



Application Instructions & Program Requirements

The American Immigration Council is pleased to be designated by the U.S. government to sponsor international training programs under the J-1 visa. The purpose of the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program is to further the foreign policy interests of the United States by increasing mutual understanding between people of other countries and the United States by means of mutual educational and cultural exchanges. The J-1 Exchange Visitor is a non-immigrant who seeks to enter the United States for the purpose of enhancing career skills by participating in a structured training or internship program conducted by a Third Party (Host Company) and sponsored by the American Immigration Council.

A non-immigrant J-1 Exchange Visitor and his/her accompanying spouse and/or minor children may apply for visas to be admitted into the United States in J-1/J-2 classifications under Immigration and Nationality Act § 101(a)(15)(J) if the Exchange Visitor and his/her accompanying spouse and/or children each present American Immigration Council-issued SEVIS Form DS-2019 (Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor [J-1] Status) to a U.S. Consular Official abroad.

In order to obtain a SEVIS Form DS-2019 through the American Immigration Council's Exchange Visitor Program, the proposed Host Company, training program and J-1 Exchange Visitor must meet the following qualifications:

1) The prospective Host Company is required to demonstrate that:

- A) The proposed training is in one of the following seven (7) categories:
 - i) Information Media and Communications;
 - ii) Management, Business, Commerce and Finance;
 - iii) Science, Engineering, Architecture, Mathematics and Industrial Occupations;
 - iv) Public Administration and Law;
 - v) Arts & Culture
 - vi) Tourism
 - vii) Social Sciences, Library Science, Non-clinical Counseling, Social Services
- B) The host company has established a bona fide training program or internship placement and a detailed training plan must be submitted demonstrating that the J-1 Exchange Visitor will not be engaging in ordinary employment;
- C) The Host Company has sufficient annual revenues, qualified personnel, facility and equipment to support a trainee or internship program;
- D) The Host Company has personnel qualified and available to provide the training as described on form DS-7002;
- E) The Host Company has an IRS Employer Identification Number and a Workers' Compensation Policy number;

- F) The Host Company has been in business at least 24 months and can demonstrate sufficient financial stability to provide qualified personnel, facility and equipment for the entire length of the training or internship program;
- G) The Host Company has at least 6 permanent full-time employees working at the site where the exchange visitor will be trained; and,
- H) The Host Company will agree to communicate with the American Immigration Council on J-1 program matters on an on-going basis throughout the J program.

2) The description of the Training Program must include the following:

- A) A detailed description of the program on form DS-7002;
- B) Host Company background information;
- C) Overall program objective;
- D) A description of the specific skills and knowledge the J-1 Exchange Visitor Trainee will acquire during the training program, how the skills and knowledge will be taught and how they pertain to the individual's ultimate career goals;
- E) A description of how the J-1 Exchange Visitor Trainee will be oriented to both the workplace and the local community in which he/she will be living;
- F) A description of the cultural opportunities that are scheduled and the activities available in the immediate area; and,
- G.) A description of the qualifications of the supervisor to provide the training.

3) A training program cannot be approved which:

- A) Deals in generalities with no fixed schedule, objectives, or means of evaluation;
- B) Is incompatible with the nature of the Host Company's business or enterprise;
- C) Includes training which the Exchange Visitor has already mastered;
- D) Is in a field in which it is unlikely the knowledge or skill will be used outside the United States;
- E) Will result in productive employment beyond that which is incidental and necessary to the training;
- F) Is designed to recruit and train aliens for the staffing of operations in the United States;
- G) Does not establish that the petitioner has the physical plant and sufficiently trained manpower to provide the training specified;
- H) Includes unsupervised activity or requires the exchange visitor to have responsibility for activities that should be fulfilled by American employees;
- I) Exceeds the maximum length of stay (18 months for trainee, 12 months for interns) allowed by the J-1 visa regulations;
- J) The proposed J-1 Exchange Visitor Trainee must demonstrate the following:
 - a. He/she has a post-secondary degree or certificate from outside the U.S. that directly relates to the proposed training program plus at least one year of non-U.S.

work experience directly related to the proposed training by provision of the following:

- i. Copy of degree/diploma and transcripts;
 - ii. Resume; and
 - iii. Reference letters covering at least one year of employment
- Or he/she has at least five years of non-U.S. work experience directly related to the proposed training.
- b. He/she has not previously completed work or training that would be duplicative of the proposed J-1 training;

K) The proposed J-1 Exchange Visitor Intern must demonstrate the following:

