



# How To Build Partnerships With Churches

## Step One

As you are looking for church partners, start broad. You should meet with any church that will meet with you.



## Step Two

Determine what level of partnership they are interested in:



## Tree Level:

Churches who want to partner in leading the ministry.

**A few questions to consider if you would want to partner with this church in leading the ministry:**

- Do InterVarsity and the church have enough shared values to be able to move forward in partnership?
- Is this a church you would feel good about inviting students to?
- Does the church and the pastor value kingdom partnerships, or are they more interested in doing their own thing?
- Is there a value for InterVarsity and what it has to offer?
- Is there a willingness to dialogue about how the ministry can be a win-win in furthering the vision of the church along with furthering the vision of InterVarsity?



## Sprout and Sapling Level:

Churches wanting to serve the ministry through behind the scenes service, prayer, and financial support.

**A few questions to consider if you would want this church to serve in the ministry:**

- Can they work respectfully with you and any students they might meet?
- Do they have the capacity to complete the task they commit to serving in?
- Do they understand that your calling is towards campus ministry and not to their church's youth group?



**Key questions to determine if there are enough shared values:**

- Is this church sound biblically and not overly legalistic or concerned about doing things in "one particular way"?
- Does this church seek to be missional on campus and disciple students?
- Is this church open to empowering students in the ministry?
- Do the leaders from this church have spiritual integrity?
- Can this church respect a woman staff worker leading the ministry and women students leading Bible study?
- Will views of this church or attitudes of these pastors be harmful to students of color?
- Does this church seek to help Catholics embrace their faith rather than seeking to convert them?

## Testing out church partnership

If you are unable to answer the questions relating to tree-level partnership, you can move into a season of building trust with the church and testing out the partnership.

### Ways to test out partnership with churches who initiate with InterVarsity:

#### Semester Trial Partnership

Invite them to try out partnership on campus for a semester.

#### Clear Expectations

Have clear expectations about the role of InterVarsity and the role of the church.

#### Assess

Have agreed upon times to debrief how the partnership is going with a final assessment at the end of the semester.

### Building Trust with churches already ministering on campus:



#### Pace

- Move at the speed of trust. This often goes slower because pastors are busy with many things.



#### Serve them

- What are their felt needs as a church? How can you serve them in a way that is meaningful to them?



#### Clear & frequent communication

- Err on the side of overcommunication to avoid misunderstandings.
- Put decisions in writing for the sake of clarity for everyone.



#### InterVarsity resources

- Connect churches and students in the Bible study to helpful InterVarsity resources.
- Pay for resources or scholarships to camp for college students from their church.



#### Get to know the vision of their church

- How does ministry on campus connect to the vision of their church?
- Demonstrate that you are not just about InterVarsity's vision but the vision of the church.



#### Show up

- Visit their church and regularly attend their campus Bible study if they have one.