

FIVE STEP GUIDE TO FÁILTE ISTEACH

fáilte isteach
Welcoming Migrants through Conversational
English Classes



change **X**

WELCOME

“Welcome to the ChangeX Fáilte Isteach guide! We’re delighted you’re thinking of welcoming migrants to your community through conversational English classes.

Here you’ll find all the information and practical tips you need. There is someone to help you at each stage of the journey so don’t be afraid to get in touch!”

Mary Nally, Founder of Fáilte Isteach



Introduction to the Idea

What is Fáilte Isteach?

Fáilte Isteach is an initiative of Third Age, an organisation that provides opportunities for older people to contribute to their communities and engage actively in society. Fáilte Isteach involves volunteers welcoming migrants to the community through conversational English classes.

Tutors and students usually meet once a week and it can happen in a very informal setting where people just have a chat in English. Fáilte Isteach also provides special learning materials that can be used during the classes and specially designed training for new tutors.

Why is it important?

The programme is underpinned with a philosophy of social inclusion and strives to support older people and new migrants to live more meaningful and fulfilled lives within their communities.

The background

Fáilte Isteach started in 2006 as often new migrants in a community experience difficulties in their social and working lives due to limited or non-existent English language skills. Everyday activities, for example, visiting the GP, assisting children with homework, shopping, accessing rights and entitlements, understanding correspondence from schools, employers and other institutions are all extremely difficult if comprehension or expression is limited. Research often indicates that local, accessible classes for new migrants are limited, and also that communities benefit greatly from the greater participation and engagement of migrants. Fáilte Isteach addresses this need by utilising the skills of the local older population to reach out and welcome migrants through English language classes.

STARTING A FÁILTE ISTEACH

EVERYTHING YOU NEED

TIME



As a leader you'll need approximately 4 hours a week to get the classes up and running.

PEOPLE



You'll need a team of 10 volunteers

FUNDING



No funding to start but potentially some as you grow

Who typically starts a Fáilte Isteach?

Someone who:

- is passionate about creating a welcoming and inclusive community culture
- is resourceful and committed
- is organised and enjoys working in a team of volunteers

5 Step Summary

- 1 Talk to relevant local people
- 2 Find a Suitable Venue
- 3 Find 10 Volunteers & Conduct Training
- 4 Advertise the Classes
- 5 Teach and Have Fun!

Support and Additional Resources

Support from ChangeX: Call us on (086) 468 5361. Email: hello@changex.org

STEP 1: COMPLETE YOUR 30 DAY CHALLENGE



The 30 Day Jumpstart Challenge has been designed to get your project off to the strongest possible start by building momentum in the first month.

- Understand the challenge**

Watch the short welcome video on your ChangeX page and read this page.

- Learn more about the idea you're starting**

Your '5 Step Guide' includes all you need to know about the specifics of starting your project.

- Find 3-5 interested people**

You already have your own project page on changex.org. Use it to share the project with others and recruit your first supporters.

- Set up a casual kick-off meeting**

Host a meeting at your home, in a pub or in a café and come up with an action plan along with your team. You can use your ChangeX page to set up an event and invite people.

- Give us a heads up that you are up and running**

At your event, take a team picture and agree the first step you will take as a group to get started.

STEP 2: ASSESS THE NEED IN THE COMMUNITY AND FIND A SUITABLE VENUE

Talk to local people

Now that you have your small team together, the first thing you'll need to think about is are there enough local migrants to warrant a Fáilte Isteach branch in your community?

Assess the local need by talking to the people in your community who will know. Talk to local migrants and people or organisations who are working with them to understand if English language classes would be beneficial. You don't need to show that there is any particular number of people interested but once you know there are a small number of people who would benefit then you'll know there is enough demand to get started.

Once you have established that there is a need locally, you'll need to figure out who the people are that can support the project locally in your community?

This may include local schools, VEC, Local Area Partnership, Library, Town Council, Migrant Organisations, Solas, Local Community Groups, Family Resource Centres or the Local Parish Centre. Arrange to meet with as many of these groups as you can and tell them why you think Fáilte Isteach classes would benefit your community. When speaking to them, remember the list of resources you need and ask them if there's anything they could help with e.g. recruiting volunteers or finding a venue.

Find a venue

The big step is finding a suitable venue. This is one which is in a central location, is easily accessible to those without a car, is able to accommodate up to 60 people and provides a safe environment for all. Ideally, this venue would be accessible free of charge e.g. a local community centre or resource centre.

Ensuring that the venue has internet connection will be important for some of the training sessions. The experience of Fáilte Isteach right across Ireland is that there is always a location available free of charge for a community purpose such as this.

Remember that when you're asking for access to a venue it's for the benefit of the whole community and not just for you.

VISIT



At this stage you might want to visit another Fáilte Isteach branch to see exactly how it works - you can find your nearest branch here (<https://www.changex.org/ie/failteisteach/locations>) and arrange a visit.

STEP 3: FIND 10 VOLUNTEERS & CONDUCT TRAINING

Volunteers

Once you've confirmed demand and found a suitable venue the next step will be recruiting your volunteers to actually deliver the classes. Volunteers do not require prior teaching experience or a teaching qualification as all training is provided. These volunteers may be people you know in the community or you could look for volunteers at your local volunteer centre, in a local active ageing group or some of the people you spoke to earlier in the process in the local community may be able to help you out in finding the right people.

All volunteers are asked to sign up to and commit to the volunteer policy and a code of conduct outlining the values and ethos of the initiative. You'll be sent a copy of each of these documents once you sign up to get started.

Training

Fáilte Isteach provides 2 training sessions for all branches before they commence. Experienced Fáilte Isteach facilitators will attend the first three sessions to provide support, guidance and debriefing to the volunteers.

The first training is an Induction Workshop and the second is a Tutor Training Workshop which will both be provided by Fáilte Isteach HQ either via webinar or in person. Training manuals will be delivered to you by post in advance of this session.

Materials

Fáilte Isteach also provides 3 booklets (beginner, intermediate and advanced) which are used by both the tutors and students in the classes. These can be ordered from Fáilte Isteach in advance of commencing classes. These are provided free of charge initially by Fáilte Isteach and any subsequent orders are charged at cost price (approximately 2 euro per booklet). We recommend that these booklets are given free of charge to the tutors, but sold to the students at a cost of 5 euro.



STEP 4: ADVERTISE THE CLASSES

The next step is to set a date for your first class and start spreading the word!

Get the word out about classes by advertising in local businesses, community centres, local newsletters or newspapers. You'll find that once the classes start word of mouth may be your strongest way of advertising but it's always advisable to do some local advertising to get started.

Some of the groups and people you spoke to earlier in the process might also be able to help you to get the word out but a simple notice in any local newsletters or newspapers will also help.



STEP 5: TEACH AND HAVE FUN!

At this stage you'll be all set to start teaching. Remember that experienced Fáilte Isteach facilitators will attend your first 3 sessions to make sure you feel fully supported and comfortable.

Running Fáilte Isteach classes is often just as enjoyable and rewarding for the teachers as it is for the learners. One of the Fáilte Isteach Volunteers Marcella Sheridan shared her experience.

MARCELLA'S VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE



“At this stage in my life, Fáilte Isteach has given me an outlet to put my skills and experience to good use. It means a lot, and has given me a lot. As well as knowing I am helping others, I am also benefiting greatly – through the friendships I have made, the different cultures and customs I have learned about, and through the opportunity it gives me to continue to do something really worthwhile”.

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