- a. He/she is enrolled full-time in a non-U.S. post secondary academic degree or certificate granting program related to the proposed internship or will be within 12 months of graduation at the start of the internship by provision of the following:
 - i. Copy of degree/diploma (if graduated) and transcripts;
 - ii. Resume
- b. He/she and his/her spouse and/or minor children have an insurance policy with the following minimum benefits:
 - i. Medical benefits of at least \$100,000 per accident or illness;
 - ii. Repatriation of remains in the amount of \$25,000;
 - iii. Medical evacuation to the home country in the amount of \$50,000; and,
 - iv. A deductible not to exceed \$500 per accident or illness.
- c. He/she has at three conversational English-speaking skills so as to be able to fully benefit from the training and cultural opportunities in the United States, and be able to communicate unassisted with American Immigration Council staff by telephone in the event of an emergency;
- d. He/she is at least eighteen years of age;
- e. He/she can demonstrate how the training will be used upon return to the home country;
- f. He/she can demonstrate the intent to return to the home country;
- g. He/she will apply for the J-1 visa in the home country;
- h. The applicant will be outside of the United States at the time of an interview with American Immigration Council staff via webcam.

Fee Policy

An application fee is required for each application and additional fees are required for applicants with dependents. The American Immigration Council offers a non-refundable 5 business day expedite service for reviewing applications at an additional cost. All fees must be paid by a check drawn on a U.S. bank or a major credit card. Please check our web site for current fees:

www.internationalexchangecenter.org/fees.

Ongoing Exchange

The use of exchange visitor programs to produce ongoing international relationships is a priority of US foreign policy. Participation in this special project of the American Immigration Council helps to formally document that this important objective is met. Both the American Host Company and the Exchange Visitor should understand that the intent of the exchange visitor program is to foster mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other nations. Please carefully read the handbooks provided by the American Immigration Council for both the Exchange Visitor and the Host, and review the Declarations that are part of the application. The handbooks are posted under the resources tab at www.internationalexchangecenter.org.

Application Instructions

General

- A) Applicants who fail to read these instructions before filling out the Application Form will delay the processing of their petition.
- B) Type – handwritten applications cannot be accepted.
- C) We recommend Visa Appointments not be made before the DS-2019 form has been issued. We recommend not buying airline tickets before the J-1 visa has been issued.
- D) Partial applications cannot be accepted.

Trainee/Intern Information

- A) Trainee/Intern Information includes Section 1, Section 2, Section 3, a resume detailing the Applicant's employment and education history, and a complete copy of the trainee Applicant's current passport, including all blank pages.
- B) DS-2019 forms cannot be sent to a U.S. Address. All DS-2019 forms are sent overseas via Federal Express. Federal Express cannot deliver to a Post Office Box. Applications must have an identifiable street address in Section 1.
- C) Educational degrees and transcripts, translated into English, should accompany the resume.
- D) If the Trainee Applicant does not possess a university degree, then letters verifying five years of non- U.S. employment experience related to the proposed training must also accompany the resume in addition to providing copies of transcripts for education (C).
- E) Trainee Applicants with a degree related to the proposed training must submit letters verifying at least one year of non-U.S. employment experience related to the proposed training.

Host Company Information

- A) As part of the application process, American Immigration Council staff will call to interview the Supervisor responsible to oversee the Exchange Visitor's program. Please attach a note if the supervisor must be reached during non-standard business hours.
- B) If the training will occur in more than one site of activity, a separate form DS-7002 must be completed for each site of activity.

English Language Proficiency

- A) English proficiency can be asserted by the trainee applicant's self-evaluation; however, as part of the application process, American Immigration Council staff will interview via webcam the Exchange Visitor Applicant. If the English language proficiency appears to have been over-rated, or if American Immigration Council staff are effectively unable to communicate with the Applicant, the application may be deemed unacceptable.

Dependent Information

- A) This section should be completed only for dependents accompanying or separately following the Exchange Visitor to the United States during the J-1 program.

Exchange Visitor Financial Support and Budget

- A) This information should be prepared by the Host Company in consultation with the Exchange Visitor Applicant.
- B) In compliance with J-1 visa regulations, this information will be shared with the Exchange Visitor Applicant. While expense information should be considered to be only an estimate, please be as realistic as possible.
- C) Income and exchange visitor personal resources will be shown on the DS-2019. The Exchange Visitor Applicant may be required to show evidence of these funds during the Visa Interview at the U.S. Consulate.
- D) Cost of living information is often available through local real estate agents, community websites, and local chambers of commerce.
- E.) If expenses are being covered by the American host, do not enter an amount, but do check the box next to the expense line.

Training Plan

The Training Plan must explain what the Exchange Visitor will learn; how the material will be taught; and how the knowledge will be evaluated. It is a detailed description of what the Host Company will do to ensure the Exchange Visitor's growth in skills and competencies. The Training Plan allows the Host Company, the Exchange Visitor, and the Program Sponsor (American immigration Council) to know at any given time what the Trainee or Intern should be learning.

