

internships, short-term programs and other exchange opportunities



There is a range of educational and cultural exchange opportunities available in the United States, but you must be well-informed...

The United States offers a wide range of educational and cultural exchange opportunities including professional internship programs, high school and university study, training, and short-term programs.

SHORT-TERM ACADEMIC PROGRAMS IN THE UNITED STATES

- **Secondary School Programs:** Read the EducationUSA guide to [secondary school exchanges](#) to get started.
- **Short-Term University Study:** Contact the office responsible for international programs and linkages at your home institution to ask if your school or university has exchange agreements with the United States. In addition, many U.S. universities open summer session classes (between May and August) to the outside public, and they sometimes make available on-campus dormitory accommodations. For detailed information about how to choose and apply to U.S. universities, see [Undergraduate Study](#) and [Graduate and Professional Study and Research](#).
- **English Language Programs:** Would you like to improve your English language skills? Search for high-quality programs with a professionally trained faculty, an excellent curriculum, and superior facilities for study – www.IntensiveEnglishUSA.com. EducationUSA advisers can help you find an accredited English Language Program (ELP).



Plan ahead: Talk to an EducationUSA adviser to define your goals and begin your research. If you are interested in short-term academic programs or internships, you will need to give yourself 6 to 12 months to prepare your applications.

Check accreditation of academic programs: [Academic accreditation](#) is a process of external quality review. Contact your adviser and be sure your program in the U.S. is accredited. Ask if your credits will be recognized in your home country upon your return.

Funding from universities, scholarship organizations, or grant-giving bodies may be difficult to obtain for academic study in the United States. Your home university may have an existing exchange relationship with a U.S. institution. These programs are often 'cost neutral'. **Internships** and **Optional Practical Training** may also help to reduce costs while providing academic and professional development opportunities (see OPT and internships below).



NEW: F VISA NOW PERMITS UP TO 29 MONTHS OF OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING IN THE UNITED STATES

Optional Practical Training (OPT) is an outstanding professional and academic benefit of completing a full degree program in the United States. OPT allows up to 12 months of practical training to foreign students enrolled and participating full-time in a U.S. college or university on an F visa, the most common visa type for academic studies.

After being enrolled one full academic year, a student may be authorized to participate in pre-completion OPT on a part-time basis while school is in session, or full-time when school is not in session or upon completion of studies. Authorized employment may be paid or unpaid. A Designated School Official (DSO) at the United States college or university where you are enrolled must approve OPT before you can receive your Employment Authorization Document.

Students of science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) may apply for an additional 17 months of OPT for a total of 29 months. That is more than two years! STEM fields are:

- Computer Science
- Chemical Engineering
- Engineering
- Engineering Technologies
- Biological and Medical Sciences
- Mathematics and Statistics
- Military Technologies
- Physical Sciences
- Science Technologies
- Health Professions and Related Clinical Sciences
- Actuarial Science

Consider the lifelong benefits of completing a Master's or other full degree program in the United States. The international student office at your U.S. university or college can assist you with practical training opportunities in your **field of study**.

INTERNSHIPS: WORK-BASED LEARNING

"The J student intern category, in our opinion, is the most appropriate status for visiting students (particularly undergraduates) to conduct research either paid or unpaid on our campus."

—JAMES DORSETT,
Iowa State University

An intern on an exchange visitor program must be a foreign national who is:

- (a) currently enrolled in and pursuing studies at a degree- or certificate-granting post-secondary academic institution outside the United States, or
- (b) has graduated from such an institution no more than 12 months prior to his or her exchange visitor program start date. Additional requirements are listed below.

How do I find an internship?

Most students find their own internships (see the tips and resources section and talk to your EducationUSA adviser). Students who have studied or had a previous exchange experience in the United States often have developed contacts that will lead to an internship. In addition, U.S. companies working in your country may have interest in hosting interns in the United States.

Do I need an exchange visitor program sponsor?

With few exceptions, all foreign nationals must be sponsored by a U.S. Department of State **designated exchange visitor program sponsor** to receive the needed documents and programmatic support for their internship.

- NEW: In addition, any post-secondary academic institution in the U.S. which is a designated sponsor in the **College/ University Student** category may sponsor "student interns" (see page 6).
- Visit the websites of several sponsors to compare costs and services.



"INTENT TO RETURN ABROAD"

Most nonimmigrant visa applicants are required to establish that they intend to return abroad after their time in the U.S. (INA Section 214(b)).

