

What are the steps to going?

Heading overseas on mission service doesn't happen overnight. In fact it can take some time to work through the details from first thoughts to getting on the plane.

Having thought through what you might be able to offer to mission service and some of the practical details that you might be affected by, you may now be in a position to put some thought into action. Whether you are looking at short or long term service, the following steps will be similar although long term service will have additional requirements.

1. Talk with a friend or family member about your call to serve God.
2. Share your thinking with a pastor, church leader and/or small group leader. Your church needs to be part of the journey with you from the beginning. They may also have someone from the mission team from the church talk with you too. Listen to the advice and direction they may give. Talk with them about how the church might journey with you and their support of you.
3. Right throughout your exploration, absorb any material you can about mission service, read biographies, talk with people on home assignments that you know, attend an information evening, a seminar/workshop.
4. Explore training for mission. Many agencies will have some type of requirement for training and this will be dependent on what the exact roles that you may end up in. However it never hurts to be looking at this in advance of application! Formal courses and/or study programmes will go a long way to your overall preparation for service.
5. If you have a leaning or clear calling to a geographical location, research all you can about the place, its customs and culture. A little knowledge goes a long way!
6. Selecting an agency may take time. Feel free to talk with mission agencies about your call to find the best fit for you – they will be happy to assist.
7. Once you have settled on an agency, complete enquiry or application forms. This paperwork process may differ slightly for every agency. These forms will help the agency to start to get to know you and begin exploring possibilities for roles and locations. For long term service, reference checks (church, profession and general), medical and psychological assessments are common parts of the application process and are included to ensure that you are physically, emotionally and professionally able to take up such a role
8. A selection interview will be conducted.
9. If accepted, there will be a period of orientation and these requirements will differ for each organisation.
10. Following acceptance, should funding need to be raised prior to departure, the agency will work with you to set a budget that you need and guide with undertaking this.
11. Once your funds are in place, orientation has been completed, all field and home requirements are fulfilled it's time to be on your way!

A word about support raising

Firstly it is important to note that support raising is more than just gathering money. You need a team of people to journey with you in your service. Your church can help with logistical details and pastoral

support, you will need finance and you will certainly need prayer and encouragement. Support encompasses all of these things and no one person can do it all on their own.

Simply the thought of fundraising for many people is daunting. While opportunities do exist for certain types of roles to have a form of remuneration, it is however for the large majority of people serving overseas their primary source of support. Agencies will have guidelines to help with this and will work you to make it happen.

Some thoughts around support raising:

- Identify a list of friends, family and others who you can start with. Perhaps a small group that you have been part of. Include your Christian and non-Christian friends – the latter group may very well take interest in what you are doing!
- Invite them to become part of your support *team*. Support-giving to people going out is a valid ministry and these people should be encouraged and developed.
- Give people options as to how they can support you – financially, prayerfully, something else.
- On the financial points, be clear around how much you need and why.
- If people give to you and through an agency, their donation may be eligible for tax rebates.
- Ensure you do follow up with a note of thanks whatever form of support people have chosen to give.
- Keep in touch with these people while you're away. Communication is a big must whether through regular newsletters, email, skype calls and such. People will be happy to remain on your support team if you take the time to connect with them.