

Follow-up contacts around the world for those moving on or going home

Finding good Christian contacts is crucial when our students return home or move on elsewhere. That's what this document is about. *But... this is only a very small part of our responsibility.* We also need to disciple students from the beginning so that they are prepared for the issues and opportunities they may face on return. Please use the following resources to learn more about these challenge:

Returning Home

<https://www.friendsinternational.uk/shop/returning-home>

Think Home

<https://www.friendsinternational.uk/shop/think-home>

ID Course (Leaders Notes)

<https://www.friendsinternational.uk/shop/id-course-leaders-notes>

ID Course (Student Notes)

<https://www.friendsinternational.uk/shop/id-course-student-notes>

Finding good Christian contacts

- **Ideally we will start early.**
We will aim to link students with contacts back home some time *before* they leave the UK, so that a relationship can start to form even at a distance. If our international friend returns home with a new faith in Christ or with an interest in learning more, it's not helpful if we leave them for months before any local follow-up contact is made. We should try to look ahead and find links well in advance.
- However, we know that for many their desire to be linked up often becomes apparent soon before departure or they're not sure where they're heading until the last minute. In that case, please start looking as soon as possible,

Some important tips – for any country

i) Your own contact system

It is ideal to develop a range of contacts yourself. You will still sometimes need to use the networks mentioned here, but your personal contacts will involve a higher level of personal trust, which is important in many cultures.

ii) Support from Friends International colleagues

You will also find the allstaff/allaffiliates/allreach email network helpful to identify close contacts of others within Friends International. Let's not overuse this (and exhaust our colleagues!), but this network has been wonderfully useful when other approaches haven't worked.

iii) Forging the link

When you have identified a suitable contact person, write to the student and the follow-up contact to introduce them to each other (*NB there are exceptions e.g. China*). ***N.B. Students often don't use email regularly so it's good to identify an alternative means of contact as soon as possible.*** It can be helpful sometimes to also write a more detailed email to the contact person to give them some background on the student concerned. Ask them to get in touch with each other, and to let us know how this works out. Silence in the following days may mean that they have done nothing! So, aim to chase this up within a week or two.

iv) Feedback procedure

If Martin in Leeds, UK, is looking for a contact in Kagoshima, Japan, as many as four or five links may eventually connect them. It is unrealistic to expect meaningful feedback information to flow back through the same channel. Feedback is important, but it must be as direct as possible between the final follow-up contact and the original Christian friend (again not always possible in e.g. China/a Muslim country). In some cases, language issues may mean an intermediary is needed, but we should do all we can to cut out as many links as we can once the local contact has been found. (It may be kind to cc the email to intermediary contacts, so that they know things are still happening).

Extra Thoughts

v) What makes a good follow-up contact person?

We may develop beautiful networks, but we still need the right people at the other end of the line of communication, people who will really take on our friends as their friends. Apart from the obvious Christian character issues, we should look for people the returnees will naturally relate to and make friends with. The best connections are often with people of a similar age, occupation and education. Other previous returnees might be ideal. Ex-patriot Christians may be helpful too, as people who remind the returnee of the context in which they learnt about Christ. See *Appendix 1: Finding Barnabases*

vi) Doctrinal/theological/style issues

You may, for example, be from a conservative evangelical background yourself and find that the only contact you can find is from a strongly Pentecostal church. Or vice versa. Similar issues come up regularly. How will you respond?

Many churches which look OK at first may have liberal theology or other issues not immediately visible to us. We certainly should not expect to find churches “just like ours” and should always encourage returnees to look for a church where God is loved, the Bible is taught, and where they can serve, even if the style and other things are very different from their UK experience.

vii) Returnee retreats

These have great potential when organised by a follow-up ‘specialist’ or even by returnees themselves. There is an annual retreat in the UK organised for Christian students returning to mainland China. Sessions are also organised for Japanese potential returnees.

