J-1 SCHOLAR
ARRIVAL GUIDE

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND SCHOLARS CENTER
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WELCOME TO
ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

We are glad that you chose Arizona State University (ASU) for your J-1 Exchange Visitor Program. At International Student and Scholar Center (ISSC), we are here to help you with immigration planning and related matters during your stay.

This J-1 Scholar Arrival Guide contains essential information about immigration regulations, programs and services for new international scholars. Whether you are coming to ASU from your home country or from another U.S. university, please read this guide carefully.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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https://students.asu.edu/international/issc/j1
PRE-ARRIVAL CHECKLIST

Carefully read all of the information in this J-1 Scholar Arrival Guide.

Before arriving, you must:

☐ Verify that all of the information on your DS-2019 is correct. Note the program begin date and notify your inviting department (and the ISSC) immediately if your travel plans change, including if you face delays in getting your visa.

☐ Pay the SEVIS Fee. SEE PAGE 4

☐ Apply for a J-1 Visa at the U.S. Consulate or Embassy of your choice. SEE PAGE 5

☐ Upon your arrival to the U.S. and ASU, schedule your mandatory J-1 Scholar SEVIS Check-In/Orientation with the ISSC. Appointments can be made via telephone or email. SEE PAGE 8

☐ Purchase or make plans for required insurance coverage. The U.S. Department of State requires all individuals who enter the United States in J-1 status to have insurance coverage for themselves and any accompanying J-2 dependents. SEE PAGE 9

NOTE
Please read the remainder of the guide for specific information regarding each of the pre-arrival checklist items. If you have any questions about any of the items listed here, please contact our office via telephone or email.
The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) requires the collection of a one-time SEVIS fee of $180 from certain J-1 Exchange Visitor students and scholars. This fee is being collected to fund operation of the Student and Exchange Visitor Program Office, which has oversight over SEVIS - the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System.

- This is a one-time fee. You will not be required to pay the fee again if your Exchange Program is extended.
- J-2 dependents are not required to pay the SEVIS fee.

Time of payment of SEVIS fee: You must remit the fee directly to DHS by completing Form I-901 electronically using the Internet or by mail as follows:

**Procedures for payment of the SEVIS fee:**

1. **On-line submission** of Form I-901 to DHS using a credit card (Visa, MasterCard, or American Express accepted). [https://www.fmjfee.com/i901fee/index.jsp](https://www.fmjfee.com/i901fee/index.jsp) Follow the instructions on the website and print the confirmation.

2. **Western Union:** Exchange visitors in any country where Western Union offers its Quick Pay™ service can pay the I-901 SEVIS fee locally using the Western Union Quick Pay™ service.

Western Union collects the SEVIS I-901 fee, in local currency, along with the needed Form I-901 data and electronically transmits the payment and data to SEVP (Student and Exchange Visitor Program). The properly completed Western Union receipt serves as immediate proof-of-payment for a visa interview at a U.S. consulate and for admission at a U.S. port of entry.

Instructions for this payment option are on the SEVP website at [http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/](http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/) Take a printed copy of the instructions and the sample of the completed Western Union form, also on the website, to the Western Union Agent to ensure that the payment is processed correctly.

3. **Mail-in submission** of Form I-901 to DHS address on form, along with the $180 SEVIS fee paid by check, money order, or foreign draft drawn on a financial institution in the U.S. and payable in U.S. currency. Allow two (2) weeks for delivery and two (2) weeks for return of the receipt. For an additional $30 fee, DHS will return the receipt in 3-5 days.

**Third-party payment:** Another person can make the payment for an exchange visitor by one of the three methods above.

**Receipts:** DHS will issue and mail an official paper receipt (I-797) acknowledging every payment regardless of payment method. Express delivery service for the I-797 receipt may be requested at an additional cost. Anyone who submits an individual fee electronically will be able to print out an electronic receipt immediately at the time of payment for use in advance of the delivery of the official paper receipt.

