



UNITED STATES STUDENT VISA WORKSHOP

ISEP Study Abroad

****DISCLAIMER****

Consular policies and procedures may change at any time. You are responsible for making sure your application meets all the requirements set forth by the United States through their consulates and embassies.

The majority of the information we will cover today applies to all U.S. Embassies and Consulates around the world. However, each consulate is different, and students are responsible for meeting the requirements set forth by the consulate at which they apply.

What is a visa?

What is a visa?

A visa is a conditional authorization granted by a territory to a foreigner, allowing them to enter, remain within, or to leave that territory.

Your U.S. student visa will allow you to remain in the U.S. as a student for the duration of your program and allow you to return to your home country.

All ISEP Exchange students participating in programs in the U.S. must apply for a J-1 visa, unless they are a permanent resident or citizen of the U.S. or Canada.

When your passport is returned with your visa in it, it will be a large permanent sticker affixed to one of your blank passport pages.



VISA PROCESS OVERVIEW

- ISEP will issue your DS-2019 for your J-1 visa
- Immediately apply for your J-1 visa after receiving visa instructions from ISEP
- Submit online DS-160 form
- Pay SEVIS I-901 fee
- Schedule visa interview or mail documents to your local U.S. Embassy or Consulate
 - Please check with your closest U.S. Embassy or Consulate on whether they are accepting in-person appointments or mail-in applications

OVERALL VISA PROCESS TIMELINE

- **Visa Expectations**
 - Visa processing timelines vary depending on the consulate or embassy you apply through.
 - Students should begin collecting the required documentation (as outlined in this presentation) and preparing their applications as soon as they have received visa instructions from ISEP.
 - J-1 visa holders are required to arrive in the United States on or before their program start date. If you start the visa process late and are not able to get your visa on time, you may not be able to participate in your program.
 - If visa delays threaten to delay your arrival, you **MUST** contact ISEP and your host university immediately.

Required Documents

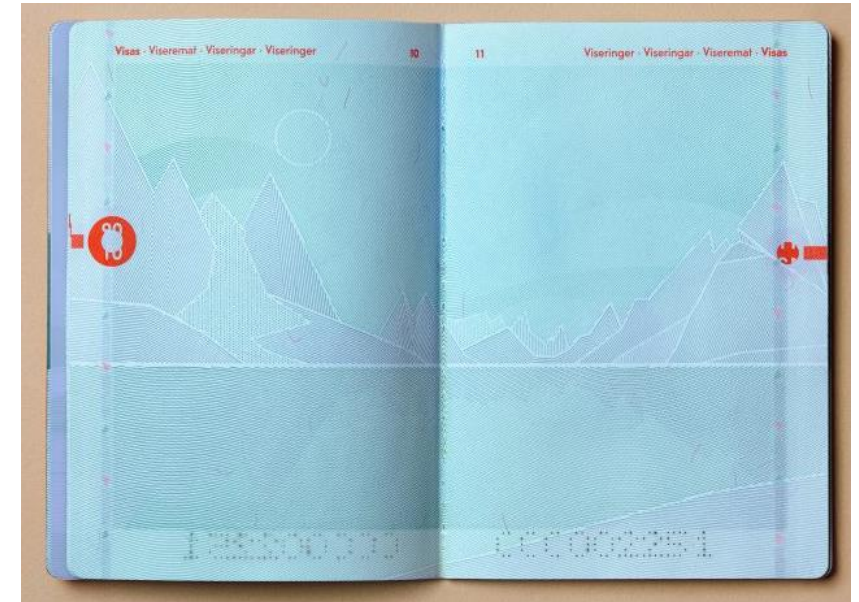
IMPORTANT REMINDERS

- Review all resources provided by ISEP and your local U.S. Embassy or Consulate
- You should start collecting documents for your visa IMMEDIATELY
 - Some documents may take time to obtain
- **IMPORTANT NOTE:** *You must pay the SEVIS I-901 and MRV fee before your visa can be issued.*
 - *Please refer to the ISEP Visa Application Guidelines – USA for information on these fees.*
- **IMPORTANT NOTE:** *If the application is not complete, it may be returned or processing could get delayed.*
 - *Only your original DS-2019 from ISEP will be accepted. If you lose or damage your DS-2019, contact your Student Services Officer at ISEP immediately.*

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:

1. *PASSPORT & PHOTOS*


- You are required to send in your passport with at least 6 months' validity past your program end date
- Your passport must have at least two blank pages for the visa to be issued
- 2x2 inch photograph



REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:

2. DS-2019

- ISEP will mail your DS-2019 to your home ISEP Coordinator
- When you receive your DS-2019, check that all the information is correct
 - Verify that ISEP has signed your DS-2019 in box #7
 - If the information is correct, sign the last line on the first page where it says 'Signature of Applicant'
 - If there is an error on your DS-2019, contact your ISEP Student Services Officer immediately
- You must have your original DS-2019 to apply for your J-1 visa and travel to the United States
 - If you lose or damage your DS-2019, either before or after you receive your visa, contact your ISEP Student Services Officer immediately

	
1. Family Name: Do First Name: Johan Middle Name: Gender: MALE Identification Number: W0001234567	
Date of Birth (mm-dd-yyyy): 08-08-1988 City of Birth: Łódź Country of Birth: POLAND Citizenship Country Code: PL Citizenship Country: POLAND	
Legal Permanent Residence Country Code: PL Legal Permanent Residence Country: POLAND Position Code: 215 Position: UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS	
Primary Site of Activity: 123 Main Street Anywhere, NY 10013	
2. Program Sponsor: InterExchange, Inc. Exchange Visitor Program Number: P-1-0000	
Participating Program Official Description: SUMMER TRAVEL/WORK	
Purpose of this form: Begin new program; accompanied by number (0) of immediate family members.	
3. Form Covers Period: From (mm-dd-yyyy): 06-01-2016 To (mm-dd-yyyy): 09-30-2016	4. Exchange Visitor Category: SUMMER CAMP Subject Field Code: 1234 Subject Field Code Remark: Labor
5. During the period covered by this form, the total estimated financial support (in U.S. \$) to be provided to the exchange visitor by:	
6. U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE/ DHS USE OR CERTIFICATION BY RESPONSIBLE OFFICER OR ALTERNATE RESPONSIBLE OFFICER THAT A NOTIFICATION COPY OF THIS FORM HAS BEEN PROVIDED TO THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE/ INCLUDE DATE:	7. Alternate Responsible Officer: Name of Official Preparing Form: InterExchange, 100 Wall St New York, NY 10005 Title: 212-924-0446 Telephone Number: 01-13-2016 Date (mm-dd-yyyy):
8. Statement of Responsible Officer for Releasing Sponsor (FOR TRANSFER OF PROGRAM): Effective date (mm-dd-yyyy): Transfer of this exchange, unless from program number to the program specified in item 2 is necessary or highly desirable and is in conformity with the objectives of the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, as amended.	
Signature of Responsible Officer or Alternate Responsible Officer: Date (mm-dd-yyyy): 	
PRELIMINARY ENDORSEMENT OF CONSULAR OR IMMIGRATION OFFICER REGARDING SECTION 212(a) OF THE IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT AND PL 94-484, AS AMENDED (see how file of page 2):	
The Exchange Visitor in the above program:	
1. <input type="checkbox"/> Not subject to the two-year residence requirement.	
2. <input type="checkbox"/> Subject to two-year residence requirement based on:	
A. <input type="checkbox"/> Government financing and/or	
B. <input type="checkbox"/> The Exchange Visitor Skills List and/or	
C. <input type="checkbox"/> PL 94-484 as amended	
(ALL USAID PARTICIPANTS G-2-0603 AND ALL ALIEN PHYSICIANS SPONSORED BY P-3-0418 ARE SUBJECT TO THE TWO-YEAR HOME RESIDENCE REQUIREMENT.)	
Name: Title: 	
Signature of Consular or Immigration Officer: Date (mm-dd-yyyy): 	
THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE RESERVES THE RIGHT TO MAKE FINAL DETERMINATION REGARDING 212(a).	
EXCHANGE VISITOR CERTIFICATION: I have read and agree with the statement in item 2 on page 2 of this document.	
Signature of Applicant: Place: Date (mm-dd-yyyy): 	

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:

3. *DS-160*

- Complete the DS-160 online form using the information on your DS-2019
 - The information entered in your DS-160 must match the information on your DS-2019
- Refer to ISEP Visa Guidelines – USA for details on how to complete the DS-160
 - Pay special attention to the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) section
- If you make a mistake on your DS-160, please contact your local U.S. Embassy or Consulate for guidance
 - You will likely need to complete a new DS-160