Japan is an example of a country where regional reunions and conferences run once students, both Christian and still seeking, return to Japan. Those mentioned in the section on Japan below often cooperate in organising retreats like this.

viii) Returnee fellowships

These exist in various places where large numbers of Christians have returned to the same area. However, it can be hard to keep these going over time, unless there is a regular inflow of new people to take over the leadership. So these may come and go. Someone with a long-term commitment would make a big difference.

ix) Pre-departure seminars for those returning home

It has proved very helpful to hold some kind of pre-departure seminar or short course or to meet regularly to go through *Think Home* (for Christians) or *Returning Home* (for any returning international) as preparation for return. Similarly, where local Christians, national or expatriate, overseas, can offer some sort of advisory seminar or day conference for those planning to study abroad, this contact can then help to put these students in contact by e-mail with friendly Christian welcomers in their new host country (e.g. the UK). *International student ministry worldwide would do well to give time to developing networks to run such events. When students have been involved in such a scheme, they have natural contacts to return to when they eventually arrive home again.*

And Finally...

x) Our Own Ongoing Responsibility

Experience shows that the key person in encouraging a newly converted returnee is often not the new home-based contact, but their original Christian friend ('mentor') abroad, i.e. you!. Terry McGrath, a leader in ISM New Zealand says, *"We are committed to act responsibly for at least two years after return for the sake of those who return. This means our staff will have smaller local ministries as they will be having to put time and resources into servicing returning graduates. Our perception is that we make a greater contribution to world missions by ensuring with the few that re-entry occurs successfully and the individuals develop to their full potential, rather than sending back many and trusting to the survival of the fittest."*

What is written here is clearly not the last word on follow-up networks! There is a long way to go, but let's all pray and act to improve our overall service to internationals, before they arrive, while they are with us, and once they have returned home again. Then we have the prospect of an eternity rejoicing together!

And now for the contacts - organised by continent and then country, in alphabetical order.

Following this, there is information on some key organisations which can help us find contacts.

For practical and security purposes, some follow up email addresses will appear as country@friendsinternational.uk. These will be automatically forwarded to the relevant person.

1. Africa

Bill Dindi of SIM is developing contacts for the continent of Africa as a whole:

dindibs@gmail.com

IFES contacts will also be helpful – see list of organisations.

ISI (USA) are also developing contacts in some countries

Specific Countries:

Kenya

Duncan Olumbe (Mission Together Africa) is developing ISM and returnee ministry there.

duncan.olumbe@gmail.com

South Africa

Emma Brewster

Emma.brewster@sim.org

Tanzania

David Hubbard

david.hubbard@friendsinternational.uk

Zambia

Andrew Muwowo is happy to find links for returnees to Zambia. Andrew was a Friends International staff worker and helps run a Bible College in Zambia.

ajmmuwowo@gmail.com

2. Asia

China (People's Republic)

For most churches in China, a personal introduction is needed. To inquire about a contact for someone returning to China please email: china@friendsinternational.uk

Please give details of the returning student/scholar: the city (and district within the city (if it is large), name, email, mobile number, WeChat ID ... It is important to maintain the confidentiality of those in China who receive and welcome new returnees, so you will not receive details of their contacts. Let your student friend know that someone will contact them. **N.B.** This contact address should only be used by Christian workers and not given to students for them to make their own contacts.

Hong Kong

The Fellowship of Evangelical Students can be contacted by email at info@fes.org.hk

Ryan Muir leads a Mandarin speaking congregation at St Andrews Church, Kowloon, and is happy to be a link person: ryan@standrews.org.hk

India

Mercy and Emmanuel Benjamin, Pune. findemmanuel@gmail.com

(Mr) Benoni Doss, Friends Beyond Boundaries, Bangalore, India. benonidoss@yahoo.com

Indonesia

Navigators ism@navigators.org have offered to support us in Indonesia.

Iran

Katie Pipe will act as an intermediary for Iranians wanting contacts and discipleship. katie.pipe@friendsinternational.uk

Both for seekers and new believers, it is very helpful to direct them to the Sat7 broadcasts in Farsi. <http://sat7.org/our-channels/channel-overview/sat-7-pars> Sat7 has staff who will respond to viewers' questions and link them up as appropriate.

