

Zurich, April 11, 2019

## Around the world through the power of friendship

**Today marks the launch of an epic journey. Six genuine people from different cultural backgrounds set out on a unique adventure to show the power of friendship around the world. The catch? They will only travel from one friend to another.**

The two teams of three people each start in Berlin and head off in opposite directions. One team heads off in east direction, and the other, towards west. Within 100 days, both teams try to make it to the other side of the world – Japan – and aim to create a circle of friendship.

The route is not planned but unfolds along the way as each stop must only be at a friend's place of the current host. If the two teams meet again at the end of their journey, the point of Yuujou is proven: We are all connected, not only by digital means, but through real, heartfelt friendship.

### Over 30,000 applicants for the journey

The travelers for this 100-day adventure were found online. The international casting exceeded all expectations: Over 30,000 people from 167 countries applied for the journey. In January 2019, a jury reviewed the profiles and drew up a shortlist. Of these, 25 candidates made it to the next round and were interviewed via Skype. Ten people were then selected and personally visited by the Yuujou team.

A jury selected the winners after these visits. John from India, Panos from Cyprus, Paula from New Zealand, Jed from South Africa and Joey from the USA have been able to assert themselves against thousands of applicants and each won one of the five desired places. They travel together with Swiss bestselling-author and former journalist Yvonne Eisenring, who is also one of the founders of Yuujou.

### Friendship is the key to a happy life

"What if we only travel from one person to another - can we make it to the other side of the world? Wouldn't it be interesting to see where the journey would lead you and who you'd meet along the road?", was a thought that Yvonne and her sister Corinne Eisenring, a TV producer for travel documentaries, had always marveled at. Together with Oliver Herren, a Swiss internet pioneer, and founder of Switzerland's largest online shop "Digitec Galaxus", they finally breathed life into their vision.

Yuujou aims to emphasize the power of friendship by creating meaningful, honest and authentic stories about people who usually stay in the background. The media art-project sets an excellent example for humanity and our inherent kindness, the wonders that can be achieved if we only open ourselves to connecting with our immediate surroundings.

The founders of Yuujou believe there is nothing more important than friendship, and several large-scale scientific studies have similar conclusions: Genuine friends and face-to-face moments are the key to a happy, healthy and long life. However, numerous surveys have shown a dark picture in this respect: 50% of U.S Americans report they feel alone and miss meaningful face-to-face interactions on a daily basis. The loneliest generation of adults is the 18 to 22 years olds. Surveys of other countries show similar results. Yuujou founders are trying to make a difference. They know that they can't beat loneliness: "But we can show the importance of friendship!"

The 100-day travel adventure is documented and can be followed on [www.yuujou.world](http://www.yuujou.world) in real time. More information about the six Yuujou travelers can be found on: [www.yuujou.world/travelers](http://www.yuujou.world/travelers)

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More information on: [www.yuujou.world/about](http://www.yuujou.world/about)

Pictures on: [www.yuujou.world/newsroom](http://www.yuujou.world/newsroom)

Video "What is Yuujou": <https://youtu.be/QlbQQ6JnXfg>