



## Values and Standards

Global Connections have established a set of values and standards for NGOs or mission agencies engaged in short-term projects.

**Core Values...** These are as follows: • the importance of partnership; • a commitment to excellence; • biblical mandate; • biblical attitudes; • discipleship of the participants; • facilitating of senders; and • long-term vision. These set the context within which the standards are framed.

**Standards...** These fall within seven clearly defined areas where the NGO or mission agency should be working towards excellence. These are as follows: • aims and objectives; • publicity and selection; • orientation and placements; • legal issues; • field management and pastoral care; • post-assignment support, evaluation, and programme development; and • responding to the challenges in today's culture and climate change.

## Amor Europe

Amor Europe emerged in 2017 as an independent charity out of the Global Development team of Urban Saints (charity no. 1144923), which enjoyed a long and beneficial relationship with the "Code of Best Practice" team at Global Connections, as it was then. Hence working to the principles of best practice has been part of our formative culture.

In this document we explain how Amor Europe demonstrates its Commitment to Best Practice as defined by Global Connections.

Amor Europe has three sectors of ministry which engage in short-term mission trips, each distinctly developed to meet the needs of children in challenging places, in the name of Jesus.

# EQUIP Short-Term Mission Trips

Amor Europe is committed to best practice in all areas of its ministry. Here we highlight how our EQUIP initiative aligns with Global Connections "Commitment to Best Practice" standards.



Amor Europe



## Standards

## Alignment

### Section 1: Aims and Objectives

**to ensure:** • a biblically-based, long-term vision for all partners; • a purposeful project that has measurable goals.

a. All short-term mission programmes have clear aims and objectives. These are realistic, measurable and reflect the long-term objectives of all the partners.

Every EQUIP mission team works towards a development plan mutually agreed between the overseas partner and Amor Europe.

b. The aims of all projects clearly reflect that this is distinctive Christian mission.

The overall aims of both partners are for Christians in the subject locality to advance the Gospel of Jesus among young people effectively, creatively, and respectfully.

c. The benefits to and responsibilities of all the partners are clearly identified and stated in the programme outlines / summaries.

EQUIP spawns or supports networks of outreach children's groups in the countries where it operates.  
To avoid negative visa issues the EQUIP responses to Global Connections are located here in the private space available only to EQUIP trainers and those considering joining the team.  
The trip checklists and aims and objectives templates clarify the roles of both partners.

d. There is clear evidence of consultation between the senders and hosts in establishing the aims and objectives of all short-term programmes.

The partner has vision within their country and sometimes beyond it, for the development of children's work.  
All EQUIP short-term mission teams serve the partner's vision helping them in the direction of travel that they set.

e. Projects will be sensitive to, and developed around, the context and environment into

All EQUIP mission team participants receive cross-cultural training prior to travelling.

which participants will be received.

We have a code of conduct which participants follow.

f. The participant is developed and disciplined throughout their experience.

Each participant is a Global Trainer. To engage in the programme there must be existing evidence of genuine Christ following spiritual life.

Each one is encouraged to continuously develop their spiritual life. Mission teams meet daily to pray and mutually encourage.

g. Where a short-term mission programme is organised by a sender that is not the participant's home church, appropriate support from the participant's local Christian community is sought.

References for all members of these teams are required. These explore the suitability of the candidate for the role. At least one referee is required to be the church leader of their current home church.

All Global Trainers are encouraged to develop a network of supporters to pray for and help fund their work.

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## Section 2: Publicity and Selection

**to ensure: • clear communication of aims and objectives; • appropriate matching of people to projects; • adequate briefing and equipping of all partners.**

a. Publicity materials accurately describe the programmes without omission of what might be considered the 'harsh reality' of circumstances with the host, and are targeted appropriately, and used with integrity.

The journey into Global Training begins with a Taster Weekend that enables new team members to make considered choices.

b. All forms of communication with participants will clearly represent the ethos and vision of the sender, and will define the purpose of the programme in terms of service, discipleship and vocation.

