

Role description for, and qualities sought in, Ecumenical Accompaniers



Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel

Quaker Peace & Social Witness (QPSW) works with, and on behalf of, the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain to translate faith into action. QPSW manages and runs the EAPPI programme for Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, and other Christian agencies.

Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI)

Role Title:	Ecumenical Accompanier (EA)
Location:	West Bank (including East Jerusalem)
Reporting to:	London: the Programme Manager for the Middle East and the EAPPI Programme Coordinator, QPSW. Jerusalem: the World Council of Churches (WCC) EAPPI Local Programme Coordinator
Remuneration:	Living allowance plus benefits (see below for more info)
Duration:	Before travel to the field: two weeks' residential assessment and training in the UK, and substantial time commitment for reading and preparation for advocacy In the field: three months After return: two-to-three weeks' rest, five residential days for advocacy preparation with an element of debriefing and evaluation, plus availability for a minimum of ten public speaking engagements

Background to the programme

The Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI) provides protection by presence to vulnerable Palestinian communities, monitors human rights abuses, supports Israeli and Palestinian peace activists, and advocates for an end to the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The programme is an initiative of the World Council of Churches (WCC) and was established in 2002 in response to a call from the Heads of Churches in Jerusalem.

The EAPPI in the UK and Ireland is a joint project of members of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) and other Christian agencies, and is managed by Quaker Peace & Social Witness (QPSW) on behalf of an ecumenical group. QPSW recruits, supports and trains the British and Irish EAs and the EAPPI Local Programme Coordinator in Jerusalem acts as the EAs' line manager in the field.

Quaker Peace & Social Witness works with, and on behalf of, members of the Religious Society of Friends in Britain (Quakers) to translate faith into action. Quakers are committed by faith to make an active witness for peace and justice. The Quaker testimonies to equality, justice, peace, simplicity and truth are a challenge to alleviate suffering and seek positive social change.

We are recruiting for **20 EAs from the UK and Ireland** to serve in Israel and occupied Palestine (I&OP) for **three months each**, for the dates shown on the 'Essential information' document.

EAs serve in small international teams in one location (or 'placement') living in a shared apartment with their colleagues. More than 25 countries send EAs to seven placements across the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) where they live and work alongside local people who are nonviolently resisting the occupation.

EAPPI is not involved in proselytising or missionary activity.

Ecumenical Accompanier role

EAs from around the world, sent by churches, other faith groups, or peace organisations will:

- observe and report violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.
- act as a deterrent to violence and to offer protection through nonviolent presence.
- support acts of nonviolent resistance alongside Palestinians and Israelis.
- engage in public policy advocacy and carry out speaking engagements in the UK and Ireland upon return from the field.
- stand in solidarity with churches and all those struggling nonviolently to end the occupation and the conflict.
- witness and share in daily life under occupation.
- build relationships with Palestinians and Israelis, which will further the programme's work, and learn about a variety of Israeli and Palestinian viewpoints.
- participate fully in the work of their team, including identifying individual roles and tasks in support of the EAPPI mission, aims and objectives.
- report frequently and extensively about their activities, and on incidents of violence and human rights abuses.
- establish and maintain contact with the media at home and in the field.
- write articles about their experiences for wider distribution by QPSW and WCC, and report to QPSW and WCC as required.
- work alongside vulnerable adults and children and will therefore be required to undergo a criminal records check.

Background to the role

The work of EAs in the field is varied but can be tiring and stressful. Please note the following, which will help you decide if this work is for you or not.

- Close family and friends can worry about EAs in the field. Make sure you have their full support.
- EAs live in a conflict zone but have to maintain principled impartiality. This means you must be committed to principles of human rights above any desire to support one side over the other.
- Living conditions in occupied Palestine can be simple and special diets may be difficult to maintain.
- EAs are placed in small international teams and have to live and work together under stressful conditions for three months. You will have to share a bedroom with another person and private space is difficult to find.

- EAs who thrive in the field are typically those who are flexible, self-aware, able to ask for help, able to take criticism and advice, and who have a 'can-do' approach.
- It is not permitted for EAs to drink alcohol while they are on duty in their placements. This means you will not be able to have an alcoholic drink for extended periods during your service in the field.
- The work is physically demanding. You may stand for long periods of time at checkpoints, walk long distances over rough terrain, get up before dawn for duties and be 'on duty' around-the-clock for extended periods.
- In a crisis situation you may have to leave an area very quickly; this means you need to be able to run at full pelt for several minutes over uneven ground.
- Very good hearing is vital for keeping safe. This includes being able to hear clearly in crowded and noisy group situations.
- The work can be emotionally draining and put you under considerable mental stress and you may not have access to your normal support.
- For your own safety it is important to fully disclose health issues. Failure to declare health issues that then prevent you completing your duties may result in you being sent home.
- Access to medical facilities is generally good but varies depending on your placement. Being frank about your health once you have been selected is vital for our colleagues in Jerusalem to place you appropriately.
- We are asked by the coordination in Jerusalem not to send EAs who are older than 70 years or younger than 25 years, but we negotiate to do so in exceptional circumstances.

