

Visa Options and Factors to Consider when Hiring International Employees

Please Note: Each International Employee's situation is unique, so please consult with the IPO before selecting which visa type is the best fit

Factors	F-1 Student on OPT and/or STEM OPT (Optional Practical Training)	J-1 Student on AT (Academic Training)	J-1 Short-Term Scholar	J-1 Research Scholar/Professor	TN NAFTA Professionals/ Temporary Workers	H-1B Employee
Employment	Authorized by School of Record AND USCIS Approval	Authorized "incident to status" by the Program Sponsor (School of Record)	Authorized "incident to status" by the Program Sponsor (IPO Staff)	Authorized "incident to status" by the Program Sponsor (IPO Staff)	Authorized "incident to status" by the Program Sponsor (IPO Staff)	Authorized only for approved position, at approved salary level, and at approved employer
Qualifications	Must have a valid EAD card (Work Authorization approved by USCIS)	Must be authorized by the program (School of Record)	Must possess a bachelor's degree	Must possess a bachelor's degree	Must possess a bachelor's degree in specific field	Must possess the minimum degree and experience required for the specialty occupation. Equivalent to at least a bachelor's degree
Minimum Duration	N/A	N/A	N/A	3 weeks	N/A	N/A
Maximum Duration	Initial OPT - 1 year STEM OPT - additional 2 years	Depends on length of program from School of Record, 3-36 months	6 months	5 years	3 years, renewable with re-entry into the U.S.	6 years
Funding Source	May be funded by U of I, personal funds, home country, or other sources	May be funded by U of I, personal funds, home country, or other sources	May be funded by U of I, personal funds, home country, or other sources	May be funded by U of I, personal funds, home country, or other source	Must be funded by the U of I	Must be paid prevailing wage by U of I
Restrictions/ Limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be full-time (21 hr/wk+) • OPT can be with/without wages • STEM OPT must receive wages • Non-immigrant intent visa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No tenure track position • May be subject to 212(e) two-year home residency requirement • Subject to 12/24-month bar • Non-immigrant intent visa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No tenure track position • May be subject to 212(e) two-year home residency requirement • Non-immigrant intent visa • Subject to 12-month bar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No tenure track position • May be subject to 212(e) two-year home residency requirement • Subject to 12/24-month bar • Non-immigrant intent visa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No tenure track position • Mexican and Canadian citizens only • degree field must be on the NAFTA list • Non-immigrant intent visa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer, job, AND position specific • Must meet Department of Labor prevailing wage determination • Dual intent visa
Dependents	F-2 dependents are not permitted to work. Can study part-time	J-2 visa classification-may apply for employment authorization. Can study full or part-time	J-2 visa classification-may apply for employment authorization. Can study full or part-time	J-2 visa classification-may apply for employment authorization. Can study full or part-time	TD dependents are not permitted to work. Can study full or part-time	H-4 visa holders may apply for employment authorization. Can study full or part-time
SEVIS Fee & Tracking	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
International Services Cost Recovery Fee	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes + USCIS and legal fees
Processing Times*	N/A	N/A	5 Business Days with completed checklist, unless changing status or transferring from another U.S. university	5 Business Days with completed checklist, unless changing status or transferring from another U.S. university	N/A	(Once petition is submitted) USCIS 'regular' process: 4-6 months USCIS 'premium' process: 15 business days
Early Termination	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	May be responsible for moving costs back to last country of residence
Source	OPT STEM OPT	AT	J1 Short-term Scholar	J1 Scholar/Researcher	TN	H-1B