

World Federation of Friends of Museums (WFFM)
Young Friends Coordination

*Having troubles trying to attract younger audiences to your museum? Have you ever thought of including younger members in your Friends Association but you do not know how? Well, here is the solution to your problems! > **THE ULTIMATE GUIDE FOR CREATING YOUR YOUNG FRIENDS' TEAM.***

THE BEGINNING > HOW TO START.

Young, creative and passionate about art & culture. Yet, for some reason there are few people refreshing museums and cultural institutions that offer them a special agenda within their cultural programming.

If you are working within a Friends Association, probably the idea of passing the torch to the next generation should have crossed your mind at some point. Ultimately, you must have asked yourself – but to who? Well, the answer lies within the Young Friends.

The first thing that needs to be done is not also to decide but also to fully commit to the idea of having a team of young friends within your association. If the ideas and projects of the younger team are not supported by the senior members then eventually the entire project will fail.

Therefore, we might say that senior members' commitment is the main key to achieve success. One entity cannot exist without the other - it is in fact a two-way relationship: the senior members provide the expertise and the younger ones contribute with new ideas and audience.

Finding these young friends is easier: think of your own children, your grandchildren, nephews & nieces. They do not have to be involved in the art world or whatsoever, they just have to be passionate about culture and responsible enough to commit themselves to the job.

If family members are not available, then another option is to make a public call for volunteers at universities. Surely you will catch the attention of all kinds of students from different walks of life. The more diversity, the better. That is the key.

SECOND PART > WHAT TO DO.

So, you have assembled a team of young friends – then what? Well, first of all, it is important to give the young team the freedom to brainstorm ideas and projects. After all, they are the ones who know what is trendy and what is not. For sure, they are the experts on what the younger audiences want and consume.

The role of the senior members will be to listen to them and to guide them through the code of ethics and conduct of the organization. In other words, to teach them their expertise by advising them – being real and honest on what is capable and what is not, and most importantly, by helping them achieve their goals.

Once the work path has been established, it is time to put hands to work.

THIRD PART > PLANNING & ACTION

A good way to mingle both teams is to have one of the senior members coordinating the younger ones. Once a week the younger team may meet with that person and together they can discuss the upcoming events and plans.

Afterwards, that coordinator will have to inform the board of senior members what has been discussed so far. Hence, both teams are in full communication and everybody is content with the work that has been done.

Finally, the brainstormed ideas will be put into action and activities will be created, promoted and held at the museum or other premise that seems fit.

In order to cost the activities, memberships for young friends can be created. These can be annually or monthly, according to the needs of the team. That is up to the board and context of that surrounds the museum and the friends association.

LAST STEP > ENJOY THE RIDE!

It is a very fun and rewarding project to do since both teams get to learn from each other and, at the same time, the line of succession within the organization is achieved with people that senior members feel that they can trust in.

Option 2 – Tips for creating a young friends branch within your Friends Association.

1. Make the decision of inviting young friends to collaborate with the association.
2. Invite sons, daughters, grandchildren, nephews and nieces to participate and to be part of the team.
3. Give them some space for them to think on their upcoming plans and events.
4. Guide them all the way and advise them with your expertise.
5. Be aware that communication between both teams is essential. Otherwise the young friends project would not work.
6. Make sure that the young members know the code of ethics of your organization and the way things are run at the museum.
7. Most importantly, let them tell you what young people need. Listen and learn what they have to say.
8. Help them achieve their goals.
9. Feel also part of the project.
10. Encourage them to have fun while working.

