ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS
A prospective exchange visitor must meet the following criteria before OISSS will issue visa documents:

- Will hold a non-tenure track position at UT
- Holds a bachelor’s degree with extensive experience in the relevant field (minimum).
- Possesses adequate funding (see below)
- Will obtain adequate health insurance coverage, as required by federal law
- For those applying in the Student category, include the admissions letter from Undergraduate or Graduate Admission offices.

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS
Please note that these figures are the bare minimum and do not include the cost of health insurance coverage.

- $650 per month for J-1 Exchange Visitor
- $333 per month for each dependent

The above values are only minimums for university sponsorship. A recommended $1,000/month is a minimum that includes living expenses.

Funding may come from the department (salary, wage, stipend, etc.), the visitor's government or employer, or a combination of these sources. The exchange visitor may not be self-supported, but may use personal funds to supplement primary source of funding.

Documents must be in English, include the specific dates of funding coverage (if applicable), and include the amount in U.S. dollars.

DEPENDENTS (J-2)
Spouses and/or children under the age of 21 who wish to accompany or join the primary exchange visitor (J-1) in the U.S. for the duration of his/her stay require exchange visitor visas. The sponsor must approve the accompaniment of the spouse and/or children and who will each be issued their own Form DS-2019.

Work: The spouse and/or children of a J-1 may not work in the U.S. in J-2 status, unless they have filed Form I-765 Application for Employment Authorization and been approved by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

Study: The spouse and/or children of a J-1 may study without also being required to apply for a student (F-1) visa.

INSURANCE
Health insurance is required by all exchange visitors and dependents for the duration of the program. Insurance may come from the host department, or the exchange visitor will make the arrangements.

(a) Minimum Coverage - Insurance must cover, 1.) medical benefits of at least $50,000 per person per accident or illness; 2.) repatriation of remains in the amount of $7,500; and 3.) expenses associated with medical evacuation in the amount of $10,000.

(b) Additional Terms - A policy secured to fulfill the insurance requirements cannot have a deductible that exceeds $500 per accident or illness, and must meet other standards specified in the regulations.

(c) Maintenance of Insurance - Willful failure on the part of the exchange visitor to maintain the required insurance will result in the termination of the exchange program.
Introduction

This brochure is designed to provide basic information to departments about the U.S. Department of State J-1 Exchange Visitor Program. The Program promotes mutual understanding between the people of the U.S. and the people of other countries by educational and cultural exchanges.

Purpose

The Exchange Visitor Program brings qualified students, professors, research scholars, and short-term scholars to the U.S. for educational purposes.

Definitions

DS-2019: Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor Status. This provides a J-1 visitor’s legal status while in the U.S. and is the basis for applying for a nonimmigrant visa.

I-901: SEVIS Fee of $180.00 is assessed for any initial DS-2019 issued to an exchange visitor. (Excludes dependents).

J-1: Visa status associated with the Exchange Visitor Program.

SEVIS: Student & Exchange Visitor Information System, a database used by the U.S. Department of State.

EXCHANGE VISITOR PROGRAM

RULES & REGULATIONS

Activities and Program Provisions: The J-1 enters the U.S. in one program category and is required to engage in that category and subject/field of activity listed on the DS-2019.

Transfers: Exchange visitors may transfer from one sponsor to another only if they are released by the first sponsor. A transfer must be clearly consistent with the intent and purpose of the original program objective and category. A transfer does not extend the length of the maximum program duration of the category.

Time Limits: The minimum period of stay for Professors and Research Scholars is 3 weeks, with a maximum stay of 5 years. Short-term Scholars have no minimum requirement, with a maximum stay of 6 months, with no extension possible. All exchange visitors are allowed to enter the U.S. 30 days prior to the program start date on the DS-2019 and are allowed to stay 30 days past the DS-2019 program end date, also called the grace period.

Extensions: An exchange visitor’s program may be extended permitted by the regulations. Sufficient funds and health insurance must be available to support the J-1 and accompanying dependents.

TWO-YEAR HOME-COUNTRY PHYSICAL PRESENCE REQUIREMENT [212(e)]

Some Exchange Visitor Program participants and dependents who are admitted to the U.S. or who adjusted their visa status to J after admission must return home for a minimum of two years after completing their educational or cultural exchange program before they can change or adjust their status. This requirement applies to those whose:

1. Exchange program was financed to some extent by the U.S. Government or the home country government;
2. skill appears in the Exchange Visitor Skills List as identified by their home country government; or,
3. purpose in coming to the U.S. was to receive graduate medical education or training.

RESTRICTIONS RELATED TO PREVIOUS J-1 PARTICIPATION

12-Month Bar (22 CFR 62.20(d)(iii)): The exchange visitor is not eligible to begin an exchange program as a Professor or Research Scholar based on a DS-2019 issued “to begin a new program” if he/she was physically present in any J status for “all or part of the 12 month period immediately preceding the date of program commencement set for on his/her DS-2019.” Exceptions include J-1 transfers, presence in J status of less than 6 months, or presence in J status as a Short-Term Scholar.

24-Month Bar (22 CFR 62.20(i)(2)): Applies to any J-1 Professor or Research Scholar with program completion on or after 11/18/2006. An exchange visitor is not eligible for participation as a J-1 Professor or Research Scholar for a period of 2 years following completion of a full five years of program participation with one or more sponsors.