**Franciscan Mission Service**

**International Lay Mission Preliminary Application**

**Organizational Mission Statement**

As Franciscan followers of Christ, we build partnerships with Catholic women and men who are inspired to live and serve in solidarity with economically poor communities across the globe – and to bring the transformative experience of mission to North American societies and churches as advocates for peace, justice, reconciliation, and care of creation.

**International Lay Mission Program Overview**

In the spirit of Saint Francis and Saint Clare of Assisi, our Franciscan lay missioners serve for two to six years in solidarity with economically poor communities in Bolivia, Jamaica, and along the US-Mexico Border.

Through our 3-month mission formation program, missioners learn how to accompany others in ways that are respectful and honoring of cultural, religious, racial, and personal differences. Missioners will learn the FMS person-first approach to mission and take a posture of humility while on mission. *Their role will not be to lead, change, or fix a situation, but instead to learn from and accompany those they will serve alongside, forming authentic mutual relationships.*

FMS serves within a wide range of ministries, including, but not limited to educational support, prison ministry, youth ministry, sustainable agriculture, and pastoral ministry. Recent missioners have accompanied youth at a group home, young mothers at a pregnancy center, asylum-seekers at a migrant center, survivors of sexual assault, residents at a hospice center, and children with disabilities who have been abandoned. “Ministry of presence” or relational ministry is the main focus of all FMS sites and activities/undertakings.

Missioners’ years in mission are often described as transformational and life-changing. The missioners’ journey does not end once they return home. The FMS focus on “reverse mission,” or mission in our home communities after returning, is a unique aspect of our program. FMS missioners commit to being “lifelong missioners,” integrating the lessons they learned from their cross-cultural mission experiences into their daily lives and continuing to live out the Franciscan values of peace, justice, reconciliation, and care for creation. The experience of mission equips each missioner to be bridge-builders within their home communities and to help deepen individuals’ awareness of structural injustices, cultural diversity and engagement of laity in the Church.

**Applicant Qualifications**

* *Catholic lay individual with dedication to deepen one’s relationship with God*
* *Single, married, or divorced, 22+ years old, without dependents (married people must both apply)*
* *Permanent resident or citizen of the United States or Canada (at this time, FMS is unable to expand its applicant pool beyond these two countries)*
* *Prior cross-cultural experience and/or a second language are valuable, though not required*
* *A willingness to serve in various ministries and integrate Franciscan values into daily life*
* *A willingness to meet the vaccination/public health requirements of the assigned mission country and ministry locations*

**Application Process**

The application process is one of mutual discernment. Prospective missioners discern their call to mission, dive into their motivations and hopes to serve, and learn more about the unique approach to mission in the Franciscan tradition. Through the applicant’s written responses, references, phone conversations, and interviews, FMS staff members discern whether the applicant is a strong fit for the International Lay Mission Program.

The application process consists of five phases: 1) Preliminary application and interview - applications accepted on an on-going basis and generally through May; 2) Autobiographical essay responses and references; 3) Multiple interviews during Discernment Days (generally during the spring months); 4) Background Check and Medical Clearance; 5) three-month training and formation in Washington, DC (starts mid-August of each year).

**Phase 1: Preliminary Application**

*Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis, but we recommend that interested applicants complete their application within a couple weeks of receiving it so they can be eligible for the second phase of the application process - essays and references. Please type your answers in the “click here to enter text” or “choose an item” sections. Please feel free to leave the Gender and Race sections blank if you prefer not to disclose that information. We invite you to share your short-answer responses by video if you prefer that over written responses; either format works for us! Thank you!*

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| **Name:** Click here to enter text. | | | |
| **Date of Birth:** Click here to enter text. | **Gender:** Click here to enter text. | **Race:** Click here to enter text. | **Religious Affiliation:** Click here to enter text. |
| **Marital Status:** Click here to enter text. | **Number of Dependents:** Click here to enter text. | | **Citizenship/Residency:** Click here to enter text. |
| **Current Address:** Click here to enter text. | | | |
| **Phone:** Click here to enter text. | **Email:** Click here to enter text. | | |
| **How did you hear about FMS? Please be specific as this helps us with our outreach efforts. For example, if you found us through a Google search, please share the words you searched. If a person told you about FMS, please share that person’s name and how you know them.**  Click here to enter text. | | | |
| **Formative Experiences:**  For each of the following three areas, describe significant experiences that have shaped you spiritually, intellectually, and emotionally and have informed your desire to serve abroad. We suggest using about 200-300 words for each response.  **Cross-cultural encounters and travels (abroad or in the United States):** Click here to enter text.  **“Stretching” or stepping outside of your comfort zone:** Click here to enter text.  **Service and ministries:** Click here to enter text. | | | |
| **Describe your character, gifts, and skills, focusing on those that you imagine might be helpful in accompanying others in an international context. Please describe the kinds of ministries you might like to explore and engage in while serving on mission.**  Click here to enter text. | | | |
| **Our program is modeled on the Franciscan ideal of living and working in solidarity with those experiencing economic poverty and social marginalization. How does this approach to mission speak to you? What draws you to serving abroad versus serving in your home country?**  Click here to enter text. | | | |
| **Describe your faith life. How do you cultivate a relationship with God, and how has this relationship influenced your desire to go on mission abroad?**  Click here to enter text. | | | |
| **How do you respond to transitions? Please give some examples of the physical and emotional ways in which you may respond to change. Describe a past major life transition and how you navigated it. What were you proud of in how you navigated it? What would you have done differently?**  Click here to enter text. | | | |
| **Describe the state of your physical and mental wellbeing so staff will be able to best support you. What physical and mental health challenges do you have which require ongoing treatment and/or maintenance? What physical and mental health challenges have required treatment in the past?** Click here to enter text. | | | |
| **What are your extra-curricular interests and/or hobbies? What makes you laugh?**  Click here to enter text. | | | |
| **Language #1:** Click here to enter text. | **Language #2:** Click here to enter text. | | **Language #3:** Click here to enter text. |
| **Proficiency:** Click here to enter text. | **Proficiency:** Click here to enter text. | | **Proficiency:** Click here to enter text. |
| **Have you ever been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor crime?**  Choose an item. | **If yes, please explain what happened and what you learned from your experience:** Click here to enter text. | | |
| **Have you ever had any problems with drugs or alcohol?**  Choose an item. | **If yes, please explain what happened and what you learned from your experience:** Click here to enter text. | | |
| **Add any other additional information you think would best help us get to know you.**  Click here to enter text. | | | |

***Please e-mail your completed application and a copy of your resume (outlining your education, work, service and ministry experiences) to our Program Team:*** [***julia@franciscanmissionservice.org***](mailto:julia@franciscanmissionservice.org)***.***

***Thank you for the time and thought you put into completing your application and resume. Upon submission of your application, a staff member will send you a confirmation email within a couple of workdays of receiving it. If you do not receive an email, please reach out again to confirm that we received it.***