A) General Overview:

- 1) The training planned must fall into one of the career fields listed. The American Immigration Council is unable to sponsor training in other career fields.
- 2) The business activities and organization history must establish the Host Company as having the expertise to provide the training.
- 3) The overall objectives of the Training Plan must match the career field chosen. They must also provide a logical step in the Exchange Visitor's career development.
- 4) Note: the J-1 visa cannot be used to prepare the Exchange Visitor for future employment in the United States, nor can it be used to fill staff shortages or displace American residents from employment-related opportunities.
- 5) We urge Host Companies to consider the difference between training provided to permanent American employees and that provided to a temporary resident from another culture.
- 6) The training must advance the Exchange Visitor's career objectives in the home country. We urge Host Companies to consult with the Exchange Visitor in responding to this question.

B) DS-7002, Training/Internship Placement Plan:

- 1) U.S. government regulations require that all Host Companies provide an IRS Employer Identification Number and a Worker's Compensation policy number.
- 2) The stipend refers to any compensation the exchange visitor receives from the U.S. Host Company.
- 3) Both the J-1 applicant and the Host Company Supervisor must sign the same page of the DS-7002. Faxed or scanned signatures are acceptable. Electronic signatures are not acceptable.
- 4) The American Immigration Council is the Program Sponsor. Please do not try to sign for us!
- 5) A separate DS-7002 signature page must be submitted for each site of activity and each training rotation having a different supervisor.

C) Phases:

A separate form must be completed for each phase of the training. As a rule of thumb, the maximum length of time for each should not exceed five months. Any department rotation should be considered a separate phase. On-the-job training will only rarely be accepted as the sole training activity in a phase, and any on-the-job training must be shown in the training plan to be tied to the acquisition of specific skills or competencies. On-the-job training must be supervised at all times.

- 1) The supervisor listed for a specific phase may be different from the supervisor for the overall training indicated on the Host Company information page. Each phase supervisor must sign a DS-7002, but only one supervisor's signature is needed if there will be the same supervisor throughout the entire training plan.
- 2) Knowing how to do a job does not necessarily mean an individual can teach the job to another. Please indicate the qualifications of the supervisor to provide training during this phase.
- 3) The specific skills or competencies to be developed during the phase must relate to the overall objective of the Training Program.

- 4) Training methods must include a combination of training activities. Methods may include: Guided research, shadowing experts, interviewing experts, discussions with colleagues/clients, participating in seminars/workshops/conferences, interpreting surveys, guided special projects, maintaining learning journals, rotation through departments, on-the- job training and specific other activities.
- 5) For each skill or competency listed, indicate how progress or acquisition of skill will be evaluated.
- 6) Each phase of training should build on skills or competencies the Trainee has previously mastered.
- 7) Cultural exchange is the major purpose of the J-1 program. The J-1 Exchange Visitor visa is issued with the understanding that opportunities will be provided for an exchange of cultural knowledge and experience. Please explain plans for the exchange visitor to share his/her culture with colleagues and/or community members during the phase.
- 8) To satisfy the intent of the J-1 visa, time should be planned to allow the trainee to experience American cultural activities during the training program. Please indicate what American cultural activities will be available to the trainee during the phase. Examples may include: American Family Activities, Sporting Events, planned visits to Museums, planned participation in specific Community Events, participation with Community Service Organizations, attendance at Performing Arts, attendance at and observation of Political Events. American society is infinitely creative. The plan for experiencing American culture should be so as well.
- 9.) If the trainee or intern can work independently, they have already been trained and need to move on to the acquisition of the next skill.

Declarations

- A) The Host Company Declaration should be signed by an employee or officer of the company authorized to approve such agreements.
- B) Trainees/Interns and their accompanying dependents must be covered by sickness and accident insurance during their entire stay in the United States. Trainees/Interns and their accompanying dependents should enroll in the group policy negotiated by the American Immigration Council or submit an alternate plan so that the American Immigration Council can confirm that the insurance meets the U.S. government regulations for J-1 visa participants.
- C) The Exchange Visitor Declaration and the Ongoing Exchange Declaration should be signed by an employee or officer of the Host Company authorized to approve such agreements and by the trainee/intern. Faxed or scanned signatures are acceptable.
- D) The American Immigration Council Declaration will be signed upon acceptance of the Exchange Visitor program application.

**After Reviewing Check List
Send Complete Application to:**

American Immigration Council
Attn: International Exchange Center
Suite 200
1331 G St., NW
Washington, DC 20005