Every person joining this team spends a weekend going through vision, ethos, materials and methods of EQUIP.

c. The application process is clearly communicated to the participant, and includes full disclosure of timescales, financial responsibilities and time commitments.

Terms and conditions of joining this team are accurately communicated at the Taster Weekend. Each individual trip is fully described at the recruitment stage.

d. The selection process is based on clearly defined selection criteria and all screening is transparent and reflects the nature of the programme being applied for.

The screening process is clearly explained from before application is invited.

e. Placement decisions are clear and transparent, will be made with integrity, and will be communicated to all involved (including when changes are made).

Where and when Trainers go is decided by conversations across the team.

f. Those not selected, are given clear feedback on why their application was not approved and will be offered short-term pastoral support if needed.

Applicants apply after a full weekend of training and explanation. If it is clear that they are not suitable they would not be invited, and we would explain to them why.

g. The home church is involved in the selection process (as appropriate).

We engage local church with our reference system, requiring one reference from the current church leader.

h. There is clear evidence that all relevant preparatory information (between selection and formal orientation) is provided to the participant as early as possible.

All preparatory documents are published to our "Trainers' Lounge" and orientation for a 2-week (max) training trip is provided via a set of trip documents, including: risk assessment; trip overview; trip checklist.

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### Section 3: Orientation and Placements

to ensure: • adequate briefing and equipping of all partners.

a. Orientation prior to the project and induction at the start of the project is given to all participants. This should include all procedures outlined in 5(e); for example:

- Project brief, location, and tasks.
- Structures and lines of accountability.
- Biblical mandate.
- Job descriptions.
- Child and vulnerable adult safeguarding measures.
- Health and safety, security, and issues arising from the risk assessment.
- Team dynamics and conflict resolution.
- Finances, legal liability, and insurance.
- Cultural considerations.
- Guidelines on behaviour and relationships.
- Communication policy with home.
- Expectations regarding debriefing.

All team members are required to complete interactive online safeguarding and health and safety training.

Each team has a Safeguarding Coordinator and an H&S Coordinator. These roles are provided with a briefing sheet, the relevant policy, reporting forms, code of conduct pocket guides.

Insurance information including emergency helplines are provided.

The charity Safeguarding Lead and H&S Lead are available for consultation 24/7.

Each expedition has a budget signed off by the CFO and agreed with the overseas partner.

Global Trainers and Senior Global Trainers work to role descriptions.

Briefing and debriefing protocols are part of the programme.

All team members are aged 18 or over and undergo enhanced DBS checks.

Liability and travel insurance in place for all travellers.

b. When a team is being placed, there are clear processes for the selection, screening, training, responsibilities, and support for team leaders. This takes account of both the nature of the team and the type and location of the placement.

Team leaders are developed in a long term programme. The Amor Europe Departmental Lead oversees the development of team leaders. At the moment team leaders are drawn exclusively from Amor Europe's Hub Team of department Leads.

We have begun the process of creating Senior Global Trainers roles. Full induction, intentional field training, mentoring and coaching forms the process of appointment. This team is drawn from the pool of Global Trainers and depends on the visible character, chemistry, and competence of trainers and its intentional development.

c. Responsibilities of all partners regarding practicalities, job descriptions and supervision are made clear and agreed prior to placement.

EQUIP training teams follow a regular pattern of agreements with overseas partners clarifying who is responsible for which parts of the delivery of the programme. Local variations apply (translation *or* not, local trainers *or* no local trainers, venue specific

roles, registration, debriefing, ongoing networking).

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## Section 4: Legal Issues

to ensure: • diligent handling of all legal issues relating to short-term programmes.

a. Where participants are working with vulnerable groups including children, 'fit person' checks are made: Enhanced DBS checks or other regional equivalent.

Each EQUIP mission team participant undergoes an enhanced DBS check prior to travel.

b. Any participant under 18 years of age, is required to provide documented parental consent.

