**J-1 Student Intern Program**

**BACKGROUND**

The J-1 Student Intern category allows international students, currently enrolled and pursuing a degree at a postsecondary academic institution outside of the United States, to participate in student internship programs for up to 12 months.

The intern program is a structured work-based learning program that:

* Reinforces an intern’s academic study.
* Exposes the intern to American techniques, methodologies, expertise, knowledge, and skills.
* Enhances the intern’s knowledge of American culture and society.

Sponsors must provide internship programs only in occupational categories designated below:

* Agriculture
* Arts & Culture
* Construction & Building Trades
* Education
* Hospitality & Tourism
* Information Media & Communications
* Management and Business
* Public Administration
* Sciences, Engineering, Architecture, Mathematics, and Industrial Occupations

**PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION**

Departments planning to host J-1 Interns are responsible for developing the internship plan, evaluating intern participation, and supporting the intern through faculty mentorship and assistance, such as locating accommodations. The following should be kept in mind when creating the internship plan:

* The internship needs to fulfill the educational objectives for the intern’s current degree at the home institution.
* All tasks assigned must be necessary for the completion of the student internship program.
* A student may participate in an internship with or without wages or other compensation, and full-time employment is permitted, as outlined on the student Training/Internship Placement Plan. To be employed, the student needs to obtain an approval from the ISS office, as well as the student’s home institution’s dean or academic advisor.
* The internship tasks must be no more than 20% clerical work.
* The internship must expose the participant to “American techniques, methodologies, and technology,” and expand the existing knowledge and skills (not duplicate) the student’s prior experience.
* Internships cannot place a student in any position that involves unskilled or casual labor, child or elder care, or aviation.

**LENGTH OF PROGRAM**

The minimum length of an intern program is three weeks and the maximum length is 12 months, per degree/major. No extensions beyond 12 months are permitted. The internship program must be full-time with a minimum of 32 hours a week.

**DEGREE ELIGIBILTY**

In order for a student to be eligible to participate in an intern program, the following must be met:

* The student must be enrolled in and pursuing a degree at an accredited postsecondary academic institution outside of the United States.
* The student must be in good academic standing at the home institution.
* The internship must fulfill the educational objectives for the current degree at the home institution.

Degree information must be verified by the following:

* A copy of the student’s current transcript
* A “home-institution certification” letter from the student’s academic institution

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT**

The intern must have English language skills sufficient to function on a day-to-day basis. The English language proficiency can be verified by one of the following:

* Documentation that the prospective intern is a native English speaker from Australia, Belize, Botswana, Canada (except Quebec), Commonwealth Caribbean, Ghana, Great Britain, Ireland, New Zealand, Nigeria, Scotland, Singapore, South Africa, or Zimbabwe
* A recognized English language test (TOEFL or IELTS)
* A department-conducted interview (see English Proficiency Interview Form in the request)
* Signed documentation from an academic or English-language institution certifying that the intern has at least an intermediate level of English.

**FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

The host department must verify that the student intern and any accompanying dependents will have sufficient funding for the entire length of stay; the minimum amount of financial support for an intern is $1,200 per month, and, if applicable, $850 per month for the spouse and $450 per month per child. The internship may be paid or unpaid. If the department will pay the intern a salary, then the amount of financial support should be noted in the letter of invitation. If the internship is not paid, then the intern must submit evidence of financial support in the form of a bank statement or a sponsor letter.

**HEALTH/MEDICAL INSURANCE**

All J-1 Interns are required to maintain the following minimum level of health insurance for themselves and any J-2 dependent(s) for the duration of their stay in the United States:

* Medical benefits of a least $100,000 per accident or illness
* A deductible which does not exceed $500 per accident or illness
* Repatriation in the amount of $25,000
* Coverage for medical evacuation in the amount of $50,000

Interns must provide proof of health insurance for themselves and any dependent(s) within 10 days of arrival to the U.S.

**MANDATORY EVALUATION OF J-1 INTERNS**

The regulations require that an evaluation be completed for each J-1 Intern at the end of the internship. Internships that last longer than 6 months will require a mid-program evaluation as well.

**APPLICATION STEPS**

The application for a J-1 intern is a two-part process; there is an application for both the department and the prospective intern, and both must be submitted (with required supporting documentation) before a DS-2019 can be issued.

**Instructions for the Department**

The department’s application includes the Training/Internship Placement Plan (DS-7002). This form must be signed by both the inviting faculty and prospective intern before being submitted as part the application. The signatures must be original, not electronic (scans/copies/faxes are acceptable).

In addition to the DS-7002, the department must submit proof of English proficiency and a signed “Responsibilities of Hosting a J-1 Intern” form.

**Instructions for the Student Intern Applicant**

The prospective intern should complete the Intern Application form and submit it to the department along with it the following:

* Copy of transcripts from home institution
* CV/ Resume
* Passport biographical page
* Copies of previous DS-2019s and J visas (if held within the 2 years prior to the internship)
* Copies of I-94, visa, I-20/DS-2019 (if currently in the U.S.)

The ISS will issue a DS-2019 once the completed application forms and required documentation has been received. The DS-2019, along with a copy of the Training/Internship Placement Plan (DS-7002) and invitation letter, will be shipped according to instructions in the department application. The fee for processing the intern application is $85.00.

**J-1 EXTENSIONS**

Extensions of stay may be possible if the student has not exceeded the 12 months allowed under the J-1 Intern status. To process an extension, the both department and intern must complete and submit the DS-2019 Extension Request and a J-1 Student Intern Evaluation form.

**30-DAY GRACE PERIOD**

J-1 Interns can remain in the U.S. for 30 days beyond the expiration date of the DS-2019. The 30-day grace period is meant to allow the J-1 visa holder time for travel and departure from the U.S.

**FORMS FOR J-1 INTERN PROGRAM**

Department Application

Intern Application

Sample Invitation Letter

Intern Evaluation