



Volunteer

Welcome To The Team

An introduction to Friends International for those who would like to volunteer

Visit us online: www.friendsinternational.uk

Welcome!

Thank you for your interest in joining in the mission to help international students grow in friendship and faith. We're excited to have you on board!

Friends International was founded in 1985, bringing together individuals and churches who had been passionately welcoming, befriending and sharing Jesus with students from abroad since the 1960s. Much has changed in the student world since then, but our passion and aim hasn't. We still want "to see international students transformed by the good news of Jesus so that they fully engage with the mission of the church in the world." The way in which we seek to see this happen hasn't changed either.

We're committed to working with the church to communicate the good news of Jesus to international students in both word and deed and in whole life cross-cultural discipleship.

As the years have passed, the numbers of international students across the UK and Ireland have grown, and now there are over a million students a year in our universities and language schools. Some are here for a week, others for five years. Regardless, we seek to befriend them and give them opportunities to hear the good news of Jesus. As the numbers of students have grown, so has the staff team and volunteers.

Thank you for all your partnership.

Alan Tower
National Director



What Does A Volunteer Do?

There are differing needs at different points in a year, perhaps serving or cooking for a summer team, hosting on Christmas Day, or helping with a Zoom event to name a few. So, whether you're able to commit to an evening once a week, or two weeks in a year, there's a space for you to explore serving with us.

Throughout the Bible we are reminded that all of us have gifts in which to bless and grow God's kingdom. From administration to teaching, from prayer to hospitality and so much more, God has given gifts to his body with which to serve.

Hosting international students in your home for a meal, reading the Bible one to one with a seeking student, discipling students to go home and live for Christ in their home culture, making cups of tea at an international café, or helping with social media and online events – befriending international students can look different, but fulfil the same aim.

Your local centre team leader (find their details here below)

www.friendsinternational.uk/where-we-work

- would love to let you know the possibilities in your local area if you're not sure where you'd best fit. If you have new ideas as well, they'd love to hear them!

Who Can Volunteer?

The ideal volunteer is someone who loves Jesus and wants to see international students come to know Him. Friends International upholds biblical teaching about the moral and doctrinal standards expected of those in Christian ministry. We expect all volunteers to model these biblical standards in their daily lives. This is especially important when working cross-culturally.

What We Offer

- Volunteers will be given training in various elements of cross cultural ministry and other relevant areas .
- Volunteers can claim expenses for local activities (if pre-agreed with the local staff).
- A chance to be part of a team of Christians, working together to love and serve international students in your local area.
- Prayer events to be praying for the work as a team.

What We Ask

- To be accountable to the local Centre Team Leader for all the things you are part of as a Friends International volunteer.
- To agree to, and work within our Statement of Faith on divergent views (see end of document) and to lifestyle choices and behaviour which reflect belief in the Scriptures as the authoritative word of God, as traditionally understood by evangelical Christians, in all matters of faith and conduct.
- For the safety of all involved, we ask that where possible all one to one conversations with students take place in public locations. If this isn't possible for whatever reason, then please let the Centre Team Leader know as soon as is practical.
- As an organisation we value all cultures and ask that volunteers do the same in all their interactions with students, staff and other volunteers. We may not agree with a culture, but we seek to honour them in our speech and interactions.

How To Apply

You'll need a local church leader reference* to volunteer with Friends International. This doesn't need to be the main Minister, but someone in a leadership position in your church who knows you well. We value working with local churches in partnership so we want them to be part of the process and part of the partnership. The application form can be found here:

www.friendsinternational.uk/volunteer-signup

If you need a paper form, please contact:

info@friendsinternational.uk

We ask that all volunteers agree to working within our statement of faith and divergent views. Both can be found at the back of this leaflet. If you have any queries please do get in touch with the person who gave you this leaflet. Thanks again for your partnership. We look forward to having you on board.

*ideally this will be from your current church, but if you are newly arrived in the centre then it can also be a home church.

The Friends International Statement Of Faith

Friends International agrees and adopts the Evangelical Alliance Basis of Faith. Volunteers of Friends International are required to agree with and sign this Basis of Faith on appointment, and thereafter at three – yearly intervals.

We believe in...

- The one true God who lives eternally in three persons – the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- The love, grace and sovereignty of God in creating, sustaining, ruling, redeeming and judging the world.
- The divine inspiration and supreme authority of the Old and New Testament Scriptures, which are the written Word of God – fully trustworthy for faith and conduct.
- The dignity of all people, made male and female in God's image to love, be holy and care for creation, yet corrupted by sin, which incurs divine wrath and judgement.
- The incarnation of God's eternal Son, the Lord Jesus Christ – born of the virgin Mary; truly divine and truly human, yet without sin.
- The atoning sacrifice of Christ on the cross: dying in our place, paying the price of sin and defeating evil, so reconciling us with God.
- The bodily resurrection of Christ, the first fruits of our resurrection; his ascension to the Father, and his reign and mediation as the only Saviour of the world.
- The justification of sinners solely by the grace of God through faith in Christ.
- The ministry of God the Holy Spirit, who leads us to repentance, unites us with Christ through new birth, empowers our discipleship and enables our witness.
- The Church, the body of Christ both local and universal, the priesthood of all believers – given life by the Spirit and endowed with the Spirit's gifts to worship God and proclaim the gospel, promoting justice and love.
- The personal and visible return of Jesus Christ to fulfil the purposes of God, who will raise all people to judgement, bring eternal life to the redeemed and eternal condemnation to the lost, and establish a new heaven and new earth.

The Friends International Statement On Divergent Views

1. Friends International is an evangelical Mission that works with a cross-section of denominational and independent churches. Furthermore, its trustees, branch officials, staff and volunteers also represent a considerable diversity in their church backgrounds.

2. The Statement of Faith contained in the Trust Deeds represents the essential truths of the Gospel that are basic for the ministry of Friends International. As such, it is the doctrinal base to which all trustees, branch officials, staff and volunteers must assent, and the grounds on which Friends International is in fellowship with churches and other mission societies.

3. Friends International does, however, recognize and respect the divergences of biblical interpretation and practices amongst evangelical Christians, including those of churches overseas to which international student Christians may belong. As long as these differences do not conflict with the Statement of Faith, or cause undue divisiveness, they are not a barrier to becoming a staff member, a trustee or a branch official.

4. Being non-denominational in doctrine, Friends International expects its trustees, branch officials, staff and volunteers to be mutually respectful on teachings not covered by the Statement of Faith. Such teachings should not prejudice their advice when counselling a new believer regarding church affiliation, nor affect the churches and mission societies with which they have contact.

5. When working in a single church context, whether one's own or another, Friends International expects its trustees, branch officials, staff and volunteers to operate with respect towards that particular church's viewpoints on matters not covered by the Statement of Faith. However when working within an inter-church context, trustees, branch officials, staff and volunteers are able to make decisions, where needed, on matters not covered by the Statement of Faith and where discretion is permitted by Scripture. Whether applying their own viewpoints or deferring to the viewpoints of others, their practice should be motivated by a desire for the optimal cooperation of the group and not by a sense of loyalty to their own theological convictions.

6. Friends International believes that God has called the trustees and staff to concentrate unswervingly on evangelism, discipleship and preparing students to help in the development of churches in their own countries upon their return, according to Christ's mandate (Matthew 28 v18– 20). Therefore, all are urged to concentrate on these goals and to exercise care in all conversation and correspondence so that no offence is unnecessarily caused to anyone, be they colleagues, local churches or students on any matters, whether doctrinal, political or racial. Whilst the cross may be an offence to some (Galatians 5.11), we are called to be the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing (2 Corinthians 2.15).