

Friendship Force Journey Types Explained

The mission of Friendship Force International (FFI) is to promote global understanding across the barriers that separate people. As a member of Friendship Force, journeys are the best way to experience cultural exchange to foster such understanding - through travel to and hosting guests from other cultures. A Friendship Force Journey is a cultural experience between travelers (ambassadors) and hosts. The hosts will introduce the ambassadors to their culture through organized activities and sightseeing tours, but especially through home hosting and sharing of everyday experiences. Friendship Force Journeys are assigned each year by FFI based on a variety of factors, including club history, preference, and availability of counterpart clubs.

See the information available on the Friendship Force International website, <https://www.thefriendshipforce.org/>, as well as on the Friendship Force Knoxville (FFK) website, <https://friendshipforceknoxville.org/>. See a short video about Friendship Force travel journeys: It Was Just a Week-<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=N3VlrWlxHl0>.

Below is a brief breakdown of the different types of journeys.

The most common way to participate in a journey is through your club - as an ambassador on an outbound journey or as a host on an inbound journey. These club-to-club journeys are exchanges with Friendship Force members of another club. They last for 5-7 days with the ambassadors/guests staying in the homes of hosts.

Each year Friendship Force Knoxville (FFK) requests an inbound domestic and international journey and an outbound domestic and international journey. We learn in February the locations we have been assigned and if any club has requested to come to Knoxville on international journeys for the following year. Domestic journeys are only between clubs within a country and are not available in countries where there is only one club. Domestic journeys may not have as much lead time and may be negotiated between clubs within the United States.

Each journey has an ambassador coordinator for the travelers and a host coordinator for the hosts. The coordinators are responsible for accepting member applicants as ambassadors and hosts, assisting with travel and other arrangements, assigning of ambassadors to host homes, developing an itinerary, and handling other related matters. Once FFI notifies FFK of its journey assignments, it is crucial for FFK promptly to appoint a coordinator for each journey. An ambassador or host coordinator has an important role in planning, organizing and ensuring the success of the journey. FFK cannot participate in journeys without club coordinators. Please consider volunteering to be a coordinator on a journey you can be enthusiastic about.

Journey opportunities for FFK members include:

1. FFK-sponsored journey opportunities
 - FFK international outbound journeys as an ambassador
 - FFK international inbound journeys as a host
 - FFK domestic outbound journeys as an ambassador

- FFK domestic inbound journeys as a host
2. Participating in a club-to-club outbound international journey of another club
If another club has an FFI-approved journey which has an opening, an FFK member can apply to join that journey. Participation is subject to approval by both the host and ambassador clubs.
 3. FFI Global Journey
Global Journeys are designed to allow clubs to invite ambassadors from around the world to visit their region with a focus on a specific theme. Participants make their own travel arrangements to and from the host community and the entire planning process is completed by the host club. Global Journey participants are recruited with assistance from Friendship Force International.
 4. FFI 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.
 5. Open World Delegation host
The Open World program, through the Congressional Open World Leadership Center, provides grants in the post-Soviet era for U.S. exchange programs that establish professional relationships between the up-and-coming leaders of Open World countries and Americans dedicated to showcasing U.S. values and democratic institutions. FFI, has an ongoing relationship with Open World, as a grantee for these exchanges. FF clubs apply to FFI as a sub-grantee to host a delegation or at times, request that a FF club apply. FFK has hosted several Open World delegations in the past, most recently in 2019 education administrators from the Republic of Georgia. FFK is tentatively expected to host a delegation of judicial officials from Uzbekistan in late 2021 or 2022. The Open World coordinator works with a facilitator from the Open World country to develop an itinerary that includes at least 30 hours of professional training for the delegates as well as cultural activities in the area. FFK members provide home stays and transportation for the delegates.

To participate in a journey as an FFK ambassador or host, watch the newsletters and announcements at meetings. Contact the club's coordinator for that journey to get more information. You can also find information about upcoming journeys on the FFI website. In the past, you could sign up to receive emails and notices from FFI regarding journeys that are available to you, including through the E-Flyer. However, such notices are now on hold due to the pandemic. 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.

If you are interested in going on an outbound journey, you must complete the Ambassador application form - <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 or an Open World delegation, you must complete the Host application at 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/>