

Common Ground 2022: Practical considerations for WCF Districts hosting solidarity delegations

Thank you for hosting a delegation. Your support is invaluable to the success of the camp and its internationalism, which we think is more important now than ever. Some of you are highly experienced in international solidarity projects and may find the topics here quite basic. However if your circumstances are different from what is covered, and you would like our help, please contact the Common Ground team via info@commonground.camp.

Financial support to the delegation

In many cases, costs will be covered from a variety of sources: delegation's own funds, IFM-SEI grants, hosting district fundraising, Common Ground central budget, individual contributions or grants from the UK.

At the earliest opportunity, have an honest and realistic conversation about:

- The costs of participation. The table below may steer this conversation but some cost elements might not be relevant.
- The level of funding your district can commit to.
- The financial situation of the partner organisation.
- Other sources of funding, including contributions from the other districts or internationals in your camp village.
- Timescales of when money is available, especially if it's external grants.
- What will happen if visas are delayed and flight prices have jumped up to beyond your original budget.
- Please see our separate guidance regarding insurance.

Costing out the activity

Cost element	Cost per person	How many needed	Who will cover
Passport fee			
Travel costs related to passport			
Cost of translating / notarising visa support documents			
Visa application fees			
Visa appointment fees			
OPTIONAL Visa Package of Assistance (useful or not?)			

Overnight stay for visiting agent or consulate			
Travel to agent or consulate			
Cost of collecting passports			
International travel to the UK			
Travel to airport			
Possible Covid tests			
UK local travel			
Any other costs like extra meals, excursions, insurance			
TOTAL			

When to make the travel bookings

Balancing the issue of flight bookings vs. visa applications will be difficult. Often, booking flights later will mean higher costs. But you may wish to minimise the financial risk to your District. Visitor visas are usually secured first (by early June 2022), and then flights booked. Therefore **we recommend not sending money for international travel before visas have been received.**

Secure visas first:

Pros	Cons
You minimise the risk of spending money yet not hosting anyone in the end.	Fewer affordable flights available.
This manages the expectations of the delegates, especially the children.	You will not know the actual costs July.

Book flights first:

Pros	Cons
You secure the cheapest flights. A big saving IF visas are granted.	Need to pay the flights upfront before you've done any fundraising.
You will be clearer on the overall cost much earlier on.	You could lose the cost of all flights if the group leader is rejected for a visa.
	You could lose the cost of an individual flight if

a participant is rejected for a visa.

How to get the cheapest flights

- Day to day, you probably use a price comparison site. In the case of group travel, a travel agent in the departure country may work better. They might 1) be able to “hold” flights, 2) allow a group booking with passenger details given much later on.
- You can try to speak to the airline directly and see how they handle group bookings.
- Skyscanner can show cheaper flights but other websites like Trailfinders may show more detail, such as lower booking fees for groups, cheaper rates for under 12’s etc.
- Stay flexible about the dates and consider hosting a day or two on either side.
- Look at indirect flights, and airports further afield.
- Learn about how far the airport is, and whether any flight times can be considered, to make a big saving.
- Consider splitting the group across several flights but bear in mind adult:child ratio and which adults are marked in each child’s visa application.

Considerations around UK stay

Please use this as a starting point for discussions - the list is not exhaustive. It is better to be completely transparent rather than too polite or vague about key issues.

Arrival	Hosting before / after camp	Equipment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you need to order covid tests to accommodation? • Pick up from airport • Driver rotas for possible delays • Allow enough space in car(s) for luggage • Someone could be held longer at the border 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language • Expectations: sharing space, different genders, pets • DBS checks for hosts? • Food requirements • Places of worship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who brings what • Think beyond tents - torches, mugs, water bottles • Some UK SIM cards? • Footwear, some warm clothing, waterproofs • Thick sleeping bags
UK camping	Departure	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any prev experience of camping abroad or in Europe? • Weather in August • Minimum expectation vs. standards of comfort • How will different genders be accommodated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check-in online? • Adequate transfer time to airport • Weigh suitcases in advance? • Luggage is over the weight limit? • Covid tests required 72hrs before? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is on call in case of flight cancellation • Make a phone number available in case group has an issue at border control or check-in • What will happen if there is a long flight delay

How to transfer money to Delegations

First and foremost, consider whether you need to make a transfer out, or whether it is better for you to make a purchase on behalf of the delegation.

The most secure way to transfer funds is a bank transfer to a bank account in the organisation's name. To do this, you will require the following information:

- Bank name
- Branch address
- Name of account holder
- Account number
- Swift Code or IBAN

Option 1 - Bank transfer

Check with your bank how to make the payment. For dual signature accounts, an instruction to make the payment can usually be made by letter or fax to their International Payments department. Make clear that you want the money paid in the currency of the recipient. If this is not possible, make a sterling or US dollar transfer. The bank will usually charge you around £25 for each transfer. Only in exceptional circumstances should funds be transferred to a personal account.

Option 2 - PayPal

If a bank transfer is not possible, cash transfers can be made via PayPal or – as a last resort – via Western Union.

To use PayPal, both parties need to open an account: <https://www.paypal.com/uk/home>.

Option 3 - Western Union

The Western Union exchange rates are usually less favourable than a bank. If Western Union is the only option, you will need to take the cash, a passport or driving licence and the fee into a Western Union outlet. You will need to give the name of the recipient as it appears on their identity document. You give the details, pay the amount and fee and the Western Union operator gives you an MCTN number. You will need to give this number to the recipient and the amount of money in the local currency. They will then collect the cash from a local Western Union outlet. If you do decide to go down this route, please ensure that the person named as the recipient from Western Union is someone you know and trust, and have been corresponding with.