

PM3

EMBA Pioneering Mission

Our role as an Association in your vision and application

The primary role of the Association in the initial stages is to be a 'critical friend' and conversation partner. This involves listening very carefully to your proposal and asking pertinent questions. In particular:

- What is motivating the proposed initiative?
- What level of support does it have?
- What research and consultation has been carried out?
- What personnel and resources are needed/available?
- Why is this particular location or people group in view?
- What other options have been considered?
- What time frame is envisaged?
- What outcome is anticipated (including what kind of church)?
- What evidence is there of God's guidance?
- What kind of input or support is expected from the Association?
- Is there a functioning cluster nearby and can this be involved?
- What support might be expected from other churches or agencies?
- How will other denominations be consulted and/or involved?

As the Pioneer Mission Group considers the personnel who may be involved the following qualities will be expected:

- Self-awareness – pioneers need to know their strengths and weaknesses, be alert to issues that cause them stress, have a healthy self-image and good sense of humour, and be committed to practices that sustain and renew them.
- Creativity – pioneers need to be open to fresh insights, not constrained by traditional patterns but willing to think outside the box, eager to experiment and explore new possibilities, and amenable to input from others.
- Flexibility – pioneers need to be responsive to their environment, willing to adapt to unexpected developments, able to cope with and manage uncertainty and change without undue stress, sensitive to cross-cultural perspectives, and capable of integrating convictions, context and constraints.
- Perseverance – pioneers need to be resilient in the face of difficulties, self-disciplined and emotionally stable, sufficiently motivated to keep going without close supervision, open to criticism but not deflected from their strategy without good cause, willing to confront issues rather than avoiding them, and able to see beyond immediate concerns.
- Team building – pioneers need to be able to inspire and envision others, recognise their capacities, delegate responsibility, manage conflict effectively, and hold together the dimension of 'team, task and individual'.

Process for potential Pioneers

It is unlikely that an individual will be affirmed as a Pioneer without a Pioneering context and vision in which to apply a grant. It is likely that the context will fulfil the criteria previously mentioned but it may be that the individual will follow the steps outlined:

- Conversation with the Regional Minister to explain the sense of calling, gifting, experience and to reflect on issues of character.
- Conversations with and experience of other pioneers to understand the demands and challenges of Pioneer Mission.
- Completion of a personal application form and taking up of references; to lead to a formal interview.

Reflecting on context and particular social groups

In most (although not all) cases, a potential pioneer or pioneering team has a strong sense of calling to a particular location or group. This is not something to be discouraged but it should be open to gentle questioning and assessment. This is something the Pioneer Mission group can offer.

The following issues could be explored:

- In what ways has this sense of vocation arisen, and how has the guidance of God been discerned?
- What research has been done into the area or community, and with what results?
- What other churches are operating in this context, have they been consulted, and with what results?
- What previous attempts, if any, have been made into this context, and with what outcomes?
- If a team is to be involved, do all potential team members share the same sense of calling to this context?
- Have any other options been considered?
- Is there a 'match' between the potential pioneer/pioneering team and the community, or do they have cross-cultural sensitivity and skills?
- What practical issues need to be considered in the initial stages (housing, finding schools for children, changing jobs, disengaging from existing commitments)?
- How long will these take to address?
- What else needs to happen before the initiative begins?
- What is a realistic time frame?

East Midland Baptists: Inspiring and Resourcing in Gospel Mission

Website: www.embaptists.co.uk

The East Midland Baptist Association is a member of the Baptist Union of Great Britain. Registered Charity no 1094457
A Company limited by Guarantee, Registered in England & Wales No. 4302466. Registered Address West Bridgford Baptist Church, Melton Road,
West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 7NF