Documents that prove this could be:

- Proof of continued enrollment in a study program outside the U.S.;
- Continuing lease for an apartment;
- Spouse/children staying outside the U.S.;
- Property you own;
- Career plans for after your return from the U.S.

Each person's situation is different. Consular officers are aware of this diversity and look at each application individually. It is up to them to determine what documentation can be accepted. For more information about this requirement, see:

What constitutes "strong ties"?

** External links to other Internet sites should not be construed as an endorsement of the views or privacy policies contained therein.*

Tips:

- **Search by field of study** and find 10–20 institutions/departments of interest. Graduate students may prefer to use www.scholar.google.com or other websites to learn about professors and their research activities.
- For off-campus internships, you may also like to research online at [FastWeb](#) or [InternWeb.com](#). See the last page of this brochure for a sample of organizations that have accepted internship applications from foreign nationals in the past.*
- **Designated exchange visitor program sponsors** for interns provide the necessary program application form and other paperwork, assist with placements or give guidance on how to locate an internship in the U.S., ensure that participants have U.S. health insurance, and provide support for interns as needed during the program (see page 6).
- Keep in mind that finding an internship can be a highly **competitive process** requiring thorough research and hard work. Your EducationUSA adviser has additional reference materials about how to prepare an effective application and find the best program for you.

Background and excerpt of additional requirements for interns:

- A primary objective of the exchange visitor program for interns is to enhance the skills and expertise of exchange visitors in their academic or occupational fields and to improve participants' knowledge of American techniques, methodologies, and expertise.
- The internship must build on the student's academic experience by developing practical skills.
- Payment and hands-on work are permitted as defined in the DS-2019. The DS-2019 is the Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor Program (J-1) Status issued by a designated sponsor.
- **Important:** As with all exchange visitor programs, interns must have verifiable English language skills sufficient to function on a day-to-day basis in their internship environment.
- The maximum duration of a student internship in any occupational field is 12 months. Internships must be full-time; i.e. consist of a minimum of 32 hours per week.
- Interns must prove their intent to depart the United States. A key goal of the Fulbright-Hays Act, which authorizes the program, is that participants will return to their home countries and share their experiences with their countrymen.
- Internship placements may be on or off campus and many, but not all interns, are paid.
- Interns must have sufficient finances to support themselves for their entire stay in the U.S.
- Visit your EducationUSA advising center for reference materials and educational advising. The resources below are a sample to help you 'find the best fit'.

TRAINEE PROGRAMS

"Trainees" have different eligibility requirements and sponsors. A trainee means a foreign national who has either:

- (a) a degree or professional certificate from a foreign post-secondary academic institution and at least one year of prior related work experience in his/her occupational field acquired outside the United States, or
- (b) five years of work experience outside the United States in his/her occupational field, and who enters the United States to participate in a structured and guided work-based training program in his/her specific occupational field.

The regulations for trainees are designed to distinguish between *bona fide* training, which is permitted, and merely gaining additional work experience, which is not permitted.

With few exceptions, training programs may last up to 18 months. For training programs in the field of agriculture and in the "Hospitality and Tourism" occupational category, the maximum duration is 12 months. Select a designated **exchange visitor program sponsor** for "trainees" and apply for sponsorship.



SUMMER WORK TRAVEL PROGRAMS

Summer Work Travel Programs: Summer work travel programs provide foreign post-secondary students the opportunity to work and travel in the United States for up to four months during their summer vacation. Participants must be enrolled in and pursuing a degree at an accredited post-secondary academic institution outside the United States, or have graduated from such an institution no more than 12 months prior to his or her exchange visitor program start date. Students must work with a Department of State designated exchange visitor program sponsor to participate in this program. Students may locate their own jobs and/or housing, or sponsors will locate jobs and housing for them.

CAMP COUNSELORS

Camp counselors: The Department of State designates exchange sponsors to facilitate the entry of foreign nationals to serve as counselors in camps for up to four months during the U.S. summer.

Participants must be *bona fide* youth workers, students, teachers, or individuals with specialized skills and at least 18 years of age. Camp counselors receive financial compensation for their service. Select an exchange visitor program sponsor and learn more about life as a U.S. camp counselor.

