



What steps should I take if I feel a call to work with France Mission?

1. If you live in the UK, contact Paul Cooke using the details at the end of this document. Paul will arrange a preliminary discussion with you – probably over the phone or via Skype.
2. If, after this discussion and continued prayer, both parties desire to take things further, we will send you a questionnaire produced by the Paris Office. You should fill this in and return to us so that we can forward it to our Paris headquarters, who will take up your references.
3. Assuming that your references prove satisfactory, we will invite you to meet the Mission's UK committee of Trustees for an informal interview. At this meeting you would be able to put questions to us.
4. If you live outside the UK, you should, instead, contact our Paris headquarters direct using the details at the end of this document.
5. We should next invite you to Paris to meet our parent committee. Where possible, we try to arrange this visit to take place either immediately before or immediately after the France Mission annual congress held near Paris each April/May, when, over a long weekend, you would be able to meet other France Mission missionaries and gain a better insight into the total structure of the Mission. These visits would be at your own expense.
6. Assuming at this point the favourable opinion of both the UK and French committees, we should start moves towards accepting you as a probationary candidate. During this period, we would expect that both our UK and French committees would keep in close touch with you and with your home church, to offer advice and to seek, together with you and them, the Lord's guidance about your future area of service.
7. From this time onwards, we would join with you in seeking to raise the necessary pledged support (see later section) by organising deputation tours, featuring you in our publications, and so on.
8. Once you have achieved the necessary level of pledged support, you would move to France and work under the supervision of a more experienced missionary for a probationary period of two years. During this time, you would attend regular training events. If your fluency in French needs improving, your probationary period would normally be spent in a location where you will readily be able to work on your language skills (we will offer advice about this).
9. After two years of successful probation you would normally become a full member of our team of missionaries.

What qualities are necessary in a missionary candidate?

1. A real call to this pioneer type of work. Single candidates of either sex, and married couples, are welcomed by France Mission.
2. Normal health.
3. A satisfactory level of general education.
4. A satisfactory level of fluency in French and Bible training. Since we are essentially a French organisation, you would be expected to have good conversational French before embarking on ministry proper. In terms of the Common European Framework of Reference (see http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework_en.pdf or http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common_European_Framework_of_Reference_for_Languages for a good summary), this would mean A2 as a minimum level (B2 would be preferable). Roughly speaking, B1 is equivalent to an A* in GCSE, while B2 would be equivalent to a good A-Level pass; a Bachelor's Degree would be equivalent to C1. A candidate who achieved the relevant level some time ago (more than 3 years) should take a refresher course based on the French DELF exam (see <http://www.ciep.fr/delfdalf/index.php>). The threshold level here would be DELF A2.
5. Candidates without the relevant level of French would be expected to spend at least one or two years focusing on full-time language acquisition. It is perfectly possible (and much cheaper) to acquire basic skills in French by following courses in the UK prior to departure. We would recommend this whenever possible to maximise the impact and effectiveness of any initial language courses taken in France.
6. Previous experience of cross-cultural mission and/or a willingness to engage with the challenges involved in this kind of ministry, e.g. by following a course such as "Explore" offered by All Nations Christian College (<http://www.allnations.ac.uk/index.php?pageid=138>).
7. A willingness to explore the challenges involved in raising personal financial support, e.g. by following a course such as "Funding the Family Business" offered in partnership with Stewardship (<http://fundingthefamilybusiness.org/training.php>).
8. Acceptable references from UK churches and employers.
9. Agreement with the Mission's basis of faith (see <http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/9-Statement%20of%20faith.html>). Please note that we do not feel that you would fit in with our existing work in France if you are not personally committed to practising baptism by immersion and a system of church government based on a team of elders.

How do I know whether I am the right sort of person to become a missionary?

There is no one "right" sort of person! But these guidelines may prove helpful to you:

A. SPIRITUAL LIFE

- Clear testimony of personal conversion
- Foundational Christian disciplines of prayer and Bible study practised regularly
- Clear conviction of personal missionary call

- Objective evidence to confirm this call
- Firm understanding of basic Christian doctrines

B. CHRISTIAN CHARACTER

- A life of mature Christian character and discipline
- Joy and humility while serving others
- A teachable spirit
- Positive relationships with co-workers and leaders
- Considered trustworthy in all relationships
- Reputation for honesty and integrity in all financial matters

C. MINISTRY SKILLS

- A recognised course of biblical studies, or its equivalent
- A proven record of effective ministry and service
- Trained and experienced in effective leadership activities
- Eagerness to serve others within his/her gift area
- Gift area includes pioneer/evangelist/teaching skills

D. CROSS-CULTURAL SUITABILITY

- Good communication skills in mother tongue
- Ability to learn foreign language
- Evidence of desire to communicate in French
- Experience of (perhaps brief) fruitful cross-cultural service
- Adaptability in lifestyle, cultural and eating preferences
- Interest in French culture, art and history
- Respect for indigenous missionary movements
- Awareness of implications for family life

E. RELATIONSHIPS

- Known for the harmony and integrity of his/her family relationships
- Role of servant leadership
- Committed to life and ministry of a local church
- Evidence of ability to work harmoniously with others in service and ministry
- Willingness to be accountable to leadership

Obviously, no-one has ALL these qualities! You may find it profitable to discuss this list with your local church leaders, and be guided by their objective view of you.

