

Help make a lasting impact on a student's life

If you have a clean and furnished spare bedroom, you could positively impact a student's life at UWA by becoming a homestay host.

Not only will you be creating lifelong relationships, but you'll also be providing students with a welcoming and safe space that will give them the best opportunity to succeed while studying.

That's exactly how Laura Tafuro feels about her experiences with hosted accommodation. "I lived with a host family in Germany during an exchange program, and later, I moved to London to study English and stayed with another host family," she said.

"Both of these experiences were life changing. The families not only welcomed me into their homes, but they provided the comfort and support I needed to feel at home in an unfamiliar country."



[Laura works in UWA's Accommodation Concierge Service.]

Having recently joined UWA's Accommodation Concierge team, Laura has experienced both sides of homestay accommodation, having been a student and a host. She knows how overwhelming it can be to arrive in a new country and wanted to offer that same sense of security to others.

Part of Laura's work is to help promote and manage UWA's hosted accommodation option. Through our partnership with the [Australian Homestay Network](#) (AHN), UWA staff and community members can become hosts for short- or long-term stays and be fully reimbursed for the student's cost of living and facilities used.

AHN ensure you are matched with a student based on interests and lifestyle factors and provide background checks and insurance.

Karin, a first-year political science and international relations student currently lives with a host mother and four other international students (plus a dog, bird and chickens).

"I decided to do homestay because I wasn't able to obtain a spot in student accommodation due to the high demand. I was initially supposed to stay for a few months, but I liked it so much that I extended my stay for the semester," she said.

Karin says her favourite thing about living with a homestay host is the people.

"I've become very close to the people I live with, and I already feel like they are my second family. My host mom is a wonderful person; she is extremely kind, loving and intelligent. I love listening to her stories and her cooking is superb. I feel truly lucky to be able to live here."



[Karin with her housemates at the WAFL Grand Final.]



[Karin and her housemates on a road trip to the Pinnacles.]

For Laura, it's the connections made through hosted accommodation that she cherishes most.

"I still keep in touch with my host family from Germany, and I've even visited them years later. As a host myself, I've built bonds with the students who stayed with me, becoming someone they could rely on, talk to and trust."

“But above all, what I value most from this experience is the chance to help someone through a vulnerable time in their life. It's deeply rewarding knowing that you've made a difference, however small, in someone's journey,” she said.

If becoming a homestay host is something you're interested in, or you know someone who might be suitable, learn more and sign up at the [Australian Homestay Network](#) website.