

Hosting International Scholars as Exchange Visitors on J-1 Visas

Important Information on the BridgeUSA
(Exchange Visitor Program) for Campus Partners



International Student & Scholar Services

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **BOULDER**

Purpose of this Workshop

- Information about the [BridgeUSA Exchange Visitor Program](#)
- Steps to determine if a J-1 visa is appropriate and/or necessary
- ISSS contacts and communications
- Important actions after the arrival of an Exchange Visitor (EV) in your department



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The BridgeUSA /J-1 Exchange Visitor Program

- The U.S. Department of State (DOS) oversees the BridgeUSA program, also referred to as the Exchange Visitor (J-1 Visa) program.
- BridgeUSA annually attracts around 300,000 individuals to the United States from 200 countries and territories.
- DOS authorizes University of Colorado Boulder, specifically ISSS, as a Program Sponsor
- CU Boulder hosts approximately 500 Exchange Visitors on J-1 visas annually
- DOS sets the regulations and rules for the program



Purpose of the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program

- The purpose of the [BridgeUSA](#) program is to promote the in-person **exchange** of ideas, research, mutual enrichment and linkages between research and academic institutions in the U.S. and foreign countries.
- The intent of the program is to allow an individual to complete their Exchange Visitor program objectives and then return to their home country so that they and their country can benefit from their experience in the U.S.



ISSS Responsibilities

- ISSS advisors are authorized by the DOS to act as Responsible Officers/Alternate Responsible Officers of the Exchange Visitor program at CU Boulder.
- ISSS is responsible for being thoroughly familiar with the Exchange Visitor program regulations, relevant immigration laws, and all federal and state regulations and laws pertaining to the administration of CU Boulder's Exchange Visitor program.
- ISSS communicates with the DOS and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) regarding CU Boulder's Exchange Visitor program.



Department Responsibilities

- Hosting departments are responsible for:
 - Ensuring the Exchange Visitor is performing the objectives list on their Form DS-2019 (the EV immigration form) and as outlined on the DS-2019 request
 - Providing cross-cultural activities
 - Notifying ISSS if there are any changes to an Exchange Visitor's program
 - Examples include but are not limited to: if the Exchange Visitor will be outside of the United States for 30 days or longer, if the Exchange Visitor's funding, duties, appointment %, or their supervisor has changed
 - Reporting to ISSS immediately if a serious problem, incident, or controversy involving the Exchange Visitor occurs
 - The DOS's BridgeUSA [website](#) provides examples of a serious incident: "potential litigation, death of an exchange visitor, serious medical or behavioral issues, sexual abuse allegations, etc."



When Is the J-1 Visa Appropriate to Use?

- A J-1 visa is appropriate for temporary research, collaboration, or teaching (up to 5 years, depending on Exchange Visitor category).
- An Exchange Visitor is in a “nonimmigrant status”, meaning they must have intent to leave the U.S. once they have completed their activity (education, research, or teaching).



Must Have CU Boulder Affiliation

- An Exchange Visitor for whom the university undertakes visa sponsorship must have some CU Boulder affiliation.
- They do not have to be on the payroll of the university.
- Scholars may receive funding from various sources including: the home government, a U.S. government agency, an employer, and/or other sources.



Acceptable CU Appointments

Acceptable

- Temporary Researchers
 - Post-Docs
 - Research Associates
 - PRA
- Non-Tenure Track Teaching Positions
- Visiting Professors & Researchers
- Paid and Non-paid

Unacceptable

- Tenure Track Position
- Permanent Staff Position
- Position With Patient Contact
 - If research involves working with human subjects, contact ISSS prior to invite.



Eligibility Considerations

- Work with ISSS to determine if an individual is eligible for the Exchange Visitor Program
- Current and/or previous immigration status can impact eligibility and/or possible program dates:
 - Did the individual spend previous time in J-1 or J-2 status?
 - Are they currently in the U.S. in J-1 or J-2 status?
 - Are they currently in the U.S. in another status?If YES to any of the answers above, contact ISSS.
- Educational Requirement: Must have at least a bachelor's degree.
 - If individual is pursuing a bachelor's degree, contact ISSS. The student-intern category may be appropriate.



