

The College and University Student Program



The College and University Student category of the BridgeUSA Program provides foreign students an opportunity to pursue a full-time course of study at an academic institution in the U.S. IIE provides sponsorship for both degree-seeking and non-degree seeking academic programs. The program is meant to promote mutual understanding and foster the exchange of ideas between foreign and American students.

The U.S. academic institution must meet the following criteria:

- Degree-granting
- Post-secondary
- Accredited

The student must demonstrate to IIE that they have the past academic experience and credentials needed to successfully complete the U.S. academic program.

IIE does not sponsor self-funded programs. The student must demonstrate to IIE that they are supported substantially by funding from a source other than personal or family funds. Such a source might be the U.S. institution, the home institution abroad, a fellowship, scholarship or support of a government agency.

For an overview of eligibility requirements, please visit the U.S. Department of State BridgeUSA program website: <https://j1visa.state.gov/programs/college-and-university-student/>.

Duration

A degree-seeking student may remain in the U.S. for the duration of time necessary to complete the program, so long as they maintain a full course of study at the academic institution and satisfactory achievement towards the degree or are completing authorized academic training.

IIE Program Fees

Fees to be paid by the host institution:

- Initial sponsorship fee (up to 12 months) = \$1500
- Extension of sponsorship, per year = \$500
- Expedited processing service (optional) = \$750
- Enrollment in IIE group insurance (optional) = Inquire directly

Fees to be paid by either the host institution or the student:

- J-2 sponsorship fee, per dependent = \$500
- Individual insurance meeting minimum J-visa requirements = varies, from \$75 - \$200 per month
- Travel validation fee = \$25
- DS-2019 re-issuance fee = \$50

Other Fees

These fees are not included in IIE's services but must be paid during the J-1 Visa application:

- \$220 SEVIS Fee
- \$160 nonimmigrant visa application fee

A non-degree student may complete a program of up to 24 months, so long as they remain full-time in a prescribed course of study at the academic institution and maintain satisfactory achievement towards the completion of the program or are completing authorized academic training.

Students may qualify for academic training during or following the program. Interested students will submit an application to IIE during the academic program for approval. Students may not engage in academic training or any type of employment during the program without prior authorization from IIE.

Cost of Living and Transportation

The cost of living can vary greatly depending on where the U.S. host institution is located. Prior to applying, students should research online to budget accordingly. Students should ask the host institution if on-campus housing is provided and if housing is included in the price of tuition. Off-campus housing in a large city can cost approximately \$2000 per month, while housing in a smaller town might cost closer to \$500 per month. Utilities may include electric or gas (\$50 - \$100 per month, depending on the size of the housing), cable and internet (\$50 - \$200 depending on plan).

Students should also inquire about the cost of meal plans at the host institution's dining facilities. Cost of food may range from \$200 - \$500 per month, depending on location and preference to cook or eat out regularly.

Most urban areas have public transit, such as subways, buses, and trains. The host institution may also offer a bus system or ride-sharing options at reduced cost for students. On many campuses, students can access the services and amenities they need by walking or biking.

Owning a car in the U.S. can be expensive, and gas prices can be between \$2 - \$4 per gallon. Drivers will need to make sure they have or obtain the proper driving license (through the Department of Motor Vehicles for the state) and vehicle insurance.

Overall, IIE recommends that each student have a minimum of \$2500 per month available, including the cost of housing and food (which may be covered directly through tuition costs).

Please be aware that wages and/or stipends received during a period of authorized academic training might not cover all living expenses and students should budget to have personal funds available.

Next Steps

Interested in exchange visitor sponsorship through IIE? A representative of the host institution should contact IIE to begin our online application process.

IIE recommends submitting the application at least 2-3 months in advance of the intended program start date. As part of the application students will need to provide documentation including, but not limited to: Resume, diplomas and transcripts, and passport.

The passport should be valid at least 6 months past the expected program end date.