**Innovative Ideas Generated at Cincinnati Workshop**

**April 20, 2018**

**Membership**

List potential member referrals

Person-to-person contacts (social events 9 times a year with members inviting guests

who have an interest in Friendship Force)

One-to-one recruiting works better than presentations

Strong membership committee

Assign mentors to new members

Someone who is close by to invite new member to events or to carpool

Old members can mentor new members in a one-on-one buddy system

Try to recruit new members from the non-profit community

At membership event, find a way to have attendees sign up that day by offering a

discount  
Networking with other groups with similar interests (Meet Up, Sister Cities, Rotary,

Global Ties, Chamber of Commerce)

Membership retention by getting members involved in activities and journeys

Membership drive held by Wisconsin-Madison Club

Headed by a young energetic woman

Good organization

Held in a Frank Lloyd Wright church

All members asked to invite one friend

100 invitations sent out. 30% of invitees attended.

Resulted in approximately 25 new members

Membership drive held by St Louis Club

Afternoon tea at a lovely home

Members could attend only if they brought a guest

Need good membership chair

Resulted in 22 new members

Membership drive held by Greater Milwaukee Club

Rented historic house

Members dressed in ethnic dress. Provided lots of food and drink.

Each room had a person behind a laptop explaining different aspects of club

Members asked to invite 3 friends, families or acquaintances

175-200 formal invitations sent out to make it seem very special

Changed club membership model to include strong retention model

Scheduled event so that one week later was one of the club’s annual

events that new member could attend, new member survey, new member manual, new member orientation session, new member mentor, half of the journey planning committees are now filled with new members)

Resulted in 23 very engaged members

Recruitment dinner

Recruitment at a tea in someone’s home where questions can be answered

Invite a group like the Red Hat Society to a coffee to learn more about Friendship Force

Add members’ photos to membership directory

Use World Friendship Day as a recruiting event

Invited international people from local universities to attend to provide cultural

entertainment

Ask members to talk about different aspects of the FF journey and how it all

works

Find a well-known personality (like Rick Steves) to attract people to a membership

event

Recognize the achievements of your members

Find a way to be more inclusive with single male club members

When members belong to two clubs (snowbirds), clubs might consider the idea of

associate members

**Journeys**

Themed inbound global journeys tend be successful

Underground Railroad (Cincinnati)

Music (Chicago)

Birding

Use the position of Journey Manager to oversee all journeys

Provide training/mentoring for new Journey Coordinators

Hosting Open World and other organizations adds diversity

Include non-Friendship Force people in dinners during journeys

If some people are apprehensive of having a home stay, give them the option to stay in

a hotel during a journey and participate in the daily cultural activities

Get new members involved in planning committee for inbound journeys

Look for ways to include families, singles or non-members in your club

Day hosting during a journey

Splitting the week between 2 hosts to make it easier for families or working

people to host

Incorporate a humanitarian element in every journey. Ask if there are needs in your

community that your group could meet (text books, medical supplies, etc.)

Find younger generation people who would like to help out with translation during a

journey

Network with other nearby clubs to get journey opportunities

Themed journeys are a great way to connect with other clubs

Invite new people to host

One day during the journey, a neighboring club could sponsor the program

Hosting a global journey and having members participate on outbound global journeys

is a good way to develop contacts for networking

Encourage hosts and ambassadors to communicate beforehand about the

non-programmed time during the journey to make it special

Hosts may want to provide postcards and postage as gifts to their ambassadors

Make a Thanksgiving Dinner for your ambassadors and describe the holiday. Invite

guests.

Consider an overnight bus trip during a journey

**Activities**

International festival

List club activities on neighborhood website ([www.nextdoor.com](http://www.nextdoor.com))

Incorporate a tour into a LEO (Let’s Eat Out)

Activities every month

Meet and greet

Casual ethnic restaurant

Encourage members to bring a guest

Meet on the 5th of each month at 5 pm. This varies the day of the week.

Have a different person volunteer to plan it each month and make it easy

to plan by not needing an exact head count. Can be a home, bar or

restaurant.

Plan social calendar for a year

Offer a variety of activities, all must have international themes (Des Moines)

Invite friends on day trips (Louisville)

Have activities with an international theme to keep members involved

Game night. Book club. Craft group. Quilting group.

Have short meetings and long parties

Fewer meeting and more emphasis on the social aspect of club

Regular meetings

Members present pictures of where they have been at General Membership Meeting

Establish college connections

Invite exchange students to club activities

Ask family members to attend or to help out with a club event

Strong programs that will attract potential new members

Small group dinners

Vary meeting locations and times

Travelogues

International dinner. Recipes provided by each dish. Members asked to bring guests.

Organize activities for the “off” month  
Mystery trip where participants don’t know where they are going

Include an interesting mix of social, learning and community service activities to fulfill

the many interests of your members

Bring international ambassadors into a classroom to educate the students

Happy hour after club meetings

Bus trip

**Community Outreach**

Take the mission into your community to break down the barriers that separate people

Planning service projects as a way to bond and to get to know people who are

different in your community

Sponsor youth art contest with the theme of “my idea of peace”

Find a way to get community recognition of club

**Leadership**

Strategic planning is important

Restructure and use leadership council instead of a board with each member of the

leadership council being responsible for an individual function

Keep the past-president on the board so you don’t lose that knowledge and experience

Cycle leadership

Board meetings

Regularly scheduled

Allow board members not present to Skype into the meeting

Same time, different place

Keep to the agenda and allotted time

**Social Media/Communication/Technology**

Have an active Facebook site and keep your website up-to-date

Frequent communication (e-mail, newsletter)

Credit/debit cards

A potential member is more likely to sign-up to be a member if they are able

to pay immediately with a credit card at a membership event. Square

is a device that attaches to a cell phone and will take a payment for a

small fee.

Allow credit cards to be used for journeys through the FFI website

Use university students to help with club communications

Young views

They could possibly help with website

Involve them in club activities

Find a way to get story of club in a feature magazine

Have the local newspaper write an article about a member’s travel experience

The communications department at FFI needs to find out the e-mail address of new

members as soon as possible so the new members can receive communication

from FFI and feel connected. This can be done when you annually submit your

list of member’s names and e-mail addresses to FFI or the information can be

individually entered on the FFI website.