

How Can I Travel with Friendship Force?

Let me count the ways! That's the question most heard from members of Friendship Force. Although it is not a travel club, learning about other cultures and experiencing first-hand the ways of other people is found thru travel. There is a lot of information available on the Friendship Force International website, <https://www.thefriendshipforce.org/>. Here's a brief breakdown of the different types of journeys.

The most common way to travel is with your club. Each year Knoxville requests an inbound domestic and international and an outbound domestic and international journey. We learn in February the locations we've been assigned and if anyone is coming to Knoxville on international journeys for the following year. Domestic journeys may not have as much lead time. To travel with FFK, watch the newsletters and announcements at meetings. If you're interested in going on an outbound journey, you must complete the Ambassador application <https://www.thefriendshipforce.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Ambassador-Application-and-Agreement-1.pdf> found on the FFI website. There is a \$25 non-refundable application fee to accompany the application (fee will apply toward the cost of the journey if accepted). If you want to host someone in your home for an inbound journey, you must complete the Host application https://www.thefriendshipforce.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/HOST_APPLICATION_and_agreement.pdf and submit it to the coordinator for that trip. For FFK policies, refer to the Journey Policies on the FFK website <https://friendshipforceknoxville.org/>

Larger clubs may have more than one of these journeys each year. And I mention other clubs because you too can travel with any other FF club. How do you know where anyone is going? If you've signed up on FFI's website, bottom of almost every page, you'll receive emails and notices from FFI regarding journeys that are available to you. One is the E-Flyer which is sent to you on a regular basis. You can flip thru that, find a journey that interests you, and submit the application (same as above). These may not have as much lead time as for those we are planning, but you meet Friendship Force members from other clubs in addition to meeting the people overseas. Clubs are required to post their journey 100 days in advance if the maximum number of ambassador places have not been filled. Members from other clubs can then join. The FFK president also receives from time to time a request from our regional coordinator to recruit for a club's journey. Those are forwarded to all members of FFK for your information.

You may notice in the E-Flyer and on the list of all journeys on the FFI website that not all the journeys are alike. There are Youth Journeys, which are ideal for your grandchildren to experience travel and other cultures. There are Global Journeys, in which the host club offers a specific topic to go in-depth and members from all over the world can join. This was the trip I took last November to Myanmar and Laos. It was titled "The Best of Burma Discovery Tour" and with me were two other Americans, one from Australia and one from New Zealand. It was a small group, and we had to stay in hotels because the Myanmar government does not allow us to stay in private homes. For other global journeys, you may also use hotels because of the

locations and sites you are seeing. Many of the journeys advertised early on are global journeys, and the host is gathering ambassadors from around the world.

Another type of journey is the Festival at Sea. FFI has been offering a cruise for FF members to learn more about Friendship Force, how to conduct journeys, how to spread the word, and meet other members. It is NOT your typical journey. Usually done on a trans-Atlantic or trans-Pacific cruise when you have several sea days, the members would meet each day, listen to talks by FFI staff and board members, role-play, try out lots of ice breakers, work on various topics to find ways to accomplish goals, and most of all, tell others on the ship about Friendship Force.

I'm sure there is more that I've left out, but hopefully, I've triggered enough interest that you'll want to start looking at other opportunities, downloading forms, and applying for the host of opportunities to you as a member of the Friendship Force. Travel often and enjoy every step of the way!

Diana Lopez