

J-1 EXCHANGE VISITOR VISA PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The J Exchange Visitor category was developed to implement the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act (Fulbright-Hayes Act) of 1961. The overall purpose of that Act, and the objective of the Exchange Visitor category, is "to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries by means of educational and cultural exchanges."

J-1 visa status enables foreign nationals to enter the United States as "exchange visitors." Exchange Visitor Programs are supervised by the U.S. Department of State (DOS), which has authorized Jefferson Science Associates, LLC to manage several J-1 Exchange Visitor programs at Jefferson Lab (JLab). Please see the U.S. Department of State for further general information about J-1 Exchange Programs.

International collaboration and exchange have long been central to the way JLab operates. Our J-1 research programs provide international students/scientists the opportunity to train in a variety of academic fields and gain practical experience, knowledge, linguistic competency, and cross-cultural skills critical to remaining competitive in today's international market. In return, JLab has the opportunity to add bright young scientists and engineering to our scientific efforts and strengthen our connections to overseas research institutions.

The dates of your program are listed on the Form DS-2019. JLab International Services Office offers continuing support to our J-1 Exchange Visitors. We guide Exchange Visitors and their JLab contacts step-by-step through the J-1 visa application process and offer helpful information. As the main contact and support for Exchange Visitors during your program, our role is to ensure your health, welfare, and safety as you transition smoothly into the new environment and integrate into the American culture.

There are different types of J-1 Exchange Visitor programs at Jefferson Lab:

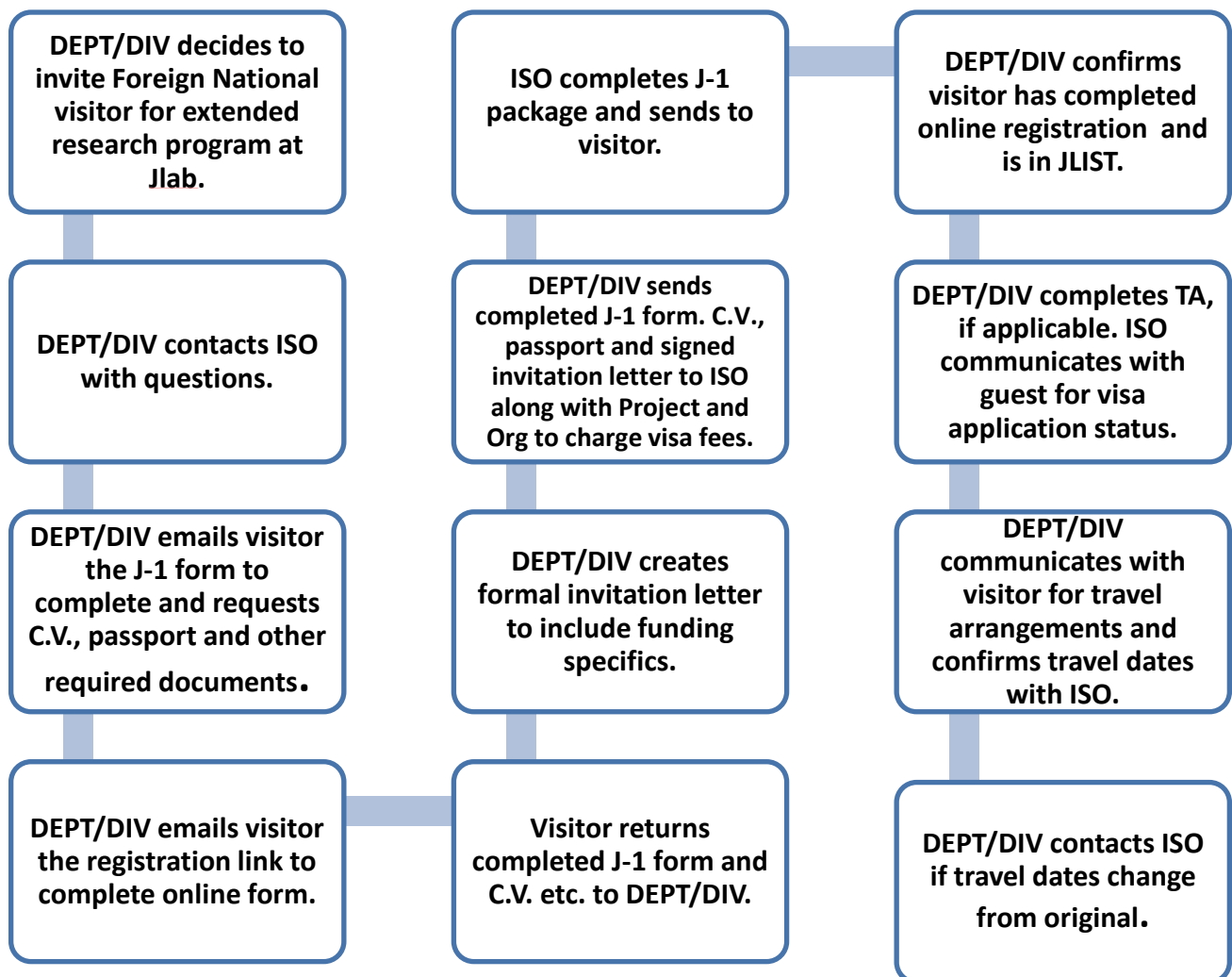
- **Research scholars** program, which enables foreign research scholars (including our guest scientists and engineers and visiting scientists) the opportunity to engage in research, teaching and lecturing with their American colleagues, to participate actively in cross-cultural activities with Americans and ultimately to share with their countrymen their experiences and increased knowledge of the United States and their substantive fields. The maximum program duration is 5 years.
- **Short-term scholars** program, which enables scholars to come to the United States for a period of up to six months to lecture, observe, consult, and to participate in seminars, workshops, conferences, study tours, professional meetings, or similar types of educational and professional activities.
- **Specialists** program, for experts in a field of specialized knowledge or skill who are coming to the United States for observing, consulting or demonstrating special skills. The maximum program duration is one year.

