

# Preparing the Journey

## Equipping International Students for Their Journey Post Chi Alpha

A Re-Entry Resource

### WHAT

We want to see every Chi Alpha international student equipped and prepared to re-enter their home country, or wherever God sends them during their time post Chi Alpha as spirit filled disciple makers, by connecting them to local believer groups in those nations.

### WHY

International students are both the harvest fields and the laborers for the harvest. Re-Entry will result in the **multiplication of disciple makers** all across the world.

**“He told them, ‘The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.’”**

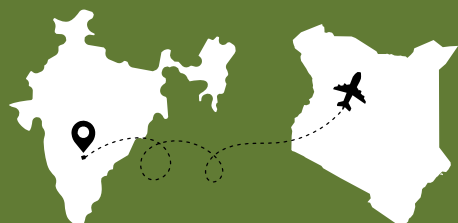
**Luke 10:2**

#### International Students:

1. Have freedom to consider the Gospel here in the U.S. Many are from "unreached people groups" (groups who have no Gospel presence).
2. Have language, religious and cultural understanding. They have the ability to **quickly contextualize** the Gospel, while it can take missionaries **YEARS** to learn these things.
3. Are potential world leaders who will have **major influence** in their nations.
  - a. *It is estimated that by the year 2025, 50% of all world leaders will have been international students.*

"International Students who have chosen to follow Jesus while studying abroad fall away from the church and that commitment within two years of returning if they are not equipped or connected to local believers."

- Friends International Student Ministries



### TESTIMONY

“Many years ago, I became a follower of Jesus Christ, because of the impact of my older sister, Claire. **She was a returnee from India.** Claire studied in India as an international student, gave her heart to Jesus, got filled with the Holy Spirit, came back to Kenya and told me about Jesus. Returnees like Claire, make an impact for the Kingdom. She not only made a huge impact in my life, but she went on to make a huge impact in the church she helped plant which has planted multiple churches. In government, she has impacted leaders of Kenya, and today there are stories of many people’s lives transformed because of one returnee.”

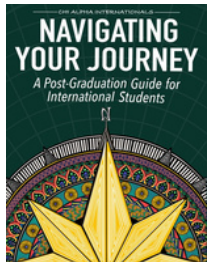
- Sevo Lwali, XAi Director

# HOW



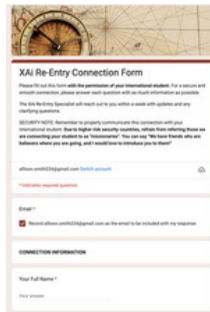
## EQUIP

- 1. Preparing the Journey:** a guide for disciplers preparing international students for their time post Chi Alpha
  - 2. Navigating Your Journey:** a post graduation guide for international students
- (Believer & Seeker versions available)



## CONNECT

- 1. Post Chi Alpha Connection Form:** filled out by discipler and sent to XAI Re-Entry Specialist to launch the connection process.



## SEND

- 1. Post Chi Alpha Roadmap:** timeline of when to use Re-Entry resources, when to submit the connection form and the follow-up process.



For access to the above resources and information visit the XAI Re-Entry Hub



For more testimonies and impact watch the XAI Re-Entry Vision Video here!





“International students need **open communication** and **discipleship about post-graduation**. I needed someone who would help me in my transition from who I used to be and where I was to who I am and where I am at now.”

- Saudi International Student

While international students are still in their Chi Alpha community, preparation is critical before they graduate. Many of them will move on to a place where they have never lived as a Christian and where they need a solid Christian community. You have an opportunity to help them process the future in a safe and Holy Spirit-filled environment. **This doesn't mean you need to have all the answers, but you can help by processing specific topics with your international student. Your students will be your best teachers!**

## PREPARATION CHECKLIST

Below is a checklist of practical steps that will help you prepare your international student

- 1. Talk with your student about why it is important to prepare for their time post Chi Alpha.**
  - a. Examples: they will face challenges, based on their experiences they are a new person, etc.
- 2. Go through Navigating Your Journey with your believing or seeking international student.**
  - a. Ask questions, pray, and seek Jesus together as you process the various topics.
  - b. Process the topics through the lens of where they are now and where God is sending them.
- 3. Work through Ch.8 of Navigating Your Journey with your international student to develop their Plan of Action.**
  - a. Contextualize what your international student has learned in XA to the environment they will be entering. Remember: your international student is your best teacher!
  - b. Have your student take the time to write their testimony and discuss what sharing their story will be like in their new context. There is power in their testimony!
- 4. Encourage Integration of Faith & Culture**
  - a. Encourage your international student to pray and have their personal devotional time in their native language.
  - b. Continue to help your student develop a strong overview knowledge of the Bible.
  - c. Provide a Bible and other resources in their native language.
  - d. Process what will happen if they take a Bible home in their new context. Will they need a digital Bible? For some international students, this may be an issue depending on the context they are entering.
- 5. Navigate “Counting the Cost”**
  - a. As you read through Navigating Your Journey, process with your student what it will mean to “count the cost” in their new context.
  - b. Research online or ask missionaries about what it is like to be a Christian where your student is going.