These issues are raised here not only so that you can consider them for your own safety and security, but also so that you can consider the knock-on effect of these issues on your team mates and the security of the team as a whole, should you be recruited.

Personal responsibilities

Participants must:

- respect the ecumenical nature of the EAPPI as it reflects its Christian heritage, as well as the other faiths you'll work alongside in I&OP.
- respect local cultural norms and practices, and commit to refraining from engaging in behaviour that could be perceived as provocative or disrespectful.
- conform to EAPPI procedures and methods both in I&OP and in the UK and Ireland as defined in the contract.
- comply with the EAPPI Code of Conduct including an order to evacuate when necessary.
- maintain regular contact and communication with their EAPPI team and the World Council of Churches' EAPPI Local Programme Coordinator on personal location and activities.
- provide timely and detailed reports on their own and their team's activities, and on incidents they have observed.
- engage in mandatory programmed sessions for training, briefing and orientation purposes both in the UK and in I&OP.
- act from a focused, nonviolent, peace-seeking personal centre.
- follow the security advice provided by the WCC EAPPI Local Programme Coordinator and local contacts, and refrain from taking unnecessary risks, which would endanger their own or others' life and health.

- acknowledge the risks inherent in this situation of conflict and take ultimate responsibility for personal safety and security by signing the 'Statement of Indemnity'.

Experience/skills and qualities sought

Essential experience/skills

- Active involvement in church-related, ecumenical, faith-based or other civil society networks in the UK and/or Ireland.
- Experience of public advocacy work, whether public speaking, media work or campaigning/lobbying your political representative(s).
- Experience of working cooperatively as part of a team, being adaptable and self-motivated and working within specific guidelines.
- Competence in using mobile phones, digital cameras and laptops including competent use of Microsoft Word, Powerpoint, the internet, email, and a memory stick/flash drive or Dropbox or other file sharing app.
- Knowledge of and interest in the Middle East region and the conflict in I&OP.
- Excellent communication skills in English, both written and spoken, and an ability to report in writing in a clear, accurate and timely manner.

Essential qualities

- Respect towards and/or a strong identification with the ecumenical character of the programme and respect towards and willingness to participate in a variety of religious ceremonies.
- Maturity, psychological stability, flexibility and ability to cope with stressful/critical situations and changing circumstances.
- Willingness and ability to develop relationships with both Palestinians and Israelis and an understanding of why this is crucial to the work.
- Ability to engage constructively with people in authority and stay calm when provoked.
- Ability to cope with modest living conditions.
- Ability to share the principle of peace, nonviolence and reconciliation as a way of life.
- Experience in or willingness to work in a different cultural context and an ability to demonstrate sensitivity to the region's cultures.
- Awareness of dynamics of power and privilege and ability to manage this in diverse international teams hosted by local people.

Desirable experience/skills

- Research and reporting on human rights and/or development work.
- Writing for publication.
- Knowledge of Arabic and/or Hebrew.
- Nonviolent direct action and solidarity work.
- Travelling, working or living in a conflict zone.
- Competency in photography.
- Experience of using a video camera.

Selection will be based on the essential skills/experience sought. However, due to the ecumenical nature of this programme, the selection of EAs is affected by the need to have EAs from a wide range of denominations, geographical locations across the UK

and Ireland, age ranges, backgrounds and genders to ensure wide diversity across the group.

Conditions of service

Working hours: A nominal 35 hours per week. However, EAs need to be flexible so that they can respond to the needs of each placement and of the local community. EAs are entitled to the equivalent of one day off per week (often accumulated and used in a block), but evening and weekend work is often required. The EA will need to ensure that adequate time is taken for rest and relaxation throughout their period of service.

Living allowance: adequate financial allowance for daily living expenses, including food, short distance travel, and personal telephone calls etc. This is provided in cash on a monthly basis in the field.

Other expenses covered: outward and return travel from UK/Ireland to Tel Aviv, travel in I&oP, accommodation, small preparation/training allowance, communication expenses in I&oP and other expenses. A small allowance is also given during the period of advocacy preparation/debriefing.

Benefits: accident, travel & medical insurance; National Insurance contributions (or equivalent for Irish EAs).

Equipment: All EAs receive a mobile phone for use in I&oP. All EAs will also use laptops and digital cameras and if necessary these can be loaned to them by QPSW.

*Candidates who are successful at interview will be expected to complete a medical questionnaire, a security information sheet, a safeguarding/criminal records check and are required to satisfactorily complete a two- week residential training before travel to the field. **Formal appointment will only be made at the end of this two-week residential assessment and training.***

Time commitment prior to service in field: If you are selected you should be prepared to give more than just three months service in the field. Those appointed at interview will have to do a substantial amount of reading and preparation for advocacy before their two-week residential training period.

Advocacy responsibilities: After your return from the field, and following a two-to-three week rest period, there will be five residential days for advocacy preparation (with an element of debriefing/evaluation) in London. You must also be available for a minimum of ten public speaking engagements, but these can take place around other commitments.

QPSW is committed to equal opportunities