

SWITCHBOARD VIRTUAL MISSIONS PROGRAM FAQ

Definition of “Missions”

What does Switchboard mean by “missions”? It seems like everyone has a different definition.

We recognize that “missions” can mean different things to different people. Switchboard defines this term broadly as cross-cultural work, ideally within unreached people groups. We aim to serve both traditional mission efforts and local church movements working toward the Great Commission.

Missional Focus & Alignment

How can Switchboard help us maintain a focused mission strategy?

From the start, Switchboard’s focus has been to support cross-cultural mission work, especially in unreached areas, aligning with local churches pursuing the same goal. Your personal, team, or organizational approach in using Switchboard can be customized according to your mission strategy. This could include encouraging your teammates and members of your partner churches to join the platform and allowing Switchboard to connect the two.

Will Switchboard take volunteers away from my partner churches?

We hear you on this concern and want to assure you that we are here to partner alongside you. Switchboard’s goal is to provide access to more diverse service opportunities. We want to remove barriers to get church members off the sidelines and participating in the Great Commission, whether with an organization your partner churches are already familiar with or a missionary that’s not connected to those churches.

Security Concerns

How secure is the Switchboard platform for workers in closed countries or high-risk environments?

No platform can be completely secure, but Switchboard uses industry best practices, including encryption, hashing and separate off-platform validation for personal identifiers. Workers can use aliases, aligning with their public-facing profiles on church websites, to enhance anonymity. For those in extremely high-risk areas, we advise consulting security professionals before using Switchboard to ensure safety. In such cases, Switchboard may not be suitable due to potential risks of exposure.

Cost & Monetization

How does Switchboard sustain itself beyond the current grant-funded model?

There is no cost for churches, volunteers or cross-cultural workers to use Switchboard, the Virtual Missions Kit, or the Ministry Expansion Kit. As a nonprofit, Switchboard currently relies on grants and private donations. By mid-2025, we aim to introduce a social philanthropy model, encouraging low-dollar, community-based giving as users serve together on the platform. This will support long-term sustainability without burdening users with fees.

Matching

How does Switchboard match volunteers with opportunities to serve?

The matching process begins as our software identifies a subset of volunteers who have the required skill and complete profiles. The algorithm selects an initial group of four Kingdom Consultants and sends them a connection request. If one of them accepts, the match is made. If no one from that initial group is a good fit, the request is shown to new volunteers with similar skills. The system is simple but effective, with most matches happening within 30-45 minutes.

How are workers linked to their supporting or home churches on Switchboard?

During sign-up, workers are asked to list their home and supporting churches. However, if a worker prefers not to be visibly connected to a specific church, they can use an alias and a general sign-up process.

How can we showcase Switchboard to our network regularly?

Encouraging members of your network to take our brief skill assessment is a great way to help them see how their expertise can have an impact in advancing the gospel. Consider including a link to the assessment in your newsletter and mentioning it when you present your ministry. Sharing stories from those who've already served through Switchboard can also encourage others to get involved.

Can we highlight our needs on Switchboard as we share with our networks?

Absolutely! We have found that volunteers are more engaged and willing to serve with organizations or causes about which they are already passionate, so highlighting your ministry's needs is a great way to get your network to volunteer. When you post a need on Switchboard, you will receive a custom link that makes it easy to share directly. If you have posted more than one need, we can route volunteers from your partner churches to a list that prioritizes your needs before other opportunities on the Switchboard platform.

Can someone else serve as the administrator for me or my team on the platform?

We encourage each user to manage his or her own individual profile and serving journey.

Criteria for Great Commission Organizations (GCOs)

**What are the criteria for Great Commission organizations to use the platform?
Are there limitations on the type of work they do?**

Organizations seeking to post needs on Switchboard must have a Great Commission orientation, but this can encompass a wide range of work, including church planting, discipleship, justice, and mercy efforts. Organizations focused on serving vulnerable populations, like orphans or trafficking victims, qualify as long as they integrate a discipleship or gospel-sharing component.

Do I need my organization's permission to use Switchboard?

We don't require your organization's permission to post a need on Switchboard. However, we recommend that you confirm that using the Switchboard platform aligns with your organization's policies and preferences.

Onboarding and Rollouts

I'm eager to begin! How soon can I get started?

Today! As soon as you make a profile, you can immediately start posting needs.

How much time will it take to sign up and begin using Switchboard?

Getting started is as easy as taking a few minutes to create a profile and evaluating your needs to create thoughtful posts. Missionaries, ministries, and volunteers create their own profiles, and Switchboard is the connector between them.

I don't have any "technical" needs. Can I still use the services of a Switchboard volunteer or Kingdom Consultant?

Absolutely. While we use technology for the connecting platform, Switchboard volunteers bring a wide range of skill sets in dozens of categories, ranging from homeschooling to storytelling to social media to fluency in a different language. Switchboard is constantly adding new categories to the platform because each volunteer who creates a profile brings new skills.

Can you share an example of a missionary or organization that has successfully implemented Switchboard?

Many missionaries like Carl, who serves in the Middle East, get the advice they need to overcome significant challenges through a one-hour consulting call with a volunteer. He recalls, "Switchboard was super simple to use, and within a week of signing in I was on a call. The connection was perfect and able to answer all my questions. I'm so thankful to have this resource!"

Others like Rex,* director of a ministry training school for Filipino believers, benefit from entire teams of Kingdom Consultants, who offer help with everything from social media and fundraising to architectural consulting. "The job done by experts is just so much better and goes so much quicker," Rex says, adding that through Switchboard, "You have a real expert."

Should I talk with my team before engaging a volunteer?

For needs related to team ministry responsibilities or direction, we urge you to discuss Switchboard as a solution with your team before posting a need.

Volunteering

What are the requirements for serving as a Kingdom Consultant?

Virtual volunteers must create a profile. As part of this process, they adhere to our three requirements:

- signing a declaration of faith
- confirming they are at least 18 years of age
- acknowledging that this is an entirely free platform. A volunteer cannot sign up for a volunteer role and then send the ministry an invoice.

How much time does this type of volunteering normally take?

Opportunities vary from a one-time hourlong consultation to a few hours a week on a recurring basis. The volunteer and the missionary together set expectations regarding the time involved.

If you have further questions about how Switchboard connects your church to global ministry and serving the Great Commission, please contact us at info@globalswitchboard.io.



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*Name has been changed.