AU PAIR PROGRAM

Au pairs: Foreign nationals are afforded the opportunity to live with an American host family in exchange for child care for up to one year, with a possible second year extension. All au pair participants receive room and board and are paid to provide child care services to the host family. Au pair participants provide up to forty-five hours of child care services per week and pursue not less than six semester hours of academic credit or its equivalent during their year of program participation. Au pairs must be: (a) between the ages of 18 and 26; (b) a secondary school graduate, or equivalent; (c) proficient in spoken English; and (d) capable of fully participating in the program as evidenced by the satisfactory completion of a physical. Au pairs participating in the EduCare program (care for school-age children) provide up to thirty hours of child care services per week and pursue not less than twelve semester hours of academic credit or its equivalent during their year of program participation.

Select an exchange visitor program sponsor and learn more about participation requirements.

RESOURCES

Designated Exchange Visitor Program Sponsors

For additional information about visas, please visit www.travel.state.gov. Keep in mind that in certain instances, exchange visitors may be subject to a **two-year foreign residency requirement**.

Short-Term Study, English Language Programs, Distance Education and Accreditation from the series **If You Want to Study in the United States**.

- [FastWeb](#) – Guide to Jobs, Internships and Careers
- [InternWeb.com](#) – Internship Search Tools for Students
- *Peterson's Internships* – Find the right internship for you (Peterson's, published annually)
- *Princeton Review: America's Top Internships*. Mark Oldman and Samer Hamadeh. Random House, New York (published annually) – www.princetonreview.com
- [Vault Guide to Top Internships](#)

Talk to an EducationUSA adviser about additional reference materials and resources available in your local advising center.

SHORT-TERM STUDY OR INTERNSHIPS ON A B1/B2 (VISITOR) VISA OR THE VISA WAIVER PROGRAM:

In some cases, you may be able to work as an unpaid intern or take a short course of study on a visitor visa or as a Visa Waiver Program traveler. In most cases, you may not receive any payment besides expenses from a U.S. source and cannot stay longer than three months. You can find more information on the visitor visa at:

<http://travel.state.gov/visa>

External links to other

Internet sites should not be construed as an endorsement of the views or privacy policies contained therein. Contact EducationUSA for additional links and resources.

SAMPLE OF U.S. INSTITUTIONS THAT ACCEPTED APPLICATIONS FROM FOREIGN INTERNS IN 2008 *

Talk to an EducationUSA adviser about additional reference materials and resources available in your local advising center.

[Amelia Island Plantation](#) (Hospitality; Tourism/Recreation)
[American Geographical Society](#) (Environmental; Science/Research)
[Arab American Institute](#) (Government; Law)
[BalletMet Columbus](#) (Theater/Performing Arts)
[Brick Wall Management](#) (Broadcast & Entertainment; Health Care; Nonprofit)
[Capitol Music Group](#) (Broadcast & Entertainment; Music/Records)
[Department of Cultural Affairs, City of Los Angeles](#) (Art/Museum)
[Discovery Communications](#) (Broadcast & Entertainment; Education; New/Interactive Media; Publishing)
[Dow Chemical Company](#) (Chemicals; Science/Research)
[Emerson](#) (Energy)
[Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting](#) (Journalism; Nonprofit)
[FAO Schwarz](#) (Toys/Retail)
[Farm Sanctuary](#) (Nonprofit; Animal Welfare/Animal Rights)
[Ford Models](#) (Broadcast & Entertainment; Fashion; Public Relations)
[Getty Foundation](#) (Art/Museum; Education)
[Global Volunteers](#) (Education; Environmental; Health Care; Nonprofit)
[Google Inc.](#) (Technology)
[Hallmark](#) (Consumer Products; Retail)
[Hawk Mountain Sanctuary](#) (Education; Environmental; Science/Research)
[Marvel Comics](#) (Broadcast & Entertainment; New/Interactive Media; Publishing)
[National Association of College Broadcasters](#) (Broadcast & Entertainment; Nonprofit)
[Pro-Found Software, Inc.](#) (Software; Technology)
[Rodale Institute Experimental Farm](#) (Environmental; Science/Research)
[Roll Call](#) (Government; Journalism)
[San Francisco Bay Guardian](#) (Journalism)
[San Francisco Opera](#) (Music/Records; Theater/Performing Arts)
[Schlumberger Limited](#) (Energy; Technology)
[Sesame Workshop](#) (Broadcast & Entertainment; Education; Nonprofit)
[Sotheby's](#) (Art/Museum)
[Source Theatre Company](#) (Theater/Performing Arts)
[Source, The](#) (Broadcast & Entertainment; Journalism; Publishing)
[Southern Center for International Studies](#) (Education; International Relations; Public Relations)
[Southwestern Company](#) (Publishing/Retail)
[Special Olympics International](#) (Nonprofit; Sports)
[Steppenwolf Theatre Company](#) (Nonprofit; Theater/Performing Arts)
[Student Works Painting](#) (Management & Strategy Consulting)
[Turner Broadcasting System](#) (Broadcast & Entertainment; Journalism; New/Interactive Media; Sports)
[Tyco Toys](#) (Consumer Products; Manufacturing)
[United Nations Association of the United States of America](#) (Government; Law)
[United Talent Agency](#) (Broadcast & Entertainment; Music; Digital Media; Philanthropy)
[Voice of America](#) (Broadcast & Entertainment; Journalism)
[Westwood One Radio Network](#) (Broadcast & Entertainment)
[Wired](#) (Journalism; Publishing; Technology)
[Women Express/Teen Voices](#) (Journalism; Nonprofit; Publishing)
[Women Make Movies](#) (Broadcast & Entertainment; Film; Nonprofit)
[Women's Sports Foundation](#) (Education; Sports)
[Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars](#) (Education; Government; International Relations; History)