Japan

- Japan Christian Link info@jclglobal.org (based in Kent) are happy to be our first point of contact, and they also have access to other similar networks. Maybe more likely to have links with livelier and maybe more charismatic churches.
- Yoshie Yokoyama heads up OMF's returnee network. She understands both the churches in the UK and in Japan. It's best to write to her both at returnee.japan@omfmail.com and yoshie.yokoyama@omfmail.com to be sure of reaching her. The links she has may be more likely to include traditional Japanese churches.
- As a back-up, try the Japanese Christian Fellowship Network (US-based) - ushq@jcfn.org
- If the contact you need is definitely in the Tokyo area, you can go direct to Mike & Liz Jeggo - Mike.Jeggo@omfmail.com and Liz.Jeggo@omfmail.com - Liz is ex-FI staff and they are now focussing on returnee ministry there.

Korea

- For those returning to Seoul, there are of course so many "evangelical churches" that it can be confusing. As a starting point, try Onnuri Church - www.onnuri.org/ This is a very large church, which may be hard for some, but has a stronger emphasis on faithful Bible teaching than some churches.
Barney Park
thegoodteacher@naver.com
- Outside Seoul, Onnuri Church has directed us to <http://vision.onnuri.org>, which should be understandable by Korean returnees, if not by us.

- OMF Diaspora Country Leaders in Korea, Stephen and Esther Kim, have also offered to be contacts for us. They know churches in Seoul and other S Korean cities.
Stephen: drm.cl.kr@omfmail.com / Esther: esther.kim@omfmail.com

Malaysia

- Kuala Lumpur and Malaysia General:

Friends International was specifically contacted by a church offering to receive and support returnees. This is the Anglican cathedral, St Mary's - which has a Biblical ministry which would be familiar to many in FI. Contacts are:

Andrew Cheah: andrew.cheah@stmaryscathedral.org.my

Dinesh Natorajan: dinesh.nato@stmaryscathedral.org.my

Pastor WONG Hon Chien

Emmanuel EFC

eefckl@emmanuel-efc.org

Chris Wylie

Faith Evangelical Free Church (Faith EFC), Kuala Lumpur

wylie_chris@hotmail.com

- Penang

Tim Nicholls

Cross And Crown, Penang

tim.a.nicholls@gmail.com

- Sarawak

Brian King

BEM Kuching Evangelical Church, Kuching

brian.bemkec@gmail.com

Pakistan

For security reasons your email will be redirected. Please use the email address below:

Pakistan@friendsinternational.uk

Philippines

IVCF is the IFES-affiliated movement in the Philippines with work among students and graduates.

Know more about us here: ivcfphil.org or <https://www.facebook.com/ivcfph>.

You may also contact us via email: ond@ivcfphil.org or mobile +639338119535.

Singapore

- <http://www.fessingapore.org/>, part of the IFES movement, should be helpful.

Taiwan

- taiwan@friendsinternational.org
- For Taipei: many good churches, but maybe try Friendship Presbyterian first. www.friendshiptaipei.com/
- For Taichung: Taichung Church Alliance (links about 130 churches in the city). This is probably a good starting place to ask. <https://church.oursweb.net/church.php?pkey=821913>
- For Kaohsiung:
<http://www.wuchang.org.tw/index.asp> (for the city centre)
<http://www.bannerch.org/kaohsiung.html> (for the North of the city)
<https://church.oursweb.net/church.php?pkey=811912> (for the South of the city)

Thailand

OMF Thailand point to this website with details on churches across Thailand.

<https://estar.ws/harvest/church-location-map.html>

Cherlyn is ISM focussed among Thai universities:

cherlyn.oh@omfmail.com

Michelle is focussed on Thai students and graduates:

Michelle.goh@omfmail.com

Turkey

BCC (kutsalkitap.org) have a wide network of workers around the country that follow up and meet with various contacts.

Please pass contact details to mektup@kutsalkitap.org

“When writing the email just give us a brief description on who they are, where they are living in Turkey as well as a contact detail (email or phone or WhatsApp) They can then be connected to our follow up team who will arrange to meet with them.”

Vietnam

vietnam@friendsinternational.uk

3. Australia and New Zealand

Australia The Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students (AFES) has its own website at:

<http://www.afes.org.au> and has a section dedicated to international student ministry.

Very helpful for internationals relocating to Australia.

New Zealand

The equivalent of Friends International in New Zealand is ISM NZ and we can contact them via their website at <http://www.ismnz.org.nz> or by email office@ism.org.nz

Very helpful for internationals relocating to New Zealand.