NOTE: **Write down the Application ID** displayed on the top right-hand corner of the page (DS-160 online form). If you close your browser window, you will need your ID to access your application again.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:

4. *J-1 NO OBJECTION LETTER*

- Your J-1 No Objection Letter from ISEP will be mailed with your DS-2019
 - You will also receive a PDF version with the visa instructions from ISEP. If you lose the hard copy, you can print the version you received over email and submit it with your visa application.
- Even if your local U.S. Embassy or Consulate does not ask for the J-1 No Objection Letter, submit it with your application documents.
- This letter serves as proof that ISEP students are not subject to the two-year residence requirement – 212(e).



PHONE: 1-703-504-9960 | FAX: 1-703-245-8070
www.isep.org | info@isep.org

November 3, 2021

TO: United States Consular Officers

RE: Section 212 (e), two-year residency requirement: ISEP students

To Whom It May Concern:

Students exchanged through the ISEP network pay their tuition, room and board to their home institution and receive the same benefits at a host institution with no money changing hands. Both foreign students coming to the United States and U.S. students going abroad on ISEP exchanges pay their own costs at home, and the host institutions do not provide any funding to the students coming on ISEP exchange programs.

Until July 1, 1996, ISEP was partially funded by a grant from the U.S. Information Agency, but the grant was used exclusively for program administration. Neither foreign students nor U.S. students ever received any grant from the U.S. government through ISEP.

We can therefore certify that the bearer of this letter has not received any grant, scholarship or financial aid from the U.S. government for the 2021-22 exchange period.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or need further information.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Rachel Dorfman-Tandlich".

Rachel Dorfman-Tandlich
Director of Enrollment Management
Responsible Officer
International Student Exchange Programs, P-1-04890
sevisinfo@isep.org

1655 N. Fort Myer Drive, Suite 400 | Arlington, Va. 22209, United States

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:

5. FEE PAYMENT RECEIPTS

- SEVIS I-901 fee payment - \$220
 - You must pay the SEVIS I-901 fee before you can schedule your visa interview or submit your visa documents
 - Pay the fee at <https://www.fmjfee.com/i901fee/index.html>
 - Your email confirmation is the receipt
- Machine Readable Visa fee (MRV) - \$160
 - Payable to your local U.S. Embassy or Consulate (fee can vary depending on the consulate)
 - Your email confirmation is the receipt

NOTE: You are responsible for all visa-related fees. ISEP is your J-1 visa sponsor but does not pay the fees on your behalf.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:

6. ***ACCEPTANCE LETTER FROM HOST SITE***

- NOTE: Not all U.S. Embassies and Consulates require an acceptance letter from your host university
- Many host universities in the U.S. send acceptance letters or letters of admission to their ISEP students, but not all do
- If your host university sends you a letter of acceptance, submit it with your visa documents
- If your host university does not send you a letter of acceptance, submit your ISEP Letter of Certification with your visa documents
 - ISEP Dashboard – Acceptance Package – ‘View your letter of certification for this program’

The screenshot displays the ISEP Dashboard with a sidebar on the left and a main content area on the right. The sidebar includes links for 'Your Dashboard', 'Profile', 'Your Contacts', 'Enrollment', 'Application', 'Course List', and 'Acceptance Package' (which is highlighted with a red wavy line). The main content area is titled 'Acceptance Package' and contains instructions: 'Please complete the following steps to officially enroll in your ISEP program. Contact your ISEP student advisor if you need help or have any questions.' Below this, it specifies 'LOYOLA UNIVERSITY NEW ORLEANS, Autumn Term 2022 - Due April 11, 2022' and provides a link to 'View your letter of certification for this program.' (also highlighted with a red wavy line). A list of four steps follows: 'Coordinator Signs' (marked as 'Completed' with a checkmark icon), 'Student Signs' (marked 'Finish' with a pencil icon), 'Medical Form' (marked 'Finish' with a pencil icon), and 'Acceptance Payment' (marked 'Finish' with a pencil icon).