Although SEVIS fee payments will be recorded by DHS in your SEVIS record and will eventually be used by government officials to document the SEVIS fee payment, it is recommended that a SEVIS fee receipt be used to request any status-related benefit (i.e., application for visa, admission at U.S. port-of-entry, application to change status).
APPLYING FOR A J-1/J-2 VISA

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

A valid J-1 visa is required for entry to the United States on the Exchange Visitor Program. For information on processing times and procedures, visit the U.S. Department of State at: travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/studyexchange/exchange.html.

Immediate family members (spouse and children under the age of 21) who will accompany you to the U.S. may apply for J-2 visas using the DS-2019 forms enclosed. If your family will join you later, a DS-2019 form will be issued by the ISSC upon request.

To apply for a J-1 visa, submit the following documents to the U.S. Embassy or Consulate:

1) Signed DS-2019(s) – A separate DS-2019 form is required for each visa applicant. Each J visa applicant should sign his/her own DS-2019, with the exception of children under age 14 (the J-1 parent should sign in this instance). The DS-2019(s) will be returned to you to present at the U.S. port of entry.

2) Receipt showing payment of the $180 SEVIS fee (J-1 only)

3) Payment of the $160 visa application fee, and appropriate visa application forms (see usembassy.gov), for each visa applicant

4) Passport(s) valid for at least 6 months into the future, for each visa applicant

5) Proof of financial support - You must be able to verify the total funds indicated on the DS-2019 with a personal bank statement and/or a sponsor’s official statement of support. If you are receiving payment from ASU, your invitation/offer letter should indicate this amount.

6) Two U.S. Passport-size Photos (often required – check with U.S. Consulate), for each visa applicant

7) J-1 Invitation letter from the sponsoring department at Arizona State University

8) Evidence of J-2 relationship to the J-1 applicant (e.g. marriage or birth certificate)

NOTE

A personal interview is required, so you will need to schedule your appointment as soon as possible. The ISSC advises against making non-refundable travel plans prior to receiving your visa.
EARLY ARRIVAL & DELAYED ARRIVAL

EARLY ARRIVAL
United States Department of Homeland Security regulations state that holders of J1 – J2 nonimmigrant visas will not be admitted to the U.S. more than thirty (30) days prior to the program start date nor will they be admitted more than 30 days after the official program start date as recorded in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS). Please consider these dates carefully when making your travel plans to the United States.

DELAYED ARRIVAL
You must inform your sponsoring department contact person if you will arrive more than 15 days after your program start date as shown on your Form DS-2019. If you are unable to reach your department contact, please send an email to: Morgan.R.Green@asu.edu and Chung-Ning.Gonzalez@asu.edu of the International Students and Scholars Center (ISSC) and copy your departmental supervisor. If email is not available, please contact your department by any means available and ask them to inform the ISSC.

For example: If your program start date as shown on your Form DS-2019 is October 15, but you cannot arrive within 15 days after that date (by October 30), then you must notify your sponsor and the ISSC of your new anticipated arrival date so that your official start date can be amended in SEVIS to more accurately reflect your anticipated arrival date.

While it is preferable for the start dates in SEVIS and on your DS-2019 to match, it is not required for your admission to the United States. The officer at the US Port of Entry will access SEVIS to verify that you are arriving within the permitted window of time, that is, within 30 days prior to and 30 days after the date recorded in SEVIS as your official program start date.
ENTERING THE UNITED STATES

PORT OF ENTRY PROCEDURE

Present the following documents to the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Officer at the U.S. port of entry:

- Original Passport(s) containing a valid J-1 visa (or J-2 visas for accompanying family members)
- Original signed DS-2019(s) for you and any accompanying family members
- Recommended: Proof of financial support (same as the document presented at the U.S. Embassy or Consulate) and invitation letter from the sponsoring department at ASU.

