

BREAKOUT PRINCETON TRIP PROPOSAL PLANNING CHECKLIST

OVERVIEW

(expect the planning process to take at least two weeks)

Leading a Breakout trip is a terrifically rewarding experience. It is an opportunity to explore a community and public issue that are of interest to you, to strengthen your own leadership skills, and to deepen your commitment to civic engagement. The following suggested steps are designed to help you submit a strong trip proposal. Please read them carefully as you work on your trip idea. As a general guideline, you should give yourself at least two weeks to research your issue and community before submitting the proposal.

RESEARCH

(before making personal contacts)

Choose an issue	Begin by identifying an issue you care deeply about. All good Breakout trips start with curiosity and a passion for social change. Your trip topic doesn't have to be something you already know a lot about, but it does need to be an issue you are willing to invest in and learn about over the next few months.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identify relevant locations	Find a few places around the country (continental US) where that issue is important and where there are people on the ground who are taking steps to address it. The best proposals are those that engage people who are already working to address a public issue in their community.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Analyze and compare locations	Research the history, effects, and potential solutions related to your issue in each of the communities you are considering. If your issue is urban poverty and you have three cities that have struggled with high poverty rates or found interesting ways of dealing with poverty, find out something about the history of each city. What are its major economic contributors? What are the housing policies of the city? What are the demographics? Are there political or social tensions? What kinds of social services do people in that city depend on?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identify relevant organizations	Research (but do not yet contact) organizations who are engaged in the issue you are interested in. What are the strategies they are using to address the issue? What kinds of resources do they need to be successful? What kinds of resources do they already have? Create a "map" of the important organizations, agencies, and individuals in the communities you are considering to see how they relate to each other. Contact potential community partners to investigate the possibility of working with them, but do not formally schedule any activities or meetings until your trip has been selected. Since you are still in the early planning stages and your proposal, if approved, might change, do not establish any definitive plans with potential partners before having a conversation with the Breakout coordinators and Breakout staff about the best approach to take. Some good resources for finding community partners include Idealist.org and Volunteermatch.org . You should also think of people you might know or have connections to, including Princeton alumni.	<input type="checkbox"/>

NARROW YOUR CHOICES

(select your location and your co-leader)

Choose a location	Once you have made a map for each community and you understand something about how the issue you are dealing with plays out in that community, decide which location you want to propose for your trip. Things to think about when making this decision include: Did your research suggest the issue is actually important in that community? Did your research discover enough interesting community partners for you to work with over the course of a week? Is there a particular community partner that you think will give you the best exposure to the issue and with whom your trip could work closely? How would a group of 10–14 students get from Princeton to your host community, and roughly how much would that transportation cost? Are there good options for sleep sites? What will the weather be like in your host community during the break (for example, Boston is a great place to talk about sustainable farming, but not in March!)? What resources exist for your trip participants to learn about your host community before the trip leaves?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Choose your co-leader	Once you have a trip topic and a location, find a co-leader if you don't already have one. Be sure to find someone you can work with and who compliments your strengths as a leader. Your co-leader should have an interest in your trip topic and, ideally, leadership experience and/or familiarity with the Breakout program.	<input type="checkbox"/>

THINK ABOUT WHETHER YOU CAN REALLY TURN YOUR IDEA INTO A BREAKOUT TRIP
(seek outside advice and consider your personal situation)

Review your plans with staff	If possible, meet briefly with a Breakout coordinator or the Breakout staff to go over your plans so far. Talk to them about how feasible or relevant this trip is and if it fits within the scope of Breakout.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attend an open house	Attend a trip leader open house to get more information about what exactly is involved in planning and leading a trip.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Weigh other commitments	Consider if you have the time and dedication to lead a Breakout trip. Being a Breakout leader is a huge commitment. Beginning several months in advance (once your proposal is approved), you should be prepared to reach out to community partners and start creating a trip itinerary. You will also need to be thinking about pre-trip sessions, housing, and other logistics. You won't have to do all this alone; your co-leader, coordinator, and the Breakout staff will all play integral roles in the planning process. However, on average you can expect to spend 5–10 hours per week on your trip, with the six weeks immediately preceding the trip (including midterms) being an especially intense period. While we are thrilled that so many students want to lead a Breakout trip, the success of each trip depends on how much the leaders are willing to put into it. Please think carefully about your other time commitments and your academic load before applying to lead a trip.	<input type="checkbox"/>

FINAL STEPS
(plan a budget and complete your proposal)

Plan your budget	Figure out a budget for your trip. The key things to budget for are transportation, housing, and food (\$10/person/day). Depending on your trip, you may also need to think about supplies and other miscellaneous expenses. The online trip proposal form has a link to a budget spreadsheet which will help you plan your budget. This is, of course, a tentative estimate that will likely change, but it is helpful to have a general idea of how much your trip will cost from the outset. While you are encouraged to begin thinking about fundraising opportunities at this stage, please wait to formally request funds from University offices and departments until your trip has been selected.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Complete the online forms	Complete your trip proposal and leader application, and submit them by the deadline.	<input type="checkbox"/>

WAIT FOR THE DECISION
(and further advice on contacting community partners)

Wait for further guidance from the Breakout coordinators	Wait to hear back from the coordinators before contacting any of your potential community partners. Applicants can usually expect to hear back from the coordinators within two weeks, at which point trips that Breakout is interested in supporting will be given a conditional green light. A coordinator will be assigned to work with you to create a list of next steps. Your first action after hearing back from the coordinators should be to schedule a meeting with the Pace staff and your coordinator to create an action plan. A “green light” does not mean you should start contacting all of your community partners right away since the Breakout staff and coordinators will likely have suggestions for whom to contact first and how you should approach them.	<input type="checkbox"/>
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For more information: pace.princeton.edu/breakout