No EQUIP participants are aged under 18.

c. Senders clearly define their lower age limit and who is responsible for underage participants. Specialist legal advice and insurance cover is sought for groups including participants under 18 years old.

No minors participate in this programme.

d. Waivers and disclaimers are not used, unless on the explicit direction of legal advice (details provided where applicable).

Participants travel as part of our staff team. They travel as team members. We do treat them as ATOL clients and comply with PTR but for this senior level of volunteer the terms of their travel are clarified while applying for the role rather than for individual expeditions.

e. Compliance with the Package Travel Regulations, including promotional material, use of contracts, booking conditions, and appropriate insurance cover is clearly demonstrated (if applicable).

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f. Requirements of the ATOL regulations are implemented, if organising flights.

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## Section 5: Field Management and Pastoral Care

to ensure: • aims and objectives are met for all partners; • care and development of the participant is provided for.

a. Systems and processes are in place to review task aims and objectives with participants, and to emphasise the ongoing responsibilities and

Objectives are agreed with the partner, and reviewed on expedition and post expedition. These objectives are derived from the point of progression the

expectations.

partnership has reached on its development path on our partnership development process.  
We are developing impact measurement processes via Cognito online forms to understand how the training impacts the operation of children's work.

b. Suitably skilled and experienced supervisors are in place to support participants and maintain clear lines of authority, supervision, communication, responsibility and accountability.

Each team is led by an experienced leader. They deliver pastoral care to the small team of trainers as part of their role.

c. Pastoral care and support structures are established and implemented.

Pastoral care flows through the Team Leader, who has access to the department lead or their delegate, 24/7 while in the field.  
Debriefing for team members is part of the programme.

d. Opportunities for personal and spiritual development of the participant are provided.

Daily team meetings for prayer and Bible study are programmed. Every training morning there is an 'encounter' session where everyone involved is encouraged to meet with God in a variety of creative ways.

e. Appropriate policies and procedures are established, communicated, and implemented. These would include:

- Healthcare, medical contingencies, security, and evacuation.
- Identifying and managing risks.
- Stress management and conflict resolution.
- Misconduct, discipline, and grievances

Policies in place:

- Risk management: expeditions.
- Whistleblowing
- Anti bribery
- Finance
- Safeguarding
- Health and Safety
- Grievance
- Disciplinary
- Code of conduct abroad
- Partnership development

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## Section 6: Post-assignment Support, Evaluation and Programme Development

to ensure: • participants are supported post-assignment; • systems are in place to allow all partners to give feedback; • feedback received is assessed without prejudice and used proactively to enhance future programmes.

a. Debriefing and support for the participant is seen as an integral part of the short-term programme and the process involves all partners.

Debriefing for each participant carried out by team leader.

b. Post-assignment preparation, including placement appraisal, begins before the end of the project.

Programme time set aside on final day and check-ins regularly through the trip.

c. Debriefing and support of team leaders is seen as an integral part of the short-term programme.

Post trip debrief scheduled for each participant.

d. Senders assist participants through post-assignment readjustment.

2-week assignments require little readjustment. Debriefing helps counter reverse culture shock.

e. Advice and guidance are offered to participants to find the next step in their Christian life following the programme. Where appropriate, this is done in liaison with the participant's home church.

Continuous development with Amor Europe EQUIP team is encouraged.

We offer access to our new and developing "Road Less Travelled" programme to signpost and produce resources for discipleship development of people involved in Amor.

f. An evaluation of aims, responsibilities and procedures is undertaken, inviting comment from all partners. Culturally appropriate ways of providing feedback are sought from the host.

Each expedition ends with a formal conversation reviewing mutual conduct, dependencies, and dreams, understanding and pointing forward to what is needed for future success and development.

g. The results of evaluations are communicated to relevant managers, for the improvement of future projects.

EQUIP Lead works towards continuous improvement in methods, materials, structures, and innovations.

