



Thank you for expressing an interest in the Reach Programme at Friends International!

The Reach programme is a unique cross-cultural discipleship and ministry training programme for Christian graduates. It combines an opportunity to participate in God's mission amongst international students with mentoring and training designed to nurture your growth and equip you for cross-cultural ministry in the whole of life. It is a well-established programme, running for over 30 years, which we renew and improve each year in response to current opportunities, issues and feedback, to make even better for those who do it the next year.

We're looking for suitable candidates to join us for the year from September 2026 who are keen to share the love of Jesus with international students. If you think this might be for you, we'd love to hear from you. The pages below give you more information about the aims of the programme, what is involved, and for whom it is designed. If you have questions, or you'd like to talk it over, please contact us at the address below.

The application form is also enclosed. It helps to plan ahead, both for you and us, so we encourage you to be in contact earlier rather than later, even if it is simply to explore the possibility of a year on the Reach Programme.

First round of applications deadline: **16th February 2026.**

We will accept applications for the remaining spaces up to **30th April 2026.**

We advise applying as soon as possible to avoid disappointment regarding visas and preferred locations.

We are praying for God's blessing for you as you seek Him for the path ahead,

Luke Hammond
Reach Programme Co-ordinator
Friends International

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Everything you need to know about The Reach Programme: Information and Application Pack

Reach is a cross-cultural Christian discipleship and ministry training programme

Our vision and aims

One million international students study in the UK and Ireland every year. Many come from countries where it is not possible to speak openly about Jesus or where the church is small. Most of these students are open to friendship; many are interested to explore big questions of life and faith.

The Reach programme is one way in which we give international students the opportunity to encounter Jesus through a Christian friend. Through befriending and sharing the love of Jesus, Reach trainees engage in God's global mission, and open themselves to be changed and equipped by Him in the process.

The vision of Friends International is

*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 Reach Year

The year is not only designed to benefit the students you will encounter, but primarily to be an investment in you, the Reach trainee. Our three aims for your time on Reach are that you would be enabled to:

- Grow in your **relationship with Christ**
- Discover and develop your God-given **gifts and potential** for serving him
- And enlarge your vision for, and commitment to, **God's global mission**

We recognise that Christian formation involves the development of the whole person in every part of life, so Reach is not simply about learning the skills of cross-cultural ministry, but also about developing conviction, values and character.

The Content of the Programme

Each Reach trainee is based in a University city, working alongside an experienced Friends International staff worker and with local church volunteers.

The programme has four main parts:

- **Practical ministry:** A range of ministry experiences through hands-on involvement in the local work: welcoming & befriending, discipleship & evangelistic Bible study, organising social events, being part of a World Café team.
- **Group training:** Four residential conferences (September orientation, November training, January annual staff conference, June debriefing), plus local training (How local training is delivered varies between cities).
- **Personal study:** Time each week spent reading, learning from, and responding to a well-developed core study programme, plus elective study in other areas.
- **Mentored supervision:** regular mentoring with an experienced staff worker who will work alongside and support you on the ground.

The curriculum is based around four broad areas:

**Bible & Doctrine
Gospel & Culture**

**Self & Community
Mission & Ministry**

Friends International is blessed with a staff team that are some of the most experienced in international student ministry in Europe, and includes those who have specialised in particular areas of ministry. We draw on these staff to deliver the training for Reach Trainees.

Reach trainees will typically also get involved with the Big Weekend Away (formerly the Word Alive International Student track) and a Summer International Outreach too.

Within the framework of the programme there is flexibility and customisability. Each Reach trainee, together with their staff mentor, will design their ***Personal Reach Plan***: a programme of training, service and spiritual formation that is appropriate for where they are starting from and which aims to prepare them for the future.

In short, Reach is a year of service, of growth, of friendship!

- to take in – through training, study and mentoring
- to give out – by sharing the love of Jesus with international students
- before moving on - as life-long ambassadors for Jesus in the world

Who is the Reach Programme for?

- Committed Christians who are growing in maturity and want to introduce international students to Jesus
- Graduates, usually aged 21-30yrs
- Fluent English speakers

Practicalities

Duration: The Reach programme starts on 1st September 2026 and runs for 12 months. There is a possibility of extending to do a second year. The programme is full-time.

Cost: The Reach fee is £1500 (or equivalent in Euros). This pays for the cost of the four residential training conferences, plus books and other resources and can be paid in instalments across the year, or in one lump sum. In addition to this, Reach trainees are responsible for raising their own finances for the year. Living costs (accommodation, food, travel, etc) may be £10,000-£15,000, depending on the individual, location, and local church help.

Reach trainees receive support and training from an experienced team in the task of support raising, but must ultimately – with help – find ways to fund their year. Family or church are valid ways for the year to be funded, but many Reach trainees need to rise to the challenge of seeking to build a team of mission partners – family, church, and friends – who can support you as we support you across the year.

In June 2025 there will be an initial support raising training day for all successful applicants. Date and details to be confirmed.

Non-UK citizens: One of the strengths of the Reach programme is the diversity of the Reach team each year. We love to receive internationals!

Those who are currently in UK on a study visa and complete their studies in Summer 2026 can apply for a visa via the graduate entry route (post-study visa).

For those applying from outside UK, we are able to sponsor a limited number (max 4) applying for a Temporary Worker - Charity Worker visa. (Although we cannot guarantee that any specific application will be successful).

The Charity Worker visa brings certain conditions, including not undertaking any paid employment, or claiming any state benefits, and keeping very clear reporting requirements. For more information about the current requirements for a Charity Worker visa please see: <https://www.gov.uk/temporary-worker-charity-worker-visa>

Before submitting a Charity Worker visa application, you need to have £1,270 in your bank account consistently for 28 days to demonstrate sufficient funds. Those on a Charity Worker visa should budget £1,400 to cover costs including visa fee and an immigration health surcharge. If applying to be placed in Ireland, please contact us for the latest information.

Time off and holidays: Reach Trainees receive one day off each week, in addition to Sundays (which are often busy). For Holiday allowance, there are 25 holiday days to use, plus UK bank holidays.

Reach trainees occasionally come into contact with children in the course of their work, so they may be required to complete a safeguarding self-declaration form.

Application

We encourage those considering applying for the Reach programme to discuss it with a leader in their church first, including them early in the process. It is important to have their support and we will ask for a reference from a church leader.

If you would like to chat informally or visit a current placement before submitting your application, please contact us at the address below and we will be happy to arrange this.

Please read our doctrinal basis, ethos statement and divergent views statement papers included in this application pack. Then complete the application form, including supplying referees who are willing and available to write a reference for you.

To apply, you need to submit:

- Completed application form
- Personal CV, covering education, qualifications, work & voluntary experience

First round of applications deadline: 16th February 2026.

We will accept applications for the remaining spaces up to **30th April 2026.**

Note: We advise applying as soon as possible to avoid disappointment regarding visas and preferred locations.

Our procedure on receipt of applications is to take up references before deciding whether to proceed to interview.

If you would like to find out more before applying, please contact Luke Hammond (Reach Programme Coordinator). You can contact him at luke.hammond@friendsinternational.uk

Once your application is complete, please send it to Jenny Gibbs, Reach Administrator. Jennifer.gibbs@friendsinternational.uk.

