



FAQ: Volunteer Application Process

1. Why does IFI ask for References?



Our experience shows that some very godly and good-hearted people are just not cut out for the “peculiarities” of working with international students. Also, we want to be certain that our volunteers have time for this work, that their spouses are happy with their involvement, and that we will not be putting any undue stress on volunteers who are struggling with other issues.

2. Why does IFI require a Background Check?

In 2011, the Ohio State University asked us to have our volunteers undergo a background check. In order to keep the doors of ministry open, we decided to require it of all volunteers who have direct contact with students in their home or one-on-one outside of their home. The only exceptions are made for OSU students or staff since OSU has already required they do a background check.



3. Why do I need to attend the New Volunteer Training?



We want all new volunteers to be equipped well to serve international students and to understand all of the services that IFI makes available to the students. Also, since each volunteer is an important part of the ministry and represents IFI to the students, volunteers need to understand and be in agreement with our ministry focus and philosophy.

Contact us



(614) 294-2434



volunteers@ifipartners.org



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4. My mom knows me the best of all. Can she be my reference? How about the pastor, who is my cousin?

We need an unbiased opinion: that means no close relatives or spouses, please. As for the pastor who is also your cousin: this is a stretch, but we would allow it if you give him/her permission to be honest! If you know your church's Local Church Representative (an IFI volunteer) well, he or she would make a good reference.



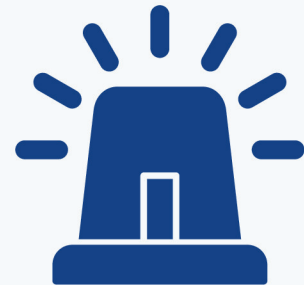
5. How will IFI protect my social security and other personal information?



With the identity theft that is going on today, we certainly need to be careful of whom we give information. IFI is committed to keeping your data private and secure, so we have partnered with Protect My Ministry (an organization also utilized by the Southern Baptist Convention, the Lutheran Church of the Missouri Synod, the Church of the Nazarene and more). They are a reputable background checking organization, and will be keeping all of the data secure. You may learn more about them here: protectmyministry.com.

6. What if something shows up on my Background check?

We consider each situation on a case by case basis. We will look at the whole picture and take into consideration that the situation occurred prior to you being a Christian. We will not be sharing the results of this with anyone at OSU or anywhere else.



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7. Does IFI screen students before they offer them services? How can we know we aren't being linked up with a trouble maker?



IFI has no way of screening students, so we can't be certain that you won't be hosting or meeting with a "trouble maker" (note that we have not had any issues in the past). Ultimately, we have to trust the Lord about this. We know that the U.S. government treats international students differently than casual visitors or immigrants who are fleeing their countries because of persecution or other reasons

The State Department and Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS) do a full background check and screening before they grant student visas. Students must have a letter of admission from a U.S. institution of learning and show proof of ability to pay for their study up front. Also, in most countries, the U.S. Embassy requires prospective students to undergo a personal interview. Not every student who applies gets the visa. Lastly, INS monitors U.S. universities continually to ensure that international students are adhering to the terms of their visa, i.e., are enrolled full time and making academic progress.

In summary, students are screened thoroughly by the U.S. government. If terrorists or people with a negative agenda want to get into the U.S., there are easier ways than entering on a student visa!

8. Can I send you the results of a Background check I have already had for work or other organization?

We WILL NOT accept background checks or copies of background checks from other organizations.



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9. How long is the New Volunteer Training?

The training is two hours long. Training is also available online 24/7 and can be completed at your own pace.

10. When and where is the next training?

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11. What is covered in the training?



The first part is an introduction to international student ministry and IFI's history, values, goals, and volunteer opportunities. The second part includes cultural awareness, cross-cultural friendships and communication, hospitality, and sharing your faith cross-culturally. You also have access to a Resource Manual for future use.

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