



Strategic Plan 2015 - 2018

Setting FFI on a Sustainable Course

For 38 years now, the Friendship Force has shown that peace and harmony in the world can be cultivated through individual friendships. This milestone bears witness to the enduring relevance of our mission and to the time, energy and talents each of us devotes to the organization we love. Celebrating those achievements and securing our legacy for the generations to come must now be our unwavering goal.

This Strategic Plan is a response to your recent input on two conclusive sets of documents. Chief findings of the June 2014 surveys showed that 83% love home stays but want lighter tasks for hosts, while exchange participants want more learning, more meaning through action, more diversity and more flexibility. The more recent policy review endorsed new policy directions and confirmed that club members are willing to embrace inclusiveness in order to set FFI on a sustainable course.

With your full endorsement, this Strategic Plan sets out a vigorous revitalization and sustainability agenda for FFI. What you see below is an executive summary. Defined in numbers, these overarching goals are designed to increase participation in exchanges by 10% over the next three years. This ambitious goal will require full engagement in the activities of the organization.

1st Initiative: Enrich Friendship Force Exchanges

Revitalize exchanges through:

- **DIVERSITY:** new clubs, thematic exchanges and partnerships in high-demand destinations.
- **MEANING:** through 'Friendship in Action' exchanges with a variety of humanitarian components.
- **LEARNING:** language learning, professional development, and education exchanges.
- **FLEXIBILITY:** new models, new exchange structures; a more flexible fee structure; a more casual exchange approach for club members, with more "time on your own" and program options with varying prices and degrees of physical challenge.

2nd Initiative: Maximize Exchange Participation & Hosting Capacity

Friendship Force is all about people meeting people. With this mission in mind, it remains our goal to involve more people as both ambassadors and hosts.

- **FILL-THE-SEAT POLICY:** Beginning April 2015, post undersubscribed exchanges on the FFI online exchange catalog 100 days before departure. Priority to regional clubs and local communities is encouraged.
- **ONLINE MEMBERSHIP:** Beginning January 2016, introduce an e-membership component and a new vetting process.
- Launch a consultative process involving creative leaders to deal with declining hosting capacity in Europe, establishing footholds in challenging/emerging

destinations, and making use of surplus hosting capacity in the USA and the Pacific region.

3rd Initiative: NextGen for Everyone

NextGen is not about age, it is a state of mind.

- Develop NextGen exchanges for active people who seek more involvement, more adventure and more freedom.
- Target active, existing FF participants as well as soon-to-be retirees and younger generations.

4th Initiative: Leadership Development

- Add field reps where most needed.
- Create task forces on a variety of topics.
- Encourage clubs to embrace a goal and report progress.
- Offer frequent and accessible training from FFI to learn new models, new tools and technology and new skills to reach out to our communities.
- Add a one-day component of leadership development to regional and national meetings.

5th Initiative: Branding & Marketing

- Develop a new promotional video.
- Initiate a global friendship campaign.
- Include clubs and members in fun global and local community projects and events - such as photo contests and exhibitions - that will raise awareness.
- Create opportunities to participate in select high profile, newsworthy events such as the Nobel Prize Laureate festival being held in Atlanta, November 2015.

6th Initiative: Leverage Modern Technology

- Build a new information database with improved functions for member services.
- Develop a global online community platform and website.
- Improve the usability and functionality of web applications for members.

7th Initiative: Partnerships

Increase program variety and participation through partnerships with:

- Like-minded organizations that share complementary missions.
- Revenue generating partners including hospitality suppliers and travel operators, such as cruise providers and land expeditions, which will benefit FFI and its members.

Also, encourage clubs to explore potential collaborations in their own communities.

8th Initiative: Enhance & Secure Revenue Streams

- Define the precise purpose and use of FFI fundraising - this will attract new and diverse donors.
- Introduce a digital fundraising platform that will also produce more FFI exposure.
- Explore potential for funding through grants.
- Link campaigns and partnerships for specific programmatic fundraising purposes.
- Formulate an endowment plan.
- Continue yearly application for Open World grants.

Taken together, these bold measures will provide the revitalization and financial stability required to secure our legacy for ourselves and for the next generation. These measures and initiatives will require both a dedicated commitment to our collective mission, and a business approach to managing expanding programs in a manner that is financially sustainable.