECTIVES AND COMMITTEE**

The project consisted of 2 main objectives:

1. Awareness – to spread awareness to the public about RED and its mission, as well as to introduce the concept of Rotaract and Leo to the public.
2. Fund Raising – we set a target of RM20,000, which was estimated to fund all of the patients under RED for a year.

The Committee was formed by members of all 3 clubs, and a certain balance of workload was established. For ease of budget and documentation, it was elected that both the secretary and treasurer duties be carried out by the RED association. The committee is as follows:

Chairpersons: Kirath Sidhu ( Rotaract representative)

Lim Jit Kin ( R.E.D Association representative)

Secretaries: Inderpreet Kaur (RED)

Loh Sue Anne (RED)

Treasurers: Goh Yi Cheng (RED)  
Khoo Chia Wen (RED)

Event Planner: Kishanraj (Rotaract)

Marketing: Diivan Raj Silvakumar (Rotaract)  
Faisal Norizan (Rotaract)

Ticketing: Rome (Rotaract)  
Cindy (RED)

Sponsor: Leo Club members

Designer: Yee Thean Sim (RED)

PA & Lightings: Alexander Samuel (RED)  
Gordon Periera (Rotaract)

Stage Crew: Rotaract Club members

Hall Decoration: Leo Club members

Photography: Chew Kok Jin

Videography : Kiu Dawn Chii

R.E.D Video Directors: Tan Shin Wuei, Nagarajen Naidu

Souvenir: Coleen Wong (RED)

Ushering and Security: Thurini Venugopal (Rotaract)

### PART C – SCHEDULE AND BUDGET

The initial planning for the project began in mid-December. The members of the Rotaract Club and RED Association got together to elect the joint committee.

From January onwards, a meeting was held every Tuesday to check on the progress of the project (ticket sales, sponsorship, promotion).

The event itself was held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March. It began at 7pm and concluded at 11pm.

The original budget was set at RM8,000 but only RM3,000 was actually spent due to our generous sponsors. The breakdown of the budget is as follows:

Promotion (ticket and banner printing, posters) – RM1,000

Performances (Hired) – RM500

Hall decoration – RM300

Audio and Lighting – RM1,000

Misc – RM200

## PART D – PHOTOS, PROMOTIONAL LITERATURE

\*refer to attachment 1

## PART E – PROJECT PLANNING

We first pitched the idea in November during the monthly meeting between the heads of all the clubs and associations. We intended to have a project which involved as many clubs as possible, but only one association stepped forward, the RED Association. We gave each other a month to bring the idea back to both our clubs and measure the response. Needless to say, both parties were eager to work together. We then needed a cause, a goal, an objective. Seeing as how RED was a charitable body of its own, we figured it would only make sense that the funds raised be channeled to them. The funds would be used to aid the patients under their care, with supervision from the welfare board of the hospital.

We then reconvened in mid-December to elect the committee. By this time, the Leo Club had heard of our partnership, and expressed their desire to collaborate with us. Another credible NGO was more than welcome as it gave us an extra boost in manpower and skills. We decided that the theme would be "The Music of Hope" to signify our effort in aiding the underprivileged patients. It would take place on the 23rd of March at the great hall of our university.

The project consisted of 4 stages, the preliminary, the promotion, the run up and the event and post event.

The Preliminary stage - in the first stage, all the necessary paperwork that needed to be done were signed, sealed and delivered. The proposal was drafted first, and upon approval from the university, we proceeded with preparing permission letters, sponsorship letters, invitations, and initial project documentation. Every member of the committee received a copy of the project timetable and deadlines. As soon as that was done, we immediately started with sponsorships, mostly for the printing of our banners and tickets. Another major sponsor we received was from our sponsoring Rotary Club, the Rotary Club of Seberang Jaya who provided 120 English-Malay Oxford Dictionaries and 300 writing pads to be distributed on the day of the event (refer below).

The Promotion stage - promotion for the event started in January, with our banners and posters going up not only in campus, but also at two of the local tescos as well as in Village Mall. The public was sceptical at first, not knowing whether Rotaract or RED were real organisations or just some scam. This led us to the idea of handing out fliers explaining what exactly is RED and Rotaract, and what role they can play for society. Slowly, but surely we won over the public as they began to show interest in the booths that we had set up at the above-mentioned locations. Once the tickets were printed, we began sales immediately.

The Run-up stage – the third stage began exactly a month before the event. A final push for promotion and ticket sales were done in order to achieve our target. The performance set list was also fixed and the performers were given time to rehearse. The hall decoration was also done up till the last detail. We also hand-delivered the invitations to the VIPs. Finally, we had 2 full rehearsals before the event to ensure the event goes smoothly.