Step	Status
Coordinator Signs →	Completed
Student Signs →	Finish
Medical Form →	Finish
Acceptance Payment →	Finish

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:

7. PROOF OF FUNDING

- Submit a bank statement to prove that you have enough money to cover extra costs during your ISEP program
 - Can be in your name, or your parent or guardian's name
 - Must be an official document with the account information and balance shown
- How much money should I have in my bank account?
 - Semester students: at least \$850 (U.S. dollars)
 - Full year/calendar year students: at least \$1700
- Bank statements can be in the local language since U.S. Embassy and Consulate workers should speak/read the local language

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:

8. *PROOF OF ISEP INSURANCE ENROLLMENT*

- All ISEP students are required to enroll in ISEP's Student Health Insurance for the duration of their ISEP program
- You can add one month of insurance on to the beginning or end of your program for coverage during your travels
- Enroll in your ISEP Insurance at least 45 days before the start of your program, or before your visa interview (whichever is sooner)
 - ISEP Dashboard – ISEP Insurance – 'Enroll Now'

Your Dashboard
Profile
Your Contacts
Enrollment
Application
Course List
Acceptance Package
<u>ISEP Insurance</u>
Invoices & Payments


ISEP INSURANCE

For ISEP Exchange and ISEP Direct students, you are required to enroll in the ISEP Student Insurance program for a period of time that fully covers their program dates. The insurance start and end dates are based on the program start and end dates.

The ability to purchase ISEP insurance will be available after all steps are completed in the Acceptance Package for ISEP Exchange programs.


For Intern Abroad students through Global Experiences, you will enroll in insurance through Global Experiences.

[Guidelines and tips.](#)



Appalachian State University, 2022, Semester 1, ISEP Exchange

Status: Not Enrolled
Deadline Date: 06/30/2022

 [Enroll Now](#)

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:

8. ***PROOF OF ISEP INSURANCE ENROLLMENT CONT.***

- After enrolling in your ISEP Insurance, pay the fee in the Invoices & Payments tab
- Download your Confirmation of Coverage Letter to submit with your visa documents
 - ISEP Dashboard – ISEP Insurance – ‘View Confirmation of Coverage Letter’
- The Confirmation of Coverage Letter is needed to prove your enrollment in insurance. The insurance card and payment receipt do not constitute proof of enrollment.

Your Dashboard
Profile
Your Contacts
Enrollment
Application
Course List
Acceptance Package
ISEP Insurance
Invoices & Payments

ISEP INSURANCE

For ISEP Exchange and ISEP Direct students, you are required to enroll in the ISEP Student Insurance program for a period of time that fully covers their program dates. The insurance start and end dates are based on the program start and end dates.

The ability to purchase ISEP insurance will be available after all steps are completed in the Acceptance Package for ISEP Exchange programs.

For Intern Abroad students through Global Experiences, you will enroll in insurance through Global Experiences.

[Guidelines and tips.](#)



Queens University of Charlotte, 2021, Full Year, ISEP Exchange

Status: Enrolled

Coverage Dates: August 22, 2021 - May 22, 2022

[View Card](#)

[View Confirmation of Coverage Letter](#)

Visa Application

TIMELINE AND GUIDELINES

- Start collecting your documents IMMEDIATELY
- If you wish to apply in-person you should book your visa interview for the earliest date available, once you have your DS-2019
 - When booking your appointment, if at first you do not see any available appointments, you should check the website regularly as more appointments are often added on a daily basis.
 - Please note in-person appointments might not be available at your local U.S. Embassy or Consulate



SENDING IN YOUR APPLICATION

- IF MAILING IN - You must send in your application (with all the required documents) for your application to be processed. Please follow your local U.S. Embassy or Consulate's instructions for mail-in applications.
 - The Embassy or Consulate General is not responsible for lost items during shipping.
- IF IN PERSON - Check if your local U.S. Embassy or Consulate is accepting in-person applications
 - Schedule your visa interview on your local U.S. Embassy or Consulate's website
 - Search for the website on Google – i.e. 'non-immigrant visa interview U.S. Embassy France'
 - Submit all documents listed on page 7 of ISEP Visa Guidelines – USA and any special documents required by your local U.S. Embassy or Consulate

WHO TO CONTACT WITH QUESTIONS

- If you have questions as you complete your J-1 visa application, reach out to your Student Services Officer at ISEP
- Please refer to the ISEP Visa Guidelines – USA for a review of the information presented today as well as further details. Important links regarding the visa process can be found in the document.

