J-1 EXCHANGE VISITORS

International Scholars Operations
November 21, 2019
Today’s Topics

- Introduction to J-1s
- UW sponsorship requirements
- J-1 eligibility requirements
  - English proficiency requirement
  - Health insurance requirement
  - Cultural exchange requirement
- J-1 procedures
- Q&A
Introduction to J-1s
What is the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program?

Key Aspects
• Over 50 years old
• Around 300,000 participants every year
• Administered by U.S. Department of State
• Uses the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (“SEVIS”)

Mission
To increase mutual understanding between people of the United States and people of other countries by means of educational and cultural exchanges, thereby strengthening the ties between the nations.
Details of J-1 Status

- Sponsor-, activity-, and location- specific
- Full-time activity only
- Temporary appointments only
- Period of stay can be a few days up to five years
- 12 & 24 month bars on certain categories
- Two-year home residence requirement (possible)
- Can be paid for outside “occasional lectures and short-term consultations” (only if authorized by ISO in advance)
Permitted Activities

J-1 exchange visitors may engage in:

• Research
• Observation
• Consultation
• Limited teaching
• Demonstrating special skills

The J visa is not a work permit.
J-1 Categories

Sponsored by ISO:

• *Research Scholar/Professor*
  Up to 5 years *but* 12- and 24-month bars on repeat participation

• *Short-Term Scholar*
  Up to 6 months

• *Specialist*
  Up to 12 months; by exception only
UW Sponsorship Requirements
Appointment Details

UW sponsors the following titles for J-1 status:
• Visiting titles
• Postdoctoral Scholar
• Acting Instructor
• Artist in Residence

Appointments must be full-time and have regular UW faculty sponsor supervision. UW cannot sponsor tenured or tenure-track faculty as J-1 exchange visitors.
Funding requirements

There are two funding requirements:
• UW J-1 Funding Floor
• UW Salary Schedule

Meeting the J-1 funding floor
Scholar has enough money to support themselves and their family in the U.S.

Meeting the salary schedule
UW or another source is compensating the scholar at an appropriate level
J-1 Funding Floor

**UW funding floor** (applies regardless of title or salary source)

- $2,100/month for the J-1 exchange visitor
- $1,200/month for the J-2 spouse
- $600/month for each J-2 child

**Funding Source:**
At least 50% of funding floor must come from a source other than personal or family funds
UW Salary Schedule

For most titles, the J-1 will also have to show outside funding equivalent to the UW salary minimum for their title and rank.

Outside funding can include one or more government, employer, UW, or third-party sources. Personal or family funds do not count.

As courtesy titles, visiting scholars are not subject to the UW salary schedule. However, they still have to meet the J-1 funding floor.
# Funding and Salary Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Example 1</th>
<th>Example 2</th>
<th>Example 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title</strong></td>
<td>Visiting Scholar</td>
<td>Postdoctoral Scholar</td>
<td>Visiting Associate Professor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(experience level 0)</td>
<td>(nine-month)</td>
<td>(nine-month)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spouse?</strong></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Children?</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Annual Funding Floor</strong></td>
<td>$61,200</td>
<td>$25,200</td>
<td>$46,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Annual Salary Minimum</strong></td>
<td>(none)</td>
<td>$50,004</td>
<td>$54,315</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
How to document funding

Funding documentation must:

• Come from the funding source
• Be signed and on letterhead
• Be written in English
• Include the scholar’s name
• Include the funding amount in U.S. dollars

ISO will review funding documentation and contact you if it does not match or otherwise meet these requirements.

Feel free to reach out to us with questions!
J-1 Eligibility Requirements

- English proficiency
- Health insurance
- Cultural exchange
J-1 English Proficiency

J-1 Exchange Program sponsors are required to confirm that prospective scholars have “sufficient proficiency in the English language [...] to successfully participate in his or her program and to function on a day-to-day basis.”

That proficiency must be determined by an objective measurement of English language.
Objective English Proficiency Measurements

Acceptable methods for documenting English proficiency:

• A recognized English language test
• Signed documentation from an academic institution or English language school
• A documented interview conducted by the sponsor

Units must use one of these three methods to confirm proficiency before submitting the visa request.
Recognized English language test

Units should retain a test result copy with exchange visitor’s name.

- Pass/fail test: Exchange visitor must have passed. (E.g.: Cambridge English.)
- Scored test: The unit can decide necessary score. (E.g.: TOEFL.)

Online or informal tests are not acceptable.

Units may choose to use the UW Admissions requirements for English proficiency.
Academic Institution or English Language School Requirements

Units should retain a signed document on school/institutional letterhead including:

- The exchange visitor’s name
- Their proficiency level

If issued by an academic institution, the document must explain the basis for proficiency assessment (e.g. completion of English coursework, etc.).
Documented English Proficiency Interview

How and when can the interview take place?