## CHALLENGES

Below are some perspectives of international students entering a new context and potential challenges they may encounter. Look them over to get an understanding of the lens your international student is looking through.

- **INTERNAL**
  - Became more westernized (individualistic mentality, accustomed to higher standards of living)
  - Identity confusion: how do they fit back into their culture?
  - Feelings of loneliness
  - Mindset changes (global mindset, Christian mindset, what was important then might not be important now)
- **CULTURAL**
  - Basic culture shock changes (dress, concept of time, food, environment, etc.)
  - Actions conflicting with home country (social interaction, language, verbal and non-verbal codes)
  - Role and status changes based on culture
  - Going from special minority to commonplace majority
- **SPIRITUAL**
  - Will they be accepted by their parents immediately? Over time? Will they be rejected and alienated from their family?
  - Will it cost them their life?
  - Absence of Christian fellowship they are used to
  - Not welcomed into churches or lack of churches around them
  - Cultural religion vs. personal religion
  - Experience high levels of spiritual warfare
- **RELATIONAL**
  - How conflict is handled and resolved
  - Pressure of family's expectations (financial support, honor, following previous religion, etc.)
  - New and different perspectives/values between peers
  - How they are now perceived by their community
  - External pressure to conform back to who they were
  - Pressure to marry someone from previous religion

Understanding what type of culture your international student is from can help shape your conversations. Below is a quick reference to "The 3D Gospel." It reviews 3 different cultures: Honor-Shame, Power-Fear, Innocence-Guilt.

<https://www.globalfrontiermissions.org/missions-101/3d-gospel-guilt-innocence-honor-shame-and-fear-power-worldviews>







## CONTEXTUALIZATION

Among the challenges an international student goes through as they leave Chi Alpha, it is vital to understand the context from which they come and where they are going. Below are some examples to help you process. Your international student will be a great source of information about their context, but for some international students, these ideas are new. Look at news articles, the latest happenings in their home country or the place they are going to, or stories of missionaries from those areas.

### Family

How a family operates typically reflects the culture they are a part of. For example, in many cultures, family is communal. International students are expected to provide for their families post-graduation, and there is a lot of respect for elders. Their independence here in the U.S. may not continue in their new context. How do they honor their parents even if their parents are telling them not to follow Christ?

### Work

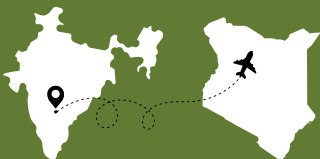
International students were sent to the U.S. to get an education. When they return, they are often expected to find a quality job and provide for their family. This can come with enormous pressure and long hours at work, causing them to be unable to attend a small group or church. Process with your student what their new workplace will be like and how to navigate it in obedience to Jesus.

### Counting the Cost

International students may be moving to places where religious practices that do not align with Christianity are cultural norms. Other students will return to countries where conversion to Christianity can have serious consequences. What will happen if they tell their family about Christ? For example, when a Muslim converts, it puts their family's reputation at risk. They have committed the ultimate sin by renouncing Islam. Their consequences can range from having tension at home to losing their life. A decision for Christ does not come quickly or carelessly. This should not make you fearful, but it requires awareness. Teach them to rely on the Holy Spirit's wisdom. How will they navigate the spiritual warfare they will encounter?

It is essential to discuss with your international student what it means to "count the cost" in their new context. What does Jesus mean when He tells us to count the cost? Many times, we categorize students who are kicked out of their families or face death as those who are counting the cost. This is very true. However, those students who need to live with their families who are not Christian are counting the cost as well.

The Bible is an excellent source of examples of people who learned how to Count the Cost. When your student is connected, the local believer group will have wisdom about the context to help prepare your student.



### TESTIMONY

A former international student from India shared his experience returning home to his Hindu family after meeting Jesus in the U.S. After they rejected his testimony, He prayed to God and said, "God, I would go to hell for rejecting you, but this is so hard I would rather go to hell." Through the power of the Holy Spirit, He continues to follow Jesus and be a part of his family.

## CONNECTION STAGE

We want to connect your international student to people who will continue their discipleship journey! The XAi Re-Entry Specialist can help you connect your international student to local believers wherever God sends them post-graduation. The first step is effectively communicating where your international student is on their journey with Jesus. This helps the people receiving your student to continue the discipleship process appropriately. On the next page, you will find the “International Student Profile,” which will help guide you as you provide information on the connection form.

[ACCESS THE CONNECTION FORM HERE](#)



## SECURITY TIPS

Many students will need connections in nations where missionaries and local believers' situations' can be jeopardized if they unwisely communicate who they are. Therefore, how they communicate to a disciple-maker will differ from how they communicate to a seeker. These connection partners are excited to continue the discipleship relationship with your students. However, all of us must do our part to walk in wisdom to help them continue the work God has called them to do.