The officer should return the following:

- Passport(s) with entry stamp: Please check that the entry stamp has the notation “J-1 D/S” or “J-2 D/S” (D/S stands for “duration of status). If you notice a discrepancy, please be sure to address it with the CBP officer immediately as it may be difficult to correct later.
- Stamped DS-2019s for you and any accompanying family members.
- Any of the recommended documents that you provided.

I-94 RECORDS

Under the current system, your I-94 entry record will be available to you by accessing the following website online: https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home. Occasionally, a paper I-94 is issued at the U.S. Port of Entry.

CANADIAN NATIONALS

Canadian nationals are not required to obtain a visa stamp from the U.S. Embassy or Consulate. However, they must present the enclosed DS-2019, SEVIS fee receipt, and a Canadian passport at the U.S. port of entry in order to be admitted in J-1 status for D/S (duration of stay). If you are a Canadian Landed Immigrant, please check with the nearest U.S. Consulate about whether or not you require a J-1 visa stamp, as requirements vary depending on country of citizenship.

NEXT STEPS UPON ARRIVAL

Inform your inviting department that you have arrived safely. Attend the mandatory SEVIS Check-In/Orientation as soon as possible after your arrival.
OVERVIEW
The U.S. Department of State requires us, as your program sponsor, to provide you with a SEVIS Check-In/Orientation. After you attend, your arrival will be validated in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) database. This validation notifies the Department of Homeland Security that you have arrived and begun your J-1 exchange visitor program and updates your SEVIS record to “ACTIVE” status.

Failure to attend orientation and have your SEVIS record validated may result in future immigration complications.

DAYS AND TIME
Please attend the SEVIS Check-In/Orientation as soon as possible after your arrival. Sessions are held Monday-Thursday at 2:00pm and Friday at 10:00am. Typically, the check-in lasts from 30 minutes to an hour. Please call or email our office to schedule your SEVIS Check-In/Orientation.

We conduct the SEVIS Check-In/Orientation in a group setting, so please be on time for your appointment and have all of your documents with you.

WHAT TO BRING
You will need to bring the following documents to your orientation session for you and any accompanying J-2 dependents:

J-2 dependents need not accompany you to the check-in, as we have limited space.

Please bring an original and a copy of each document listed below.

- Passport(s) – Must show visa and entry stamps.
- I-94 Arrival/Departure Record records(s) https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home
- DS-2019(s)
- Proof of insurance – Must show that it meets U.S. Department of State requirements.

Please also include your Local U.S. Address, Local Phone Number & Email Address.

ENTRY STAMP

PASSPORT

VISA STAMP
MEDICAL INSURANCE

MEDICAL INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

U.S. Department of State regulations require all J-1 Exchange Visitors to have medical insurance for themselves and any accompanying J-2 family members for the duration of their program.

In addition, J-1 Exchange visitors and their J-2 dependents may be subject to the requirements of the Affordable Care Act.

Willful violation of the insurance requirements can result in termination of your J-1 program by the ISSC, in accordance with immigration regulations.

Fulfilling this insurance requirement is essential, not only because of the U.S. Department of State regulations, but because medical treatment in the United States can be very expensive, especially without proper insurance coverage.

It is the J-1 Exchange Visitor’s responsibility to notify the ISSC of dependents who are currently in the United States or who arrive later and present evidence of appropriate insurance coverage for them. It is your responsibility to provide proof of continuous insurance coverage to the ISSC.

ASU Health Insurance: Review your department invitation letter to find out if you are eligible for the ASU Faculty and Staff Health Insurance Plans. If so, note that current ASU employee benefits guidelines reflect that insurance policies will be effective the first day of the pay period following completion of enrollment.

Please note that ASU medical insurance does not cover medical evacuation or repatriation of remains to the home country. Thus, eligible ASU Exchange Visitor employees electing an ASU health insurance plan will also need to purchase a separate insurance policy for medical evacuation and repatriation of remains.

YOUR INSURANCE MUST MEET THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS:

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ABOUT US

We are located in Discovery Hall, Suite 172.