

Screening Process for non-FFO applicants

After a Journey is publicized, you may begin receiving e-mails or telephone calls from people you have not yet met, or you may receive a completed application. Your task is to determine if they will make a good ambassador, based on e-mail and telephone communication. It is different from accepting a person from your club that you already know, but it can be just as effective. In fact, when interviewing someone you have not met, it may be easier to ask the standard questions that sometimes don't get asked of people we already know. Remember, while you are determining if they will be good ambassadors, you also need to "sell" them on the Journey, so be positive and friendly:

- If they are not FF members, talk to them a bit about the Friendship Force to see what they know and explain the itinerary and our special home hosting component. Get to know this person in a casual, approachable manner while selling your Journey and the Friendship Force.
- Ask the applicant if they have any questions.
- Ask if the person would have difficulty "living" with a person of a different economic level, religion, race, etc.
- Make sure they understand the application process and fees and transportation arrangements. Most people who are new to FF travel are surprised to learn that the home hospitality is basically given to them and their hosting fees go to the activities for the week.
- Communicate with everyone both near and far by group e-mails or a website on a regular basis
- Be sure to share a summary of what is presented at your local workshops/ meetings.

Note: For detailed information and a list of suggested questions you might use when interviewing out of town ambassadors and references, go to the FFI website Leadership Resources Toolkit at:

www.thefriendshipforce.org and follow the links -
Member Resources - Leadership Resources Toolkit - Selecting Ambassadors and Hosts
- Ambassador Selection Package

SCREENING PROCESS:

FFO VP Journeys (or Journey Director, if appointed) determines suitability of application and suitability of candidate based on the following:

1. **Health and Mobility.** Ask about the applicant's health and mobility, explaining the physical demands of your Journey. Tell them that FFO can and does accept ambassadors with challenges, but we must know of these in advance to see if accommodations can be made.

2. **FFO Ambassador Capacity Checklist.** Ask the applicant to complete the FFO Checklist to determine their ability to physically manage your specific Journey.
3. **FFI Ambassador Application and Agreement Form.** Make sure the applicant fills out the application and returns it to you, so you will have the information from it before your next conversation. Emphasize that the form is an 'application' and they will be informed of acceptance following completion of screening process.
4. **References.** Request references from a person who has traveled with the applicant. Telephone or email for references. Ask what other groups they are in as these might overlap with some local Friendship Force members. Tell them that we want our host families to feel as comfortable with their guests as they wish to feel welcomed by their host families, so we require a couple of references. If one is a family member, ask that the other reference be a non-family member.
5. **Home Club President.** If applicant is a FF member, contact home Club President to discuss any possible issues and history with club hosting and travel and request references.
6. **Interview.** Set up a Skype or Facetime interview with the applicant to get to know each other better. You may also be able to arrange for a Friendship Force person to meet the applicant so more questions can be asked and answered face-to-face.
7. **Information transfer.** If the VP Journeys is completing the screening process and the applicant meets the required criteria, VP Journeys passes all information on to the FFO Journey Host Coordinator (HC). If references are not favorable or you decide the person should not be accepted, you can either explain why the person will not be invited to join the Journey or use a face-saving response by saying that regrettably space is limited on this Journey and these have now been allocated.
8. **Inbound Journeys Visiting ED.** The FFO HC contacts visiting Ambassador Coordinator (AC) to discuss "guest" ambassador joining the inbound FFO Journey. If all agree, the FFO HC contacts the applicant to welcome them and ensure they receive all Journey information and materials. If they cannot attend meetings in person or via Skype, stay in touch with them on a regular basis so that they feel part of the preparation process. Introduce the non-local ambassadors to all of the others by e-mail. Short bios with pictures are a nice way to do this and those should also be sent to your counterpart Host Coordinator to assist with home host assignments.

MY LANGUAGES JOURNEY SCREENING

Factors to be considered when assessing suitability of an applicant who wishes to join a Journey through the My Languages Journey program:

- a. Participant must want to improve their ability in the same language in which the Journey will operate;
- b. Participant must not increase the complexity of the Journey or place extra demands on the HC, or on other ambassadors who are part of the Journey.
- c. Language aptitude determination should take place (requires intermediate and above ability) for the language in which the Journey will be operating (in the case of FFO, this would always be English).

An example of a suitable Journey would be an Inbound to Ottawa from Brazil (native language Portuguese) where a Portuguese-speaking person from another geographic area wishes to increase their facility in English, the language of the Journey. Or a group from Ottawa wishing to improve their French, traveling to France with a MLE person from the USA wishing to improve their French. Not recommended would be a group coming to Ottawa from India (1st language Hindi, 2nd language English) combined with a language-learner from Brazil (1st language Portuguese, 2nd language English). Rule of thumb might be to avoid mixing groups of ambassadors with different 1st languages.

Note: For more details, see FFO My Language Journeys Guidelines located on FFO website at friendshipforceottawa.ca – Journey Coordinators Toolbox.