



# Information for volunteers

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## Is this for me?

Christian Aid's GAP year programme is for anyone with a passion for global justice who's looking to take a year out. Maybe you're about to go to uni, or you've just finished. Or maybe you've been working and want to change your focus.

You need to be someone who is serious about making the world a fairer place and is happy talking to other people about it. A lot of the work will be based in Christian settings, so an understanding of the Christian faith would be helpful.

You need to be up for a challenge! A lot of the work is about getting 'out there' and meeting new people in new places. You need to be comfortable working with groups of young people. Obviously this requires lots of creativity, hard work and the ability to have a good laugh along the way!

## What will I do?

You will be placed in a Christian Aid area office in the UK or Ireland. There are area offices throughout the regions and nations whose key job is to make links with local supporters.

Your task will be to inspire lots of young people in that area to do something about poverty and injustice. We'll give you training, support and resources to help you do great work with teenagers, youth leaders and students. You will be there to help young people put their faith into action, to give, act and pray, helping the poorest people in the world through campaigning, fundraising, workshops, worship and events.

**'The Christian Aid Gap year has been the best year of my life! In no other place would you meet people so fantastic, lovely and caring towards each other and I'm so grateful for the opportunity to work with them everyday.'**

Quote from Lucy, a volunteer in 2006

## Where will I live?

Christian Aid will find accommodation for you near your placement. This might be in a shared house, a student hostel, or with a host family. You'll either get all your meals provided or your subsistence costs – food and toiletries – will be covered.

## What happens when?

Your placement runs from the end of August to the end of June the following year. Here's how a typical year works:

*August* Volunteers join the Christian Aid team at Greenbelt arts festival

*September* Placements begin

*October* Two-week overseas trip to visit Christian Aid partner organisations

*Nov – April* Opportunities to spend time with the other gappers, share experiences of your trip and work with the wider organisation and Christian Aid supporters.

*May* Christian Aid Week

*June* Evaluation and debriefing

*August* Second chance to join the Christian Aid team at Greenbelt, and help welcome the new GAP year volunteers

## How much will it cost?

Christian Aid will cover your accommodation and subsistence costs; the cost of your overseas trip to Christian Aid partners; all expenses incurred for Christian Aid in your volunteering; all costs for training and attendance at Christian Aid residential events and 3 return journeys to your home from your placement.

You will have to raise your own personal spending money for the Gap year. You can do this in all sorts of imaginative ways. Asking your local church, family or friends for support would be a good place to start and Christian Aid can also provide you with fundraising ideas.

## What is Christian Aid?

The best way to find out all you need to know is to check out Christian Aid's website: [www.christianaid.org.uk](http://www.christianaid.org.uk)

But to give a brief overview, Christian Aid works with nearly 600 local organisations in some of the poorest communities in the world, and is committed to fighting injustice and tackling the root causes of poverty. Christian Aid works wherever the need is greatest, regardless of religion. It is also the official development agency of more than 40 sponsoring churches of different Christian denominations in the UK and Ireland.

### Who will support me?

On a day-to-day basis, you will be managed and supported locally by the staff at your placement. You'll also get lots of additional support and opportunities from the wider organisation.

### What about training?

You will be given lots of initial training and skills development in your first few weeks. Alongside that, there will be periods of residential training and support as an integral part of your year.

### How do I apply?

Interested in applying? Excellent! You can download all you need from

**[www.pressureworks.org/gap](http://www.pressureworks.org/gap)** Alternatively, to receive an application form in the post please contact us:

*Write to* GapYear at Christian Aid  
2 Deans Court Lane  
Wimborne  
Dorset  
BH21 1EE

*Email* [phaynes@christian-aid.org](mailto:phaynes@christian-aid.org)

*Telephone* (0)1202 840764

Just fill the form in and return it with a registration fee of £10 (payable to Christian Aid) to: Gap Year at Christian Aid, 2 Deans Court Lane, Wimborne. Dorset. BH21 1EE. Please also e-mail an electronic copy of your application form to [gap@christian-aid.org](mailto:gap@christian-aid.org)

You'll need to give reference forms to your two referees before sending your application. They should be people who know you well but who aren't members of your family. Ideally, one of the referees should be someone from a church setting: your vicar, minister, priest, elder, deacon, etc.

Once your form has been received and processed, and your referees have provided references, you may be invited to an info and interview day. This is an opportunity for us to get to know you, to help us decide whether you're suitable for the programme, and for you to grill us with all your questions.

Your application will then be carefully considered, and if you are accepted onto the programme a suitable placement will be sought. We will do all we can to place you somewhere that will be both challenging and fulfilling.

Once a possible placement has been found, we will contact you to set up a visit. You will then get to see the office, find out about the area and meet the people you'd be working with. If either party is not happy, further placement options will be explored for you. If everyone's happy, the placement will be confirmed and your great work together will begin!

**'I've really enjoyed my GAP year – I've gained so much confidence and understanding of development issues, youth work and communicating with people. I think I've also given a lot in my time, energy and thoughts, but it's been more than worth it.'**

Quote from Hilary, a volunteer in 2003/4



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**Cardiff:** PO Box 6055, CF15 5AA **Edinburgh:** PO Box 11, EH1 1EL  
**Dublin:** 17 Clanwilliam Terrace, Dublin 2  
**Website:** [www.christianaid.org.uk](http://www.christianaid.org.uk) [www.christian-aid.ie](http://www.christian-aid.ie)