

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Where do I begin?

The first step is for you to pray and ask God for direction and confirmation. Then each person desiring to travel submits the following:

1. \$120 non-refundable deposit (make all checks payable to sending church/organization).
2. Completed short-term application.
3. Copy of passport.
4. Documentation showing background check is being acquired.

All participants are required to have a valid passport. If you do not have a valid passport, please begin the passport application process **before** the short-term missions application process as it may take 3-4 months to receive a new passport.

Where do I get a passport?

There are several locations in Charlotte to get a passport:

- US Post Office, Carmel Station at 6300 Carmel Road
- Mint Hill at 8920 Lawyers Road
- US Post Office, S. Providence Station at 11035 Golf Links Drive
- Downtown office at 201 N McDowell Street

Passport applications can be downloaded from www.travel.state.gov. The passport form must be presented and signed in person at an authorized passport acceptance facility. You will need to bring your actual birth certificate (not a copy) and two passport photos.

Is there an age and/or physical requirement?

BGA Global Missions trips are planned for individuals age 16 and older. Each trip requires a different set of criteria. It is important that we place participants on trips where they will best fit the needs of that trip and our Global Partners. If you have health concerns or issues, please discuss those with BGA and leadership of the sending church/organization before starting the trip application process.

What is the cost of a trip and how do I pay for the trip?

Each trip cost will vary depending on destination and type of trip. All participants are required to raise 100% of the cost of the trip 30 days before your trip departs. If you have not raised all of your funds, you will need to leave a "good faith" check with BGA and leadership of the sending church/organization to be deposited if the necessary funds have not been raised. Deadlines are set in place because of financial commitments for airline tickets, lodging, and ground transportation. Trip must be paid in full 30 days after trip returns or good faith checks will be cashed.

Raising support offers a unique opportunity for friends and family to participate in the mission experience. Just as you are building relationships with people in another country, your supporters invest in that same Kingdom work by giving financially. Those that support your trip become a vital part of your team. You can pay for your own trip; however, we encourage everyone to send out letters and use the blog provided to raise the support. There is something incredible about completely trusting God to provide your monetary needs. If you still want to fund your own trip, we suggest sending out support letters to help others on the team raise funds.

How can family/friends donate to my specific trip?

Supporters can make checks payable to sending church/organization. Checks can be mailed directly to our office or they can be sent to you. Your supporters should write the name of your TRIP (not your name) on the memo line.

Sending Church/Organization

Attn: Global Missions
1234 New Road
Charlotte, NC ZIP

The best way to keep track of who is financially supporting you is to have them send in with their check a tear-off receipt similar to the one found in the sample donation letter. It is nice to include a self-addressed, stamped envelope with your letter; it makes donating to your trip even easier for your supporters. The tear-off portions are collected by the sending church/organization and are returned to the Trip Leader **after** the trip returns. These can be used when you write thank-you letters to those who supported your trip.

What level of financial assistance does BGA provide for short-term teams?

All trip participants are required to raise 100% of the trip cost.

What is the policy for fund-raising?

BGA encourages the team to organize fund-raising activities that can help offset the cost of the trip. Many teams find fund-raising efforts to be an effective team building activity as well. BGA and leadership of the sending church/organization can assist short-term teams with brainstorming ideas.

What does the support cover?

The support you raise covers your travel costs, food, lodging, exit cost, ministry expenses, and local ground transportation. Participants are responsible for the cost of passports, souvenirs, immunizations and food/drink while traveling to and from your trip destination. Some of the money you will raise is needed to cover the project costs of your specific trip. ***Please note: your support money does NOT cover medical expenses in the event you are injured or become sick while on your trip. It is imperative that you have your own personal health insurance and each team will purchase travel insurance.***

Any monies that are raised over the cost of your trip will go towards helping a teammate reach their goal, help cover the cost of supplies for the trip, or will be used in a manner decided upon by BGA and leadership of the sending church/organization and our Global partner. No money will be refunded; instead, it will be used strictly for the partnership for which it is raised.

What happens to the money donated by friends/family if my trip is cancelled?

Your donors will have the choice of receiving a refund, having their money transfer to another BGA and leadership of the sending church/organization Mission trip you are taking during the same fiscal year (October 1 - September 30), or donating it to the Global partnership associated with the trip you were fund-raising for.

There are individual financial responsibilities if you must cancel your trip. Once the plane tickets have been purchased, you are responsible for the full price of your airline ticket. Your non-refundable deposit will go towards the cost of your ticket and you will be required to reimburse By Grace Alone Ministries for the remaining balance. The deadline for refunds will be made clear and communicated through the short-term Trip Leader.

Is there a waiver form?

Each participant is required to sign a liability waiver releasing BGA, its leadership, and the partnerships from liability.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS *(continued)*

Will I need immunizations?

Every person is required to get the necessary immunizations/inoculations for your destination. Please visit the CDC web site (www.cdc.gov/travel) for the most recent list. Check with your Primary Care Physician and your personal health insurance company to determine cost and coverage. It can take up to 6 months (or longer) to complete the immunization/inoculation process so please begin as soon as possible. The cost of required immunizations/inoculations is not included in the cost of the trip. No one is permitted entry into most African countries without documentation proving Yellow Fever vaccination.

What will the accommodations be like?

Accommodations vary depending on the location. Some teams will stay in local homes, ministry centers, and possibly hotels while others may stay in tents. Flexibility is vital on a short-term mission trip.

What is the size of the typical short-term team?

The most effective teams range from 10-12 participants.

What additional requirements are there for each team member selected?

Each trip will have a minimum of 6 team meetings/trainings. Each team member is required to attend a minimum of 80% of the meetings. All teams will have trip specific meetings as well as a full day cross-cultural training facilitated by BGA and a debriefing after the trip returns.

What if the trip we selected is full?

If your desired trip is full, your application(s) goes onto a "waiting list". If a leader of another trip is still recruiting for his or her team, they may contact you about joining their trip.

May I travel at a different time/date than the team?

All BGA teams travel together; it is imperative for team unity and for liability reasons. All of the trip departure and arrival dates are posted; however, exact flight times are subject to change.

What if there is a medical emergency while in country?

Each team will purchase short-term travel insurance. In the event of a medical emergency, personal medical insurance is primary. The partnering organization will work to send the team member to the closest safe medical facility. If illness/emergency is severe enough for medical evacuation, BGA and leadership of the sending church/organization will coordinate with the travel insurance company and airline to get the trip participant and travel companion back to the states as quickly as possible.