• Must be **in-person or video** if possible
• If neither is possible, a phone interview may be used
• The interview must be conducted **before** the J-1 visa request is submitted to ISO

The interview **must** be conducted by a UW employee, preferably the faculty sponsor or the unit administrator, who is proficient in English.
Proficiency Interview (continued)

Resulting documentation should include:

• Participant names
• Interview date, time, and method
• What was discussed
• Assessment method (e.g. was a rubric or scoring method used)
• Signed and dated by interviewer

ISO is happy to review your interview documentation templates!
Proficiency Interview (continued)

**Informal assessment:** The interviewer can discuss life in the U.S., e.g.:

- Where do you think you’ll want to live?
- What support services are you interested in?
- Tell me about what you like to do outside of work.
- What do you think will be most challenging about living and working in the U.S.?

If the visitor can’t answer these questions clearly and completely, they’re probably not proficient enough for daily life in the U.S.

**Formal assessment:** The interviewer can use the TOEFL Scoring Rubric or another proficiency rubric of their choice.
Insurance Requirement

J-1 exchange visitors must obtain and maintain the following throughout their stay:

- Health insurance
- Medical repatriation
- Evacuation insurance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefit</th>
<th>Required amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medical benefits</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deductible per accident or illness</td>
<td>$500 maximum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repatriation of remains</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical evacuation</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ISO collects the Insurance Compliance Form at check-in and with all J-1 extensions.
Cultural exchange requirement

All sponsors must have cultural exchange plans in place for the J-1 and J-2(s)

For possible activities, see:

- Our cultural exchange page
- FIUTS
- The Whole U
- Visiting Seattle (City of Seattle website)
- Experience Washington (commercial website)
J-1 Procedures
Sponsor responsibilities (pre-arrival)

1. Start at least **three months** before the start date
2. Review “How to Sponsor a J-1 Exchange Visitor”
3. Collect scholar information using **J Visa Intake Form**
4. Verify and retain evidence of **funding** from all sources
5. Document scholar’s **English proficiency**
6. Plan **cultural exchange activities** for the scholar and their family
7. Submit **J Visa Request** to ISO and pay CTI fee(s)
8. Provide signed visa request, with supporting documentation, to ISO
Supporting Documentation

Supporting documentation includes but is not limited to:

- Copies of biographic pages for J-1 and all J-2 dependents
- The offer, invitation, or reappointment letter
- Funding documentation
- Documentation of English proficiency
- Patient care letter for foreign medical graduates

See our J-1 Checklist for more detail.
DS-2019 Certificate of Eligibility

ISO sends host department Form DS-2019

Department forwards DS-2019 to exchange visitor

Exchange visitor uses DS-2019 to apply for J visa at consulate and enters U.S.

Let ISO know if arrival is delayed!
We can amend the dates on the DS-2019.
**Sponsor responsibilities** *(post-arrival)*

- Make sure scholar **does not start before start date on DS-2019**
- Help scholar **settle in** (Husky card, NetID, housing...)
- Ensure the scholar attends the [ISO Check-In Session](#)
- Provide **cultural exchange opportunities**
  - Notify ISO *in advance* of: late arrivals, early departures, changes in worksite, title, research focus or duties, leave of absence, resignation, etc.
  - Notify ISO *immediately* of any **significant incidents** involving the scholar: injuries, deaths, lawsuits, arrests, investigations, document loss or theft, etc.
- **Extend** the scholar’s stay in a timely manner
Scholar Responsibilities

- Pay $220 SEVIS fee and other visa application fees
- Attend check-in at ISO within 30 days of start date
- Maintain health insurance in compliance with federal law
- Report changes in residential address or other information on DS-2019
- Avoid unauthorized employment
- Seek permission from ISO before engaging in “occasional lectures and consultations”
- Leave the U.S. within the 30-day grace period
Reporting Requirements

J-1 exchange visitors must report the following changes to ISO:

• Late arrival in U.S.
• Changes in address or contact information
• Changes in worksite
• Lengthy travel outside the U.S.
• Early departure (either J-1 or J-2)

All changes and/or incidents can be emailed to ISO at acadvisa@uw.edu.
Transfer Procedures

Transferring to UW:
- Unit must submit a new J Visa Request and a copy or scan of the exchange visitor’s current DS-2019
- ISO will contact the current program sponsor to arrange the transfer

Transferring from UW:
- Exchange visitor must submit a Transfer Verification Form to ISO
- ISO will contact the new program sponsor to arrange the transfer
Leaving the U.S.

**Grace period**
Exchange visitors have up to 30 days after the DS-2019 end date to leave the U.S. If they leave during the grace period, **no notice to ISO is necessary**.

**Leaving before DS-2019 end date**
Report departure to ISO so that the DS-2019 can be updated.

Please encourage your exchange visitors to complete our [J-1 Scholar Exit Interview](#) form before they leave the U.S.!
Any questions?

Contact us: acadvisa@uw.edu

For more resources, visit: https://ap.washington.edu/ahr/visas/j1/