HOW MUCH WILL THIS PROCESS COST?

- SEVIS I-901 Fee: \$220
- Visa Application Fee (MRV fee): \$160
- Minimum total cost will start at \$380 and will increase depending on your personal situation and services selected
 - Please keep in mind the following costs
 - ☐ If mailing in- cost of envelope to send
 - ☐ If visiting for an in-person interview, travel cost to embassy or consulate

THIS PROCESS TAKES TIME

- Completing the DS-160 is relatively fast and can be done in 1-2 hours if you have the information needed
- Immediately after completing your DS-160, you should schedule your visa interview or prepare your documents for your mail-in application
- The process becomes lengthy if you have to wait to schedule your visa interview. Schedule your interview as soon as possible once you have received your DS-2019.
- The process of obtaining your visa once submitted is not very lengthy – usually about 1-2 weeks if all documents are submitted correctly
 - Please plan for extra time in the event that the embassy/consulate faces delays

What to Expect at Your Visa Interview

WHAT CAN I EXPECT AT MY VISA INTERVIEW?

Consulates can be intimidating places, so keep the following in mind:

- **Arrive early.** If you have an early morning appointment, the security officers in the building will not let you go up to the consulate until it officially opens, so get to the general vicinity early and wait.
- Follow all COVID-19 regulations and guidelines for the city and the particular office.
- **Bring all your documents.**
- **Use the bathroom before you go**, as some consulates only have bathrooms on the first floor, and you don't want to have to leave the waiting room.
- **You will need to show ID** and sign in, and in some cases pass through metal detection, so be prepared.
- **Some consulates do not allow food and beverages** in the waiting area, so plan accordingly.
- **Pack a book**, as some consulates do not allow you to use your cell phone.
- **You'll be seen by an interviewer** who will request your paperwork and ask you questions about your study abroad plans.

OUR BIGGEST PIECE OF ADVICE FOR YOUR CONSULAR APPOINTMENT...

Be kind and pleasant to everyone.

It sounds like obvious advice; however, visa paperwork can be stressful. The officers have the power to be gracious if you've made a mistake on a form, or they could make you re-do those forms (or even come back another day) if you've given them a poor impression. This is the reality of bureaucracy, and kindness always pays off.

(Never attempt to bribe an officer!)



Before Departing For the U.S.

BEFORE DEPARTING FOR THE U.S.



- Once you receive your visa, make a copy immediately for your record.
- Pack the copy of your visa, your passport with your J-1 visa, your original DS-2019 and your SEVIS I-901 fee payment receipt in your carry-on when traveling to the U.S.

Arriving in the U.S.

ARRIVING IN THE U.S.

- Complete Form CF-6059 upon arrival
 - Usually given to passengers arriving in the U.S. on international flights. Can be completed on the plane or upon arrival before going through customs. (Pack a pen in your carry-on!)
- Make sure that your passport is stamped by the customs officer when first entering the U.S. at the airport.
 - NOTE: J-1 visa holders previously had to receive a J-1 and D/S (Duration of Status) stamp next to their visa. Many officers have stopped doing this as your arrival record (I-94) is now accessible online.
- Once you've arrived at your host university, check your I-94 record to make sure your arrival details are correct.
 - Please refer to page 5 of ISEP Visa Guidelines – USA for information on accessing your I-94 record.

TRAVELING WHILE ON PROGRAM

- Your J-1 visa allows you to travel outside of the U.S. during your program and return within your program dates as long as you have a travel signature from ISEP.
- After you arrive at your host university, your host ISEP Coordinator will collect your DS-2019 and mail it to ISEP. All ISEP students are required to submit their DS-2019 for a travel signature. ISEP will sign your DS-2019 and return it to your host ISEP Coordinator.
- Once you have your travel signature, you can travel outside of the U.S. for leisure or for an emergency.
 - Please research travel restrictions and entry requirements before leaving the U.S.
- Bring your DS-2019 with you on your travels and do not lose it. You will need your original DS-2019 to re-enter the U.S.
 - If you lose your DS-2019 while traveling, contact your ISEP Student Services Officer immediately.
- You are permitted to stay in the U.S. for 30 days after the end date on your DS-2019. Once you leave the U.S. after your program ends, even during your grace period, you will not be able to re-enter on your J-1 visa.



WHAT ARE YOUR QUESTIONS?