In addition, these practical skills can all be useful:

- Computing and IT skills
- A driving licence
- Musical ability
- Artistic ability
- Large-scale catering experience
- Financial and business skills

but, above all, the experience of many cross-cultural missionary organisations is that the most important qualities are connected with:

- Your personal spiritual life
- Your clear missionary call
- Your commitment to team-working
- Your cross-cultural flexibility

Finally, please remember that you are applying to join a FRENCH missionary movement. You will need to give this matter some thought, and perhaps discuss it with other foreign missionaries in France.

Relationships between the local church and France Mission

The **local church** is without question the place where a foundation is laid which will develop interest and responsibility towards mission. It is here that training in spirituality is given, spiritual gifts are recognised and put into practice, and a potential missionary candidate can prove him/herself by working as part of a local ministry team.

Local church leaders are best placed to discern a candidate's suitability for training and future service.

The local church will offer spiritual, logistical, and financial support to its members on the mission field.

France Mission brings into this situation its specialised knowledge and expertise, acquired over 50 years of church-planting in France. The Mission is best placed to see where a new candidate's gift-mix can be suitably deployed. The Mission's existing networks can assist in raising financial support and publishing prayer news from the field.

The Four Stages

Typically, there are four stages in the commissioning of a new missionary:

1. SELECTION

- The local church, through its leaders, will "set aside" a candidate for future ministry, taking into account his/her current ministry in the local church and testing his/her spirituality, personality, family situation, and missionary call.
- On receipt of a completed candidate's questionnaire, France Mission will assess the suitability of the candidate for specific ministry in France. References from local church leaders and other mature Christians are an essential tool in this assessment.

2. TRAINING

- The local church will commend a candidate to study at Bible College, as necessary, or will offer its own in-house discipleship training provision.
- If the training period takes place within the UK, France Mission will offer the candidate a range of opportunities to connect with the work in France. Language learning will need to be addressed.

3. SENDING

- The **local church** will normally commend the candidate to full-time cross-cultural ministry at a special service, at which a representative from France Mission will encourage the church members in their support of the candidate.
- **France Mission** will recommend placement for the first two years in a particular situation and under the guidance of a particular senior missionary.

4. PASTORAL SUPPORT

- The **local church** will maintain regular contact, to communicate its ongoing concern and love, and will ensure regular specific prayer, through:
 - Phone/Skype calls
 - Emails
 - Letters
 - Personal visits
 - Practical, logistical support
 - Discussion, as required, between church and Mission leaders
- **France Mission** will provide spiritual oversight and training on the field, through a combination of:
 - Oversight by a more experienced missionary
 - Help, as required, with language training and cultural adaptation
 - A training programme for all FM probationer missionaries
 - FM's programme of annual retreats and congresses
 - Regular contact with FM's Paris headquarters and the FMT office in the UK
 - Occasional visits by the British Director or by UK Trustees

but this in no way diminishes the importance of regular contact with the local church.

France Mission's Financial Policy

1. France Mission works by faith, and depends for its funds entirely on the Lord and on all those who share with us the vision of spreading the gospel in France.
2. The Bible teaches that "those who preach the gospel should live by the gospel" (1 Cor. 9.14) and it is on this basis, repeated by the Apostle Paul in 2 Cor. 9.6-15, Galatians 6.6 and 1 Thess. 5.12-13, that our financial strategy rests.
3. When a missionary has been accepted by the UK and French committees, and when his/her full support is pledged (i.e. his/her salary and the employer's social security contributions levied thereon), his/her contract of employment with France Mission will take effect and he/she will be able to start on his/her two-year probationary appointment.
4. France Mission Trust, through deputation tours and English-language publications, will join with the candidate in raising the necessary pledged support. The amount of support required will depend on age/stage and geographical location, but will be in the region of £2,000-£3,000 per month for a full-time worker (a figure which will cover the missionary's salary + all associated employment costs, including insurance and pension contributions etc.). Because the Trust is a UK registered charity, income tax can be

reclaimed on covenanted and Gift Aid gifts. This reclaimed income tax is treated as part of a missionary's pledged support.

5. This attempt to raise sufficient promised support also allows the Lord to confirm a missionary candidate's true call by meeting his/her financial needs. Secondly, it causes a team of concerned prayer partners to be formed around a missionary candidate, a group of people who will be instrumental in the spiritual success of his/her future ministry.
6. Our church-planting strategy has the goal of working with short-term teams and full-time missionaries to see a viable church group founded within a period of five to eight years.
7. We expect, within the same period of time, that the new church group will contribute progressively towards the Mission's finances by sending an increasing contribution to the France Mission treasurer in Paris with a view to becoming financially self-supporting.
8. FM Trust's annual accounts can be viewed at www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/32-Annual%20accounts.html

Conclusion

If you feel that God would have you join the team of salaried France Mission missionaries (whether on a full- or part-time basis), then please contact us to set the process in motion.

In our experience, the timescale between first enquiry and full contract of employment is usually around 9-12 months.

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have questions in your mind.

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