

# Reaching Out to New Students

## Why NSO?

### Breaking Down NSO

New Student Outreach (NSO) is a special, limited season about belonging and hospitality.

- **Special** – Students are much more open to saying yes to new things during the first month of the school year.
- **Hospitality** – Students are trying to find a community where they can feel welcomed and seen and determine if following Jesus is going to be a priority after high school.
- **Belonging** – God is at work in skeptics, seekers, and Christians. Many of them want your welcoming community and an opportunity to explore Jesus with you and make InterVarsity home.
- **Limited** – After about a month, life on campus solidifies as “normal” and people get into the grind. Joining new communities then becomes more complicated.

### Jesus' Witness During NSO

In Acts 1:8 Jesus commissions his disciples to be his witnesses throughout the world. During NSO we also have an opportunity to serve as Jesus' witnesses to our campuses, equipped with the Holy Spirit.

## 4 Steps of NSO

### Plan

The three main elements of a successful NSO plan:

- **Prayer** – The best ministry plans start with prayer. Some ideas include setting aside time every Monday to pray for NSO leading up to move-in day, establishing prayer partners, or prayer walks.
- **Retreat** – A back-to-school retreat allows returning InterVarsity students to reconnect, refocus on their campus mission, and reignite their passion for building witnessing communities.
- **Event Planning** – It's important to have events that allow you to meet people and build relationships. Plan events for both Christians and non-Christians and prioritize building relationships.

### Connect

The three components of connection:

- **Invite** – You'll be extending numerous invitations, so it's crucial to develop invitation skills. Refer to our Inviting Well course to learn more.
- **Host** – Set up information tables so that students can approach you and you can invite them to explore Jesus with you.
- **Share Jesus** – When you get a chance to share the Gospel, campus tools like Proxes can help.

### Follow Up

**Follow up is the most important aspect of NSO and requires the most dedication.** It is vital for maintaining and nurturing relationships while offering additional invitations for further faith development. Good follow up is persistent, involves relationships, and assumes God is already at work.

## Debrief

Debrief allows you to interpret the season from God's perspective and aim the momentum going forward. It's also an excellent way to help others interpret and discern some of the ways that God is shaping them as they take missional risks.

## Putting It All Together

### NSO and the Bigger Picture

By intentionally anticipating the seasons before and after NSO, you can better understand the flow of the ministry calendar, enabling you to make more effective plans and participate in God's momentum.



- **Summer Outreach** – Connecting with students during the summer can establish initial relationships and lead to more fruitful NSO experiences.
- **New Student Outreach** – When students arrive, we can help them navigate this significant transition and invite them to follow Jesus with us in community.
- **Fall Conference** – Fall Conference often becomes the turning point for new students to decide that InterVarsity will be their home community. It's a critical part of NSO because our goal extends beyond meeting new students; we aim to form deep connections with them.

## Your NSO Next Steps

1. **Spiritual Preparation:** Begin by focusing on spiritual preparation. Collaborate with your community to schedule prayer sessions for NSO and organize a leader's retreat.
2. **Plan for Summer Outreach:** If your community has a strong history of successful NSO events, consider investing in summer outreach.
3. **Plan Your NSO Calendar:** Map out the key events and activities for your NSO, ensuring you allocate time for each step.
4. **Develop a Follow Up Plan:** Create a strategy for following up with new students after initial interactions during NSO.
5. **Plan Community Events:** Organize events that foster a sense of belonging and encourage new students to engage with your community.
6. **Schedule Invitations to Faith:** Set specific times to invite new students to say yes to following Jesus (and specific times to train your leaders on how to make invitations to faith).
7. **Plan Fall Conference:** Develop a strategy for incorporating a Fall Conference, where new students can solidify their commitment to your community.
8. **Set Ministry Growth Goals:** Reflect on your objectives for NSO and your overall ministry growth in the coming year.

## Related Resources

- [NSO Prayer Meeting Guide](#)
- [Spiritual Practices Handout](#)
- [NSO Back-To-School Retreat Template](#)
- [How to Host an Interest Table](#)
- [10 Ways to Make Your Ministry Fun](#)
- [Refresh Proxe](#)
- [Best Practices for Follow Up](#)
- [Leading Life-Changing Debriefs of Your New Student Outreach](#)
- [Following Jesus using the Discipleship Cycle](#)
- [New Student Outreach Plan Calibrator](#)

## Recommended Courses

- [Running a Proxe Station](#)
- [Inviting Well](#)
- [Following Up](#)

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