Research Scholar, Professor and Short-Term Scholar Programs

Participants in these categories research, lecture, study, observe, or consult at research institutions, corporate research facilities, museums, libraries, post-secondary academic institutions, and similar organizations in the U.S. "Scholar" programs foster the exchange of ideas, promote international collaborative academic pursuits, and support connections between institutions and research projects in the U.S. and foreign countries. Foreign scholars also actively participate in cross-cultural activities, bringing back the experiences gained to share knowledge of American cultural, professional, and academic practices with their countrymen.

The minimum academic qualification for applicants to these programs is a bachelors' level degree and appropriate experience in the field of research to be completed.

Research Scholar

Research Scholars enter the U.S. to research, observe, or consult in connection with a research project. They hold positions as professors, researchers, post-docs, graduate students, attorneys, or similar in their home country.

The position must be a temporary appointment.

Applicants cannot have been present in the U.S. in J-1 status in the 12 months preceding the program start date, unless as a Short-Term Scholar or for a period of less than six months duration.

For an overview of eligibility requirements, please visit the U.S. Department of State BridgeUSA program website: https://j1visa.state.gov/programs/research-scholar/.

Professor

Professors observe, consult, teach, or lecture at a post-secondary university in the U.S. To qualify, applicants must show experience in the proposed field of teaching and as a Professor in their home country.

The position must be a temporary, non-tenure track appointment. Applicants cannot have been present in the U.S. in J-1 status in the 12 months preceding the program start date, unless as a short-term scholar or for a period of less than six months duration.

For an overview of eligibility requirements, visit: https://j1visa.state.gov/programs/professor/.

Short-Term Scholar

Short-Term Scholars lecture, observe, consult, train, demonstrate special skill(s), and/or participate in educational and professional activities including seminars, workshops, conferences, study tours, and meetings.

For an overview of eligibility requirements, visit: https://j1visa.state.gov/programs/short-term-scholar/.

Duration and Repeat Participation

Research Scholar and Professor programs can be three weeks to five years in duration.

Following completion of a BridgeUSA program in the Research Scholar or Professor category, the scholar is subject to a 24-month bar on repeat participation in these categories. The scholar will not be eligible to begin a new program as a Research Scholar or Professor for two years following the end date of a previous program in the Research Scholar or Professor category.

Short-Term Scholar programs have no minimum duration and a maximum duration of up to six months.

IIE Program Fees

Fees to be paid by the host organization:

- Initial sponsorship fee (up to 12 months) = $1500
- Extension of sponsorship, per year = $500
- Expedited processing service (optional) = $750
- Enrollment in IIE group insurance (optional) = Inquire directly

Fees to be paid by either the host organization or scholar:

- J-2 sponsorship fee, per dependent = $500
- Individual insurance meeting minimum J-visa requirements = varies, from $75 - $200 per month
- DS-2019 re-issuance fee = $50

Other Fees

These fees are not included in IIE's services but must be paid during the J-1 Visa application:

- $220 SEVIS Fee
- $185 nonimmigrant visa application fee

Compensation and Funding

IIE recommends that scholars have a minimum of $2500 per month available for expenses. Scholars cannot be "self-funded" and must show some type of third-party financial support, either through host organization wages, continued home employer salary, scholarship, fellowship, and/or government funding. Please be aware that compensation provided by a host organization might not cover all expenses and scholars should prepare to bring personal funds. Additional funding must be shown for J-2 dependent applications.

Cost of Living

The cost of living can vary greatly depending on where the host organization is located. Prior to accepting a position, scholars should research online to budget accordingly. Housing in a large city can cost approximately $2000 per month, while housing in a smaller town might cost closer to $500 per month. Utilities may include electric or gas ($50 - $100 per month, depending on the size of the housing), cable and internet ($50 - $200 depending on plan). In a single-family home, the tenant may also be responsible for water and trash collection, about $150 - $200 annually. Cost of food may range from $200 - $500 per month, depending on location and preference to cook or eat out regularly.

Transit

Most urban areas have public transit, such as subways, buses, and trains and this is a great environmentally friendly option for transit. The cost of monthly public transit tickets ranges from $25 - $150 for local service, or higher for regional service. Owning a car in the U.S. can be expensive, and gas prices can be between $2 - $5 per gallon. Drivers will need to make sure they have or obtain the proper driving license (through the Department of Motor Vehicles for the state) and vehicle insurance.

Payroll Deductions

If the host organization is providing compensation, taxes will be deducted from each paycheck. J-1 Exchange Visitors are subject to federal, state and local income taxes but are exempt from FICA and FUTA. Scholars receiving income in the U.S might expect to pay 22% - 24% of their annual salary in taxes. Tax returns are filed in April for the preceding year. Scholars are responsible for knowing their personal filing requirements. Questions should be directed to a tax professional with experience in nonimmigrant filing.

Next Steps

Interested in exchange visitor sponsorship through IIE? A representative of the U.S. host organization should contact IIE at jvisasponsorship@iie.org or 212-984-5313 to begin our online application process.

IIE recommends submitting the application at least 2-3 months in advance of the intended program start date. As part of the application, scholars will need to provide documentation including, but not limited to: Resume, diplomas, and passport.

The passport should be valid at least 6 months past the expected program end date.