

# The Teacher Program



The Teacher category of the BridgeUSA Program offers foreign teachers the possibility to teach full-time in accredited public and private primary and secondary schools in the United States. Exchange teachers may also teach at the pre-kindergarten level in language immersion programs.

The goal of the program is to promote cultural exchange between foreign teachers, their students abroad, and the U.S. school community. Teachers will return home after their exchange and share their knowledge of U.S. culture and educational practices in their home countries.

For an overview of eligibility requirements for interested teachers, please visit the U.S. Department of State Teacher Program website: <https://i1visa.state.gov/programs/teacher>.

## Teaching Positions

U.S. host schools or school districts must provide a full-time position as a teacher of record, with a minimum of 32 hours per week of teaching or teaching-related administrative activities.

Teachers must be employees of either their U.S. host school, host school district, or their home school during the exchange. Positions are temporary, do not lead to tenure, and are commensurate in responsibility and compensation to those of similarly situated U.S. teachers in the host school or school district.

## IIE Program Fees

*Fees to be paid to IIE by the host school:*

- Initial application fee and sponsorship for up to 12 months = \$1,750
- Extension of sponsorship, per year = \$750
- Extension Beyond Maximum Duration Application = \$750 (includes \$367 fee to Department of State)
- Expedited processing service (optional) = \$1,000
- Enrollment in IIE group insurance (optional) = Approx. \$190, inquire directly for rates
- New host school fee = \$300

*Fees to be paid to IIE by either the host school or the teacher:*

- J-2 sponsorship fee, per dependent for duration of program = \$500
- DS-2019 re-issuance fee = \$50

*If not electing enrollment in IIE group insurance, host or teacher may pay for insurance meeting minimum J-visa requirements = varies from \$75 - \$200 per month*

## 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

**Note:** Teachers who work with a placement agency are advised to inquire directly about the fees and what each fee covers. Check with your host school to see if you are responsible for any initial visa costs or fees, or if you will be responsible for covering the cost of any state teaching licensure requirements. Fees disclosed to IIE during the application process are summarized in the teacher's Terms of Appointment.

## Duration and Repeat Participation

The standard maximum duration for programs in the Teacher category is three (3) years. Teachers may be eligible for an extension beyond maximum duration of up to two (2) additional years, at the discretion of the U.S. Department of State. At the end of the program teachers must depart the U.S. to put their experience to use in their home country. Past participants are eligible to apply for another Teacher category program through BridgeUSA after a period of at least two (2) years residency outside of the U.S.

## Initial Funds

IIE requires that the U.S. host school system cover the cost of our sponsorship fees (see Fee Chart above). Teachers should budget for fees associated with preparing for the application, such as credential review and translation services, and for fees associated with the J-1 visa application process. Teachers must obtain a certified translation for any document that was not originally issued in English, such as their academic degrees, transcripts, and professional licenses. A full list of required documents is provided by IIE within our online application.

Credential evaluation ranges in cost from approximately \$100 to \$300. A list of member organizations in the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES) can be found here:

<https://www.naces.org/members>

Certified translation can cost between \$20 to \$150 per document. IIE does not provide translation services or refer to providers.

Within the application to IIE, each teacher must demonstrate \$3,000 available in advance of their program to cover the international flight and initial expenses such as rent and transportation prior to receiving the first paycheck. Please note that some school systems may require that the teacher has a Social Security Number (SSN) before they can receive a paycheck, and the SSN can only be applied for after arrival in the U.S. and may take 4-6 weeks to process. *IIE will provide detailed information on this process if you are approved for sponsorship.* Teachers must have funds available to cover their expenses prior to receiving the first paycheck.

## Third Party or Partner Fees

IIE does not partner with third-party recruiters or staffing agencies that charge any fees to the individual teacher. U.S. host school systems working with a third-party recruiter must disclose their arrangements to IIE during the application process. It is IIE's strong preference that U.S. host schools cover all recruiting and placement fees. Teachers who have independently worked with a third-party to find their teaching position must disclose any associated fees and contracts in their application to IIE. IIE will assess our ability to provide sponsorship on a case-by-case basis. IIE does not provide sponsorship to programs where the teacher is determined to be responsible for unreasonable fees.

IIE requires that the U.S. host school system cover the cost of our sponsorship fees. Please carefully review the information on fees above.

At time of application to IIE U.S. host schools and teacher applicants must disclose if they have worked with any third-party placement organizations and any fees associated with the placement, sponsorship, or visa application process that have been paid, will be paid, or will be reimbursed by the teacher. A summary of any fees that the teacher is responsible for will be included in the IIE Terms of Appointment.

## Cost of Living

During the program, IIE recommends that each teacher have a minimum of \$2,500 per month available, either through wages or combination of wages and personal funds. Additional funding must be shown for J-2 dependents (legally married spouse or children under 21). Please be aware that wages and/or stipends from a host school, host school district, home school or home government might not cover all living expenses in the U.S. and teachers are advised to have access to additional personal funds.

The cost of living can vary greatly depending on where the host school or school district is located. Prior to accepting a position, teachers 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. After initial application review, IIE provides teachers with a budgeting workbook tool to plan their finances.

## Transit

Most urban areas have public transit, such as subways, buses, and trains and this is a great environmentally friendly option. Price of a monthly public transit ticket may range from \$25 - \$135 for local service, or higher for regional service. Owning a car in the U.S. can be expensive, with gas prices between \$2 - \$4 per gallon. Drivers need to make sure they have or obtain the proper license (through the Department of Motor Vehicles for the state) and vehicle insurance.

## Work-Related Fees and Deductions

If the teacher is being compensated by the host school or school district, 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.

During the application process, the U.S. host school will provide information to IIE on the teacher's salary, estimated deductions, union fees and costs for certification or background checks (if applicable), and any non-monetary compensation. Work-related deductions may include health insurance costs, retirement benefits, and taxes. The amounts for each deduction or fee will be summarized in the teacher's Terms of Appointment with IIE.

For general guidance on expected federal tax deductions from an exchange teacher’s salary, please review more information from the IRS on marginal tax rates for tax year 2023, by income- level:

<https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/irs-provides-tax-inflation-adjustments-for-tax-year-2023>

<b>Tax rate</b>	<b>Income level for single taxpayers</b>	<b>Income level for married, filing jointly</b>
35%	over \$231,250	over \$462,500
32%	over \$182,100	over \$364,200
24%	over \$95,375	over \$190,750
22%	over \$44,725	over \$89,450
12%	over \$11,000	over \$22,000
10%	\$11,000 or less	\$22,000 or less

Teachers are responsible for being aware of all personal tax filing requirements. Specific questions should be directed to a tax professional with experience in nonimmigrant filing.

### Questions?

Please call us at 212-984-5313 or email [jvisasponsorship@iie.org](mailto:jvisasponsorship@iie.org) with any questions.