

Inviting an International Scholar



MISSISSIPPI STATE
UNIVERSITY™

International Institute

Presentation Overview

International Scholars

- General Overview
- Process for invitation, document issuance, and visas
- Requirements upon arrival
- Common Issues



International Scholars

General Overview

- International Scholars (researchers, professors, student interns) will be issued DS-2019s and will enter the US on J1 visas
- J1 program is designed to promote cultural and educational exchange between people of the United States and people of other countries
- J1 is a non-immigrant visa so visitor must demonstrate non-immigrant intent to receive visa



International Scholars

Process

- Process begins upon decision to hire or invite an international visitor to campus to teach, research, or observe in MSU department
 - The initial screening and selection process is up to each individual department. ISO can provide assistance on specific requirements but selection is done by the department.
- Once candidate is decided upon, department begins the process for inviting an Official Visitor.
 - This process can be quite time consuming so please plan accordingly



International Scholars

Process Continued

- Assemble a complete visitor packet which includes:
 - Official Visitor Agreement
 - Required Attachment A (description of the project)
 - Visitor's CV
 - Contract Cover Sheet
 - DS-2019 Request Form
 - Copy of visitor's passport

*Text in red denotes forms which require signatures



International Scholars

DS-2019 Request Form

- Biographical Information-send to visitor and request that they fill out this section
- Program Information- 1-2 sentences that will print on the DS-2019
- J-1 Category
 - Professor
 - Research Scholar
 - Short-term Scholar
 - Student Intern
 - Specialist



International Scholars

DS-2019 Request Form

- Proof of funding
 - Visitors must be able to show at least \$1,200/month for duration of program. Adding a dependent requires an additional \$3,850/year
- English Language Requirement
 - Regulations require that J-1 visitors have “sufficient proficiency in the English language, as determined by an objective measurement of English language proficiency, successfully to participate in his or her program and to function on a day-to-day basis.”



International Scholars

DS-2019 Request Form

- Ways to certify English Proficiency
 - Certification of English Language Tests (IELTS or TOEFL) taken within past 5 years
 - Certification of proficiency by an English language school or academic institution where English is primary language of instruction
 - Interview assessing proficiency by the MSU faculty Mentor/Supervisor
 - Visitor is a citizen of a country where English is the official language



International Scholars

Process Continued

- Along with completed form, please send the following documents to your Dean or Center Director
 - Contract Cover Sheet
 - Completed DS-2019 Request Form with signatures
 - Copy of funding for visitor (Offer letter, Scholarship from home government, personal funding, etc)
 - Copy of passport for principal and any dependents requesting documents
 - Copy of CV
 - Official Visitor Agreement complete with the signature of an authorized representative of the home institution/employer-not the visitor themselves (for visitors not being paid by MSU)



International Scholars

Process Continued

- After the Office of Research Security has received the completed packet, they will coordinate complete the federally required Restricted Party Screening and obtain the necessary signatures from ORED.
- If no negative results are received, original packet will be sent to ISO for document issuance
 - In order for visitor to have enough time to receive documents and secure a J1 visa, ISO must receive completed packet from ORED no later than 1 month prior to visitor's start date
- Once DS-2019 is issued, departmental representative will be contacted to pick it up from ISO. Department is then responsible for sending it to visitor.



International Scholars

Visa Process

- Once visitor has received DS-2019, he/she will pay the SEVIS I-901 fee and schedule the visa interview.
 - Timeline can vary from a few days to a few weeks depending on the consulate
- Visitor should look at the appropriate consulate's website to see what documents will be required. Common documents include:
 - Invitation letter or letter explaining the research to be conducted
 - Proof of funding
 - Documents to prove non-immigrant intent (employment letter, land/house deeds, etc.)
- If J-1 visa is issued, visitor can enter the US up to 30 days before his/her start date



International Scholars

Requirements Upon Arrival

- Once visitor arrives, he/she needs to check in with International Services Office and complete they mandatory Immigration Orientation course online
- According to Department of State regulations, all J-1 exchange visitors are required to maintain health insurance that meets DOS requirements.
 - MSU Employee Insurance does not satisfy these requirements. Alternate insurance will be discussed when visitor checks-in.



International Scholars

Common Issues

- **Housing For Scholars**
 - Short-term housing is often difficult to find. If the visitor will be an MSU employee, consider starting with Facilities Management and faculty/staff housing.
 - If there is a student association from the visitor's home country, they are a great resource for finding housing and making the transition to MSU easier for the visitor
- **Social Security Number**
 - J1 Exchange Visitors are eligible to apply for a Social Security Number but must be activated with our office first. Must complete orientation and provide proof of insurance before activation.
- **Drivers License**
 - J1 Exchange Visitors can obtain a driver's license but must first be activated with our office



International Scholars

Common Issues Continued

- 2 Year Home Residence Requirement- 212(e)
 - Government funded exchange program - The program in which the exchange visitor was participating was financed in whole or in part directly or indirectly by the U.S. government or the government of the exchange visitor's nationality or last residence;
 - Graduate medical education or training - The exchange visitor entered the United States to receive graduate medical education or training;
 - Specialized knowledge or skill: Skills List - The exchange visitor is a national or permanent resident of a country which has deemed the field of specialized knowledge or skill necessary to the development of the country, as shown on the Exchange Visitor Skills List. Review the Exchange Visitor Skills List 2009.
- Must satisfy the 2 year requirement or apply for a waiver before changing/adjusting status in the US, receiving an immigrant visa at a consulate, or receiving an H visa at a consulate



Questions?



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