TIPS FOR INTERNSHIPS

- Plan ahead! Be sure your goals, financial situation and timeline are clear before formally applying.
 - Contact **EducationUSA**. Your adviser has free and unbiased resources to assist you.
 - Update and proofread your resume or CV.
 - Include a succinct, upbeat cover letter with your application, stating why you are interested in the institution and why you hope they will decide to hire you.
 - Contact a **designated exchange visitor program sponsor** to apply for sponsorship.
 - Ensure your passport is valid six months beyond the date you expect to depart the U.S.
 - Finding an internship is a competitive process requiring thorough research and hard work.
- Good luck!

(Source: [Vault Guide to Top Internships, 2008](#))

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Designated exchange visitor program sponsors for interns provide the necessary program application form and other paperwork, assist with placements or give guidance on how to locate an internship in the U.S., ensure that participants have U.S. health insurance, and provide support for interns as needed during the program. Participants pay sponsors a program fee for these services. All such organizations have been approved to run the program by the U.S. Department of State and must abide by the State Department's program regulations.

THE FOLLOWING ALLIANCE MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS SPONSOR INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS:

AIESEC United States
www.aiesec.org

Alliance Abroad Group
www.allianceabroad.com

American Council on
International Personnel
www.acip.com

American Immigration
Law Foundation
www.aifl.org

American-Scandinavian
Foundation
www.asf.org

AMIDEAST
www.amideast.org

ASSE International Student
Exchange Programs
www.asse.com

Association for International
Practical Training
www.aipt.org

CDS International
www.cdsintl.org

Communicating for Agriculture
www.caep.org

Council for Educational Travel, USA
www.cetusa.org

Council on International
Educational Exchange
www.ciee.org

Council of International Programs
www.cipusa.org

Cultural Exchange Network
www.cenet.us

Cultural Homestay International
www.chinet.org

French-American Chamber
of Commerce
www.faccnyc.org

German American Chamber
of Commerce
www.gaccny.com

InterExchange
www.interexchange.org

Intrax
www.intraxinc.com

MAST International
<http://mast.cfans.umn.edu>

The Ohio Program
www.ohioprogram.org

YMCA International Programs
www.internationalymca.org



"STUDENT INTERNS" – A NEW OPTION

- Any post-secondary academic institution in the U.S. which is designated as a sponsor in the **College/University Student** category may now sponsor "student interns". The program requirements are slightly different than the separate "Intern" category, which most students use (see page 2 and the links above for additional program requirements).
- A student intern on an exchange visitor program must be a foreign national who is enrolled in and **pursuing a degree** at an accredited post-secondary academic institution outside the United States and is participating in a student internship program in the United States that will **fulfill the educational objectives for his or her current degree program** at his or her home institution. The designated exchange visitor program sponsor will inform you of other program requirements.
- Find an internship: For either category, use the search engines and the full range of resources above to find and apply for an internship. Whether you are looking for opportunities on or off campus and paid or unpaid, EducationUSA advisers can help you find the right fit.

EducationUSA advisers in 170 countries provide accurate, unbiased information about all accredited U.S. higher education institutions. Find your EducationUSA center at: www.educationUSA.state.gov/centers.