Formal report forms reviewing the expedition are produced by team leads and seen by all Hub and Board members.

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## Section 7: Responding to the Challenges of Short-Term Mission in Today's Culture and Climate Change

to ensure: • the church or agency adopts a considered and responsible approach to climate change; • participants are encouraged to consider UK based programmes; • overseas programmes focus on "listening and learning", over and above "showing and doing".

a. The reason(s) for continuing to run overseas / international short-term mission programmes are clearly communicated in all promotional material.

The spawning of and encouragement of children's works networks owned and accountable indigenously, in locations where intelligent outreach among the next generation is rare, not a thing, lacking in locally owned skills and such makes its own case for this team.

The places into which this team works are often hostile to the church. This creates unique dynamics not easily understood and partnered with without immersion.

Unless we travel, the effective transfer of skills and the mutual development of vision is severely limited. Interactions online happen through the year but we try to visit each partner at least annually in person with a team of trainers.

b. The sender can demonstrate balance in their short-term programmes between overseas and UK based. If UK based programmes are not currently offered, the sender is able to

All of our teams work internationally. We produce more indigenously based overseas trainers (as we view them) than UK based Global trainers. That is the intention of EQUIP.

articulate why.

Our ethos is 'how can you develop indigenously owned and equipped youth and children's ministry in your country?' and 'how can we help you do that?'

c. Where applicable, the sender is able to demonstrate an awareness of carbon off-setting, and can evidence the steps taken to offset international travel required as part of their programmes.

We do not believe in development for the current generation at the expense of the next.

We have and follow a Sustainability Policy, established with the consultancy from Hydrock, a highly respected environmental specialist company. Our team uses green electricity, reduces, recycles, and repurposes wherever possible. All necessary travel is properly calculated and offset by purchase of sea grass through the Ocean Foundation — a highly peer reviewed and acclaimed carbon reduction programme.

d. The sender can practically demonstrate that their programmes focus on "listening and learning", over and above "showing and doing".

In every aspect of our work we listen and learn. Every participant is trained to cross culture humbly and with eyes open to learn from those we meet, serving and empowering rather than demanding and humiliating. However, some mission work is much more about teaching and doing than it is about listening and learning. It will always be so.

Our calling and vision is to enable Christians in countries where the church is under pressure to own the problem and solution of next generation ministry in their country.

Our approach is 'the Bible critiques our culture. Teach us how it critiques yours' How would you apply solutions in this culture?' Interactive learning is a technique not widely used in schools in the countries we are most drawn to. Thus it is ground-breaking in most settings where we work.

Our technique is to work with the partner to learn with them solutions that they can multiply across their culture. To learn the things they do well and take them to other cultures.

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## Further comments.

In response to 7b (UK versus overseas trips):

Amor Europe exists to enable members of one country to work together with members of another. Global Partnership is one of our five values and a key reason for our existence. This is in keeping with the church's activity in the New Testament, church history and prophetic encouragement both within the bible (Paul's vision of the man from Macedonia, various international mission teams involving the early church members) and direct words and circumstantial encouragements that cheer us on today.

We do appreciate the need for mission in the UK — we operate on the Peace Line in Northern Ireland, but that is an exceptional response to a specific development need among school children. Almost everything we do is outside of the United Kingdom, most of it away from Europe. Our calling is to those in most need and to mobilise Europeans to become personally involved. Where we do operate in Europe it is in Moldova, reputed to be the European country most affected by poverty.

In response to the question of our values:



Amor Europe's values are:

- **Knowing God** — everything comes from this and to this.
  - **Local Relationships** — serving and loving those who are permanently based where we visit.
  - **Global Partnerships** — mutual learning and resourcing from working together cross culturally.
  - **Dispersed Power** — whoever has power shares it with others.
  - **Transformative Experiences** — travellers, hosts, and beneficiaries should all be transformed for the better. If not, we should not be going.
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