4. Europe

IFES may be the best first port of call in Europe, especially in the countries with the smallest evangelical presence. For countries with no specific information in this list, check <http://ifeseurope.org/> and then select National Movements.

Austria

- Lukas and Maria Vogel (FI Affiliates)
www.connectingcultures.at
welcome@connectingcultures.at
- <https://freikirchen.at/gemeinden.php>. This website is not accessible in English. You need to select the region for a list of all Free Churches in that area. Each church is marked with a colour, indicating the denomination.
- <https://oesm.at/ueber-uns/international-students/>

France

- The website <http://www.eglises.org/?Langue=en> is very helpful and can be accessed in French as well (simply by changing en to fr). Some churches may be ethnic (Cambodian or Korean or gypsy or ... lots of them) so not all are helpful for French-speaking people. There are strongly charismatic as well as conservative evangelical churches on the list, so checking through to see something about the denomination can help to see if any particular church is a good fit for the person you have in mind – for most churches you can also click on their own website to get more of a flavour. In Paris the churches are listed in order of “arrondissement” (with the number in Roman numerals) which is very helpful.
- France Mission operates a comprehensive ‘find a church’ scheme with links to a wide range of evangelical churches in France as well as the 50 churches affiliated to France Mission itself. Go to <http://www.france-mission.org> or email churches@france-mission.org
- Anyone looking for an English-speaking church in Paris should try St Michael's: www.saintmichaelsparis.org
- You could also contact the French IFES movement, the GBU, via their website at <http://www.gbu-france.org/english.html>

Germany

- The German IFES member movement, the SMD, has a central webpage at <http://www.smd.org> with lots of helpful information. Each city's SMD group has its own webpage information, which you should be able to find by googling SMD and the city name. On each homepage you can find the name, e-mail and phone number of the SMD contact person. (It's worth understanding that what the SMD call “high school ministry” – Hochschule - is in fact close to what we consider university ministry.)
- Germany has a 'church finder' web page as well provided by 'Evangelischer Rundfunk' - <http://www.erf.de/service/kirchenfinder/103?reset=1> . (You can translate the website into English). This seems to include Catholic churches as well, and liberal protestant ones. Gemeindeart gives you the choice of the sort of church you are looking for. I would tend to go for Freie Evangelische Gemeinde but please notice that this also includes Adventists. Details provided for each church vary, but overall this is still a good resource when looking for a German church, with some cover for Switzerland and Austria as well.

Italy

- There is a reasonably helpful website at <http://www.evangelici.net/address.html> . (You can translate the website into English.) The only problem is that it is simply a listing of churches without giving any evaluation of what they are like or where they stand doctrinally. The biggest groupings in Italy are Pentecostal and Brethren. Some have a webpage or e-mail link that you can follow up, and this may help you to form a clearer impression.
- Chris & Lizzie Brown cbrown@crosslinks.org are on the staff of the GBU (Italian IFES movement) and are very happy to help with recommendations, specially to GBU groups.

Turkey

See Asia

Spain

- Andrea Lagos gbu@gbunidos.es

Andrea works for the central GBU (IFES) office in Spain. She has a list of recommended churches in the university cities of the whole country. She can also provide information about university Christian Unions.

Other European countries

See notes on IFES on Organisations below: Go to their website (<http://www.ifesworld.org>) for information on many national contacts, then go to the website for the national movement. You may even be able to locate staff in a region or city.

5. Latin America

Latin Link would be happy to help find returnee contacts: They can help with the following countries (North to South): **Cuba, Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, Brazil**

Please contact the International Team Leader:
international@latinlink.org

Debora Roehl, who is based in Mexico and part of the Lausanne Movement Global Network Facilitation Team for ISM, is also willing to help. Email address: debora@fcsi.ws

Again, IFES is another source of contacts.

6. North America (USA & Canada)

For both the USA and Canada you can use ACMI Link <http://www.acmilink.com/>
See list of organisations below for more information.

To connect a student with a Christian fellowship in Canada you can also go to the International Student Ministries Canada website: <https://ismc.ca/>

Click on Locations (under "About us").
There is a listing of links to all the cities where they have staff.