### **Below are some security tips to keep in mind:**

- Refrain from calling workers in sensitive countries “missionaries.” You can say, “We have friends who are believers who live where you are going, and I would love to introduce you to them!”
- Encourage your student to be aware of what they communicate about Christianity over the phone or the computer. They can use a VPN to help with their security.
- Research applications that have high security. These are always being updated and changing.
- Research the country your student is going to.
- Open Doors International releases a yearly “World Watch List,” listing countries with high levels of persecution for Christians. You can access it here to learn more about potential places your student is going: <https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/persecution/countries/>



## INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROFILE

Disclosure of who the local believer group is and why they are in your international student's country will be up to the local believer group. Based on the information below, they will make their decisions. Use the questions, categories, and Engel scale below to guide you in deciphering where your international student is on their journey with Jesus.

1. What is your international student's home country/belief background?
2. What is your international student's post graduation plan?
3. Has your international student accepted Christ?
4. Has your international student been water baptized?
5. Has your international student been baptized in the Holy Spirit?
6. Has your international student started actively making disciples?
7. Has your student completed any leadership training? (Example: LTC, XAi LIT)

### Discipleship Journey Categories

- **Disciple Maker (Engel Scale +5)**
  - Has accepted Christ as their Savior
  - Understands the Great Commission and actively makes disciples
  - Water Baptized
  - Baptized in the Holy Spirit
  - Can sense God's calling to full time ministry or the marketplace
  - Has a strong overview of the Bible and understands how to share the Gospel in their context
  - Understands what it means to count the cost for Christ in their context
- **Disciple (E.S. 0 - +4)**
  - Has accepted Christ as their Savior
  - Needs more discipleship on their journey to make disciples
  - Has been water baptized or is seeking water baptism
  - Is seeking baptism in the Holy Spirit
  - Is committed to growing in Christ and fellowship with other believers
- **Seeker (E.S. -7 - -1)**
  - Warm to Christ but has not made a commitment to follow Jesus
  - Has had but will need more conversations about Jesus
  - Is actively attending XA events on your campus

### Engel Scale

- +5: Effective in sharing their faith and life; they are continuously making disciples
- +4: Continuing their growth in character, lifestyle, service and learning how to make disciples
- +3: Functioning member of the Local Church/Local Believer Community
- +2: Learning the basics of the Christian life
- +1: Evaluating of the decision
- 0: Repentance and faith
- -1: Challenge to respond personally
- -2: Grasp of implications of the Gospel
- -3: Aware of personal need
- -4: Experience of Christian love
- -5: Positive attitudes to the Gospel
- -6: Awareness of the Gospel
- -7: Interest in Christianity
- -8: Vague awareness of Christianity
- -9: Experience of emptiness
- -10: No Framework for the Christian God





# XAI POST CHI ALPHA ROADMAP

## If student is leaving in 2-6 months:



- Meet regularly with your international student to go through **Navigating Your Journey\***. The more you can process their time post XA, the better! Weave it into their discipleship - disciple with the SEND in mind!
  - **\*The book is written to go through weekly. However, take as much time as needed per chapter and discussion.**
- With the permission from your international student, submit the **Post XA Connection Form\*** to the Re-Entry Specialist to launch connection process.
  - **\*Please submit form at least 5 weeks to departure.**

## If student is leaving in 1 month or less:

- Meet with International Student to go through key topics of **Navigating Your Journey.\***
  - For believers, focus on Ch. 2 Processing Transition and Ch.4 Walking in the Power of the Holy Spirit.
  - For seekers, focus on Ch.2 Processing Transition and Ch. 4 Facing Challenges.
  - For both seekers and believers, go through the "Creating a Plan of Action" chapter.
- With the permission from your international student, submit the **Post XA Connection Form\*** to the Re-Entry Specialist to launch connection process.

## CONNECTION PROCESS

Discipler Submits Connection form to XAI Re-Entry Specialist to launch connection process

### 2 - 3 WEEKS

The Re-Entry Specialist establishes connection for your international student.

### 4 - 5 WEEKS

- Meet up plans will be made between your international student and the person they are being connected with.



### 1 WEEK

- You will receive updates/follow-up questions from the Re-Entry Specialist

### 3 - 4 WEEKS

- You will receive the connection information from the Re-Entry Specialist.
- The Re-Entry Specialist will send a connection message to you, your international student and the person we are connecting them with.

- It is **VITAL** for you to follow up weekly or bi-weekly with your international student as they navigate their new chapter. You are someone they trust, which will also help build trust between them and the person they are connected with.

A simple WhatsApp Message goes a long way!

- Gauge how your student is doing. Encourage your international student to spend time with Jesus and meet up with the person we connected them with. You can help maintain your student's positive attitude toward their new context, home, etc. Please let the Re-Entry Specialist know if there are any issues or we need to connect them with someone else!