EV (J-1) Categories

Category	Minimum Participation	Maximum Participation	Acceptable Activities	Special Requirements / Restrictions
Research Scholar / Professor	3 weeks	5 years	Teaching, lecturing, observing, consulting and conducting research	Bachelor's degree required. No tenure track positions.
Short-Term Scholar	1 day	6 months	Lecturing, observing, consulting, training, demonstrating special skills.	Bachelor's degree expected.
Specialist	3 weeks	1 year	Observing, consulting, demonstrating special knowledge or skills. Sharing expertise.	Cannot be filling a permanent or long-term position.
Student Intern	3 weeks	1 year	Full-fill educational objectives for degree program in home country. DS-7002 Internship Plan .	Internship position. Good academic standing. Must return home to finish degree. Department must submit the Exchange Visitor Student Intern Request



Estimated Processing & Arrival Timeline

- Departments submit the DS-2019 request to ISSS at least 3-4 months prior to the Exchange Visitor program start date.
- It can take a few weeks to several months for the Exchange Visitor to obtain a J-1 visa from a U.S. embassy or consulate abroad.
 - The EV cannot enter the U.S. until their J-1 visa is issued (*except Canadian citizens*).
 - Each EV will have a different experience with the visa process.
 - ISSS cannot control the amount of time it takes for visa issuance.
 - [DS-2019 Request Timeline](#)



Start Date – Form DS-2019

- Determines when the EV can enter the U.S.
 - 30 days before the start date
 - Up to 30 days after
 - If delay beyond 30 days, contact ISSS.
- Determines when the EV can begin their appointment and/or program activities
 - On or after the DS-2019 start date, *not before*



If EV Is Paid By CU

- Departments must ensure the EV:
 - Completes Form I-9
- New CU employees will receive an email notification within approximately 14 days of their employment start date from CUIntlTax-noreply@Sprintax.com inviting them to complete their Sprintax Calculus profile.
- Enrolls in CU insurance
 - Only the [CU Health Plan Exclusive \(HMO\)](#) and the [CU Health Plan Kaiser \(EPO\)](#) insurance plans meet the minimum insurance requirements for Exchange Visitors



Department Assistance to Exchange Visitor

The hosting department needs to be prepared to assist the EV with:

- Obtaining a BuffOne Card and access
- Onboarding employees with HR, Benefits, etc.
- Obtaining an Identikey for the scholar
- Orienting scholar to their department, labs, facilities

ISSS is unable to provide direct assistance with finding housing for scholars. Off-Campus Housing & Neighborhood Relations is the best resource.



Completion of the Exchange Visitor Program

- Departments must contact ISSS if the EV will complete their J-1 program at CU Boulder prior to their DS-2019 end date
- ISSS emails the department and the EV approximately 30 days before the end date on the DS-2019. In the email ISSS confirms if the EV is eligible for an extension or not.
- All EVs and their supervisors must complete an *End of Program* eForm available in the [MyISSS portal](#) under “J-1 Scholar Services” prior to the DS-2019 end date.
 - EV initiates the eForm, not the department
- EV can work (engage in EV activities) only until the end date on the DS-2019.
- EV may stay in the US for 30 days after their program end date.



Dependent Status / J-2 Visas for Spouses and Children under 21

- Spouses in J-2 status can apply for work authorization from the U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS)
- Spouses and minor children in J-2 status may enroll in school at any level, full-time or part-time. Recreational or degree-seeking study is allowable
- Once a dependent child turns 21, they are no longer eligible for J-2 status and need to change to another immigration status such as F-1 if they wish to stay in the U.S.



Connecting With ISSS

- ISSS email account: iss@colorado.edu
- [Scholar Department Assignment Lookup](#)
- [Subscribe](#) to the ISSS Monthly eNewsletter

