At a special meeting of the Friendship Force Ottawa (FFO) Board held on 2024-10-17 the Board approved a motion to develop and implement associate membership as a pilot for a one-year period (2025).

The following was conveyed to all FFO Members in an email dated 2024-10-19 from Anna Van Adrichem-Rochon, President, FFO.

Objectives of the 2025 Associate Membership Pilot for FFO (2025)

This pilot aims to balance inclusivity and continuity while supporting members who wish to remain involved but prefer a different level of engagement

Guidelines for Associate Members (AMs)

1. Participation:

- AMs can participate in all FFO meetings, events, and social activities.

- AM's can organize events and social activities.

- AMs will pay the same event/activity fees as full members.

2. Task Involvement:

- AMs can take on various tasks, such as organizing activities, managing the website, editing newsletters, or leading special projects.

- AMs cannot, however, serve as members of the Board of Directors.

3. Volunteering:

- AMs should be willing to volunteer, when possible, to assist with inbound journeys and to share their experience

4. Communication:

- AMs will receive all FFO communications.

5. Code of Conduct:

- AMs must follow the same code of conduct and behavioural expectations as full members.

6. Membership Fee:

- AMs will pay a reduced membership fee of **$35/year** for 2025.

7. Eligibility Requirements:

- AMs must be current or former FFO members with at least **two (2) years** of membership experience. This is to understand and appreciate FFI's mission of building friendships because "A world of friends is a world of peace."

Associate Membership Exclusions:

- AMs will not be members of Friendship Force International (FFI) in 2025.

- As such, they cannot:

  - Participate in outbound journeys with FFO or other FFI clubs.

  - Use the FFI online platform (https://my.friendshipforce.org/).

  - Join events or activities organized directly by FFI.

Voting and Governance:

- AMs cannot vote on FFO matters, including elections.

Board Involvement:

- AMs cannot serve on the FFO Board of Directors.

- However, they are welcome to attend Board meetings to observe and participate in discussions (without voting privileges).

Conclusion:

This **Associate Membership Pilot Program** will **conclude at the end of the 2025 membership year.** If FFI's tiered membership program launches as

expected in 2026, FFO will transition to align with it. If the program is not implemented, FFO will re-evaluate the pilot and determine a suitable path forward.

Thank you for your ongoing support as we explore this new approach.

Current Status:

Since then, the pilot was explained and discussed at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) held on 2024-10-30. Given the fact that Friendship Force International (FFI) still had not rolled out its proposed tiered membership program, the FFO Board decided at its 2025-10-02 Board meeting to continue with the Associate Membership pilot until and if FFI implements a tiered membership program. FFO membership fees are determined on an annual basis as part of the budget process.