The Event stage – on the day of the event, we had a team of usherers to escort the guests and VIPs into the hall and to their seats. We also had a security team to ensure that there were no gatecrashers or misbehaviour. Before the event began, we had invited 120 orphans and special children to attend our show free of charge. Each of them also received a free copy of an Oxford English-Malay dictionary and 2 writing pads each courtesy of our sponsoring club, the Rotary Club of Seberang Jaya. Overall the event went smoothly, despite running into a few problems with the microphones and speakers, but the emcees managed to handle the situation well. After the event, the entire team stayed back to clean up the hall and also to have a brief post-event discussion. The conclusion of the discussion was that the event went according to plan, and the project was considered a success. It was noted that in the future more time should be allocated for finding sponsors as well as for the performers to prepare. The net amount of funds collected (after deducting expenses) was RM24,300 all of which were given to RED Association to provide aid to the patients under their care.

## PART F – PROJECT EXECUTION

When we first came up with the idea for this project, it was not to simply raise some money for any old charity. It was not to raise more funds than other Rotaract clubs, nor was it done just for the sake of doing it. When we first came up with this idea, the one thing that was on all of our minds was “see a need, fill a need”.

When the RED Association was first established in our university, it was a story of David versus Goliath. An association to provide monetary and material support to underprivileged patients was said to be redundant, that there were already bodies like the Red Cross and Salvation Army to handle those affairs. They also said that they would not be able to get approval from the government and hospital boards to receive the patient’s case files.

11 months after its launch, the RED Association has already helped 8 patients and have another 4 more patients still receiving support. What more, each of these cases were referred to the association by the welfare board of the hospital. The reason for their success is simple, they saw a need, and filled that need. Even though there were organizations dedicated to improving health and preventing disease, they had a more general approach, and thus the aid they offered was general as well. What RED offered was specialized help. They could cater to the individual needs of each patient. If a patient needed a wheelchair, it was provided. If a patient needed cataract surgery, it was paid for. If a patient needed a colostomy bag, it was obtained. Where general support could only comfort, the specialized effort of RED cured.

Observing their progress and methodology, the Rotaract Club of Aimst knew that this was a cause worth supporting. We wanted to be a part of an effort that helped real people, real names and faces. To be able to provide a hand in not only improving lives, but doing so on a more personal level. We saw a need to improve the health and quality of life of individuals, and we filled that need via the Music of Hope. This was the impact that we wanted to leave.

This project gave all the members involved a chance to improve themselves in terms of new skills and knowledge, do something about the need of healthcare aid in society as well as fostering a better relationship

among all the clubs involved as well as the public and those we benefit from the project, thus fulfilling the purpose of Rotaract.

The Music of Hope is also a prime example of a project that is able to accomplish most of the Rotary Goals:

1. It enabled all those who were a part of this project to develop not only skills of their avenue, but also inter-personal and leadership skills.
2. It taught the members to respect the right of patients to treatment and healthcare, regardless of cost, and also emphasise their duty to these patients.
3. It also provided a great opportunity for the members to address the need of specialized treatment and healthcare support in the community.
4. It gave us the chance to collaborate with our sponsoring rotary club to present a “project within a project” with the distribution of dictionaries and writing pads to the special children who attended the event.
5. It also inspired many individuals from our university to join the Rotaract Club after witnessing our effort, and this will lead to eventual membership of Rotary.

This project saw the collaboration of 3 different organizations (Rotaract, RED and Leo) and thus a lot of interaction between members occurred. Many bonds were forged, and relationships built as everyone strived to work together to make the project a success. The manner in which we made new friends and allies was akin to our Rotaract motto “Fellowship through Service”. The way each and every member sacrificed their time and energy to give their all to the project was selfless indeed. Weekends and spare time were given up to sell tickets and to rehearse as much as possible to ensure the event was a success is a fine example of our Rotary motto “Service above Self”. Let us not forget the monumental role the public played in making this project a successful one. The concert could not have even taken place had the public not practise the Rotary theme of “Reaching Within to Embrace Humanity”.

One of the Rotary areas of focus is disease prevention and treatment. This project, in raising funds for RED has not only allowed for the improvement of the capacity of local healthcare, but also enhances the health infrastructure of the local communities. By providing equipment such as wheelchairs and crutches, as well as appendages like colostomy bags, there is an increase in the capacity of healthcare. More can be done for the same patients. The distribution of glucometers and manometers has helped keep diseases such as Diabetes and Hypertension in check, preventing further morbidity of the patients.

Due to the wide publicity of the project, not only has there been a rise in Rotaract Awareness amongst the public and students, there has also been a rise in membership as many of the members of RED have shown interest in Rotaract and it’s functioning. The best evidence of this is the induction of the RED Advisor, Dr. P.K. Rajesh as a Rotarian of the Rotary Club of Bandar Sungai Petani. Many of his RED members have also followed suit and applied for membership to the Rotaract Club of Aimst University.

Even if this project does not receive an award, it should still be given due acknowledgement for the fact that it proves 2 things:

1. Rotaract is not on its own – now, more than ever we have to break out of our shell and join hands with other NGOs if we are to push our efforts to the next level.
2. It is not about the quantity of results, but the quality of the impact that matters.

Prepared by,  
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Rotaract Club of Aimst University

\*Attachment 1 to be found in the same email.