7. Organisations

ACMI Link

<http://www.acmilink.com/> This is great for helping people moving to the USA or Canada, *but it goes beyond this*, because many ACMI members have their own networks around the world. The search system allows you to look for a country (e.g. USA), a state (e.g. California), a university (e.g. UCLA) or even an ISM worker if you know a name. To apply to be an ACMI Link contact:

<http://www.acmilink.com/HostApplication/Create>.
We can use ACMI Link without being members of ACMI.

ACMI (Association of Christians Ministering among Internationals)

Most members of ACMI are in the USA, but they and non-USA members have contacts abroad too. If you are not an ACMI member, you can access ACMI Link (above), but not the whole ACMI membership email network; so you need to join. (ISM staff outside N America are currently allowed to join free!) You should initially write to admin@acmi-ism.org to ask about joining. Once on board, you can write to the whole ACMI membership to look for contacts in e.g. Middle East or Latin America. You may get a confusing abundance of replies for some places!

International Church Network

<http://www.internationalchurches.net>. This is specifically for *English-speaking* evangelical international churches, so will not be the ideal for most returnees. But it can be a helpful resource for those looking for such a church. It's always best to check out the website of a church before recommending it – you can learn a lot about the style of a church there, and even a doctrinal statement to help you.

Various student ministries are happy to use their own staff workers around the world to help with follow-up. There are many, but here are the details of a few:

IFES (International Fellowship of Evangelical Students)

This may be most relevant for those returning to student life in their own countries, particularly for linking students into graduate fellowships. These fellowships exist to support undergraduate ministry, but would also be keen to receive returnees. For obvious reasons IFES cannot publish a general list of their workers and affiliated movements, but they will put known Christian workers in touch when needed. Go to their website:

<http://www.ifesworld.org>)

for information on national contacts, then go to the website for the individual national movement. You may even be able to locate staff in a region or city.

Navigators

The Navigators have a policy of developing 'national partnering networks' in various East Asian and South-East Asian countries. They have recruited Navigators leaders in Asia and assigned staff in key nations to help returnees. These staff try to visit returnees regularly. Their strengths are especially in Indonesia, but also in Malaysia, Singapore and Japan. For more details contact:

ism@navigators.org.

This is a generic address and there should be a staff worker dedicated to responding.

ISI (based in USA)

They have a massive follow-up network to support their own staff in the USA and can refer enquiries to individual staff with their own extensive networks.

Write to: team@isionline.org

One of their staff helpfully wrote: "It would be great to have you network with our returnee follow ups! As you probably know, global contacts are rarely static so instead of me giving you a snapshot of what exists now (but will change frequently), please just feel free to contact me when you are searching for a contact. I will be happy to assist any time!"

And last but definitely not least:

Friends International All Staff email

Definitely worth using if other approaches don't work.

Finding Barnabases

Finding Friends and Fellowship Back Home

We all appreciate the importance of connecting our international student friends with a church or Christian contact back home, especially if they have professed faith while in the UK or are seriously seeking. But what are we looking for? An address of a church? A name? A telephone number? If we stop and think, we will realise how daunting it could be for a returnee to make a cold contact, especially if they have had no prior contact with Christians in their home country.

The Barnabas Model

Barnabas is a great character. We first meet him in Acts 4: 36-37 where we learn his nickname, 'Son of Encouragement'. In Acts 9:27, he takes the newly converted Saul and introduces him to the rather suspicious apostles. He acts for Saul as an advocate and a bridge into their Fellowship. Then later in Acts 11: 22-26, we read how Barnabas fetches Saul to help in the new church in Antioch and how there they work together to teach the new believers. Barnabas recognises the potential in Saul and puts him in a training situation, which in turn will lead to his missionary journeys.

So, an introduction, a bridge, an advocate, a recogniser of potential, and a trainer and facilitator. Wouldn't it be great if we could identify people like Barnabas to welcome home our returnees and help them to integrate into the church back home?! Realistically, we can't do that for every returnee, but the example of Barnabas should give us an ideal to strive for. Let's not be satisfied with just the name of a church but seek to connect people with helpful contacts. **'Finding Barnabases'** should be our aim!