Participation in exchange programs as a J-1 research scholar for the first time or after a prior J-1 status is restricted by a “bar” (or ineligibility period). Depending on previous J-status, the period of ineligibility is either 12 or 24 months.

Eligibility for participation in J-1 categories other than research scholar or professor is not affected by these barring periods.

Some J-1 exchange visitors may be found subject to a two-year home-country physical presence requirement, which means you either have to reside in your home country OR obtain a Waiver from the U.S. Department of State before you can change status or enter the U.S. in a work-authorized or permanent resident status.

JLAB PROCESS



[J-1 Visa Form](#)

[Invitation Letter Template](#)

[Funding Specifics](#)

[Welcome Brochure](#)

[Rights Brochure](#)

JLab Procedure

1. **Offer and acceptance:** Recruitment/Division issues an offer/invitation letter outlining the position and term length. Foreign National accepts the offer in writing.
2. **Information gathering:** ISO initiates the case and prompts the foreign national to complete the questionnaire and provide supporting documents online. The applicant must also review and acknowledge understanding of our J-1 Orientation Presentation.
3. **Forms:** Once all of the requested information is received, ISO creates a SEVIS record and issues a Form DS-2019, and mails the original documents to the foreign national.
4. **Visa interview:** Foreign national schedules a visa interview abroad (not necessarily home country), receives a J-1 Visa Stamp, and enters the U.S.
5. **Orientation and validation:** Next day or first business day thereafter, foreign national attends the J-1 orientation with the ISO, which then “validates” the program.
6. **Extensions: It is the foreign national’s and manager’s responsibility** to initiate a J-1 program extension (if an extension is possible) or a change in status. Although the ISO monitors the J-1 expiration dates, we **do not** solicit the division, supervisor, or foreign national for extension of programs, and the programs automatically close on the last date of validity.
7. **Transfers:** Transfers between J-1 sponsors are allowed if the program is still valid. Please contact the ISO with an institution transfer request.
8. **Program ending:** Programs end automatically, and it is the foreign national’s responsibility to depart the U.S. within the 30-day grace period. Programs may be ended early by the ISO if requested. Programs may also be ended early by the ISO for various reasons including noncompliance of program regulations.

Health, Safety, and Welfare of Exchange Visitors – EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBER

Ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of all exchange visitors is the U.S. Department of State’s collective highest priority. The Department takes this responsibility very seriously in order to ensure the continued viability of international educational and cultural exchange as an effective public diplomacy tool.

To help safeguard the health, safety, and welfare of all exchange visitors, the Department has established an Exchange Visitor Program (EVP) Emergency Hotline – **1-866-283-9090** – a 24/7 toll-free telephone number that allows exchange visitors to directly contact the Department in emergency and urgent situations. A Department representative is available 24 hours a day.

Please contact the International Services Office

at

ewing@jlab.org with any questions.