University of Virginia
International Studies Office (ISO)
208 Minor Hall/POB 400165

About UVa’s J-1 Program

UVa sponsors two types of foreign visitors for J-1 visas: Scholars and Students

Scholar

The J-1 visa and status is available for official visits to UVa of up to three years’ duration by foreign researchers and faculty. Although the J-1 regulations permit payment from a US source, J-1 is not, strictly speaking, an employment status. Consequently, many J-1 regulations are incompatible with, or inconvenient for, man “employment” situations. J-1 regulations assume flexibility on everyone’s part, especially as regards timing, that true employment situations often do not. Host departments should contact their dean’s offices for further guidance in the matter.

Two-Part Process

There is a two-part process for UVa departments hoping to have a foreign researcher or faculty join them on J-1 status.

First, all arrangements for the potential J-1 visitor’s activity and appointment (salaried or non-salaried) at UVa are worked out between the potential visitor and his or her University host department. ISO helps host departments in this endeavor by advising them on the requirements for J-1 status and, in conjunction with the host department’s dean’s office, guiding them through UVa’s internal processes. As regards UVa policies on visiting researchers and faculty (foreign and domestic), host departments should contact their dean’s offices for further guidance in the matter.

Second, after all professional arrangements are made for the J-1 visitor’s appointment at UVa, ISO works with the University host department and with the potential J-1 visitor to help the incoming scholar obtain a J-1 visa and then to maintain the J-1 status conferred by entry to the US with a J-1 visa, extending this status when necessary, and providing advice about other statuses, etc.

Criteria

Professional appointment at UVa (salaried or non-salaried) via your department’s School’s dean’s office, or other formal, written invitation issued by a member of your department’s faculty and approved by your department’s chairman.

Must have highest degree in field, or be close to getting it, or possess extensive, high level experience in the field

Activity at UVa must be of the sort that requires the highest degree in the field or extensive, high level experience in the field
Medical professionals may not engage in clinical activity or have patient contact (“no touching”) 

If UVa position is permanent, J-1 visitor may not hold it permanently 

In some cases, a foreign national who is an advanced graduate student at an institution abroad may qualify for a J-1 visa if she is coming to UVa as a Scholar, i.e., if she will be engaged in research either on her own or as part of a team at the University, but she will not be enrolled as a student at UVa. If you have questions about this, please contact ISO. 

Equal Opportunity Program (EOP) and other UVa restrictions may apply. Your department’s request for UVa to sponsor a foreign national for a J-1 visa and status comes to ISO via your dean’s office, which reviews requests for compliance with EOP and UVa policies. Contact your dean’s office for more information about this. 

**Funding minimum**—$1500/month for J-1 visitor, $500/month for each dependent (called J-2). Lesser amounts may be acceptable. Please contact ISO about this before submitting a request for UVa to sponsor a J-1 visitor. There is no maximum funding limit. Total funding may come from a single source or from a combination of them: UVa, home institution salary, home country government, US government, personal funds.

Please note that this is the funding minimum for J-1 status, but that other, higher standards may apply according to UVa’s own policies on these matters. Contact your dean’s office for more information about this.

**Duration**—Up to three years total, usually sponsored for no longer than a year at a time. If your department wishes to sponsor a foreign scholar for more than a year’s J-1 status at a time, e.g., for all three years from the start, please contact your dean’s office for more information about this option.

**Extending J-1 status**—Requests to extend J-1 status come to ISO from the host department, not from the J-1 visitor him- or herself. This is because requesting UVa to extend J-1 sponsorship beyond the initial period of J-1 status is almost exactly like the routine for requesting J-1 sponsorship in the first place, at least as far as the University process goes.

**Please note:** J-1 visitors do not have to leave the US in order to extend their J-1 status. **Extension of J-1 status is within ISO’s discretion, i.e., it takes place on Grounds!**

From ISO’s side, extending J-1 status is a matter of providing the J-1 visitor with a new DS-2019, one with a different expiration date on it. However, in order to qualify for an extension of J-1 status, the host department’s dean’s office must approve a continuation of the professional appointment.

**Procedure**—After securing a UVa professional appointment, or other formal invitation, for your J-1 visitor, host department completes form called “Request for UVa to Sponsor J-1 Visitor” located at the following URL and routes it to ISO as indicated on the form: **PUT URL HERE**

After receiving the Request, ISO reviews it and prepares a DS-2019 (formerly IAP-66) for the expected J-1 visitor and, if applicable, for his or her dependents. The DS-2019 is a numbered, bar-coded document—a US government certificate—that tells the staff at a American embassy or consulate that the person named on it is eligible to apply for a J-1 (or, in the case of a dependent,
a J-2) visa. The DS-2019 is not available to the general public. It is not a blank form provided to the host department or to the scholar for completion.

When the DS-2019 is ready, ISO encloses instructions for its use, along with very general pre-arrival orientation information about, e.g., travel to Charlottesville, short-term lodging near UVa, etc., in an envelope and sends it to your department by UVa messenger for timely dispatch to the expected J-1 visitor.

ISO does not send the DS-2019 directly to the incoming J-1 visitor. Your department does this.

**Timing**—ISO suggests that your department submit J-1 requests as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Submission Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New</td>
<td>120-60 days before start date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer</td>
<td>60-30 days before start date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extension</td>
<td>60-30 days before start date</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Requests submitted to ISO after the latest date indicated above will be acted upon. However, please call ISO first to discuss the matter. In the case of New and Transfer requests, ISO may ask you to change the start date for your new J-1 visitor.

**Canadian citizens only.** If your J-1 visitor is a citizen of Canada, the process described above varies just enough to require a discussion about it with ISO. Please contact us as soon as possible to talk about the matter.

**Student**

The vast majority of foreign students in the US are sponsored for F-1 visas and status, as F-1 is the standard foreign student visa. For information about UVa’s F-1 program, contact Richard Tanson (tanson@virginia.edu, 2-3017) or Caroline Herrarte (cah6t@virginia.edu, 2-3042). Questions about UVa’s F-1 program as it relates to the Darden Graduate School of Business Administration (only) should be directed to Barbara Millar at Darden (bam5p@virginia.edu, 4-4822).

Only two kinds of students qualify for the J-1 program: (i) those enrolled as full-time students in degree programs at UVa, whose funding is provided directly to them by their home country government (in the form of a grant or scholarship) and (ii) those who are coming to UVa under the terms of an exchange agreement between the University and their home institution (“exchange students”).

If you have questions about the J-1 program as it relates to students, please contact ISO.

In some cases, a foreign national who is an advanced graduate student at an institution abroad may qualify for a J-1 visa if she is coming to UVa as a Scholar, i.e., if she will be engaged in research either on her own or as part of a team, but she will not be enrolled as a student at UVa. If you have questions about this, please contact ISO.