

The Teacher Program



The teacher category of the BridgeUSA Program offers foreign teachers the possibility to teach full-time in accredited public and private primary and secondary schools in the United States. Exchange teachers may also teach at the pre-kindergarten level in language immersion programs.

The goal of the program is to promote cultural exchange between foreign teachers, their students abroad, and the U.S. school community. Teachers will return home after their exchange and share their knowledge of U.S. culture and educational practices in their home countries.

For an overview of eligibility requirements for interested teachers, please visit the U.S. Department of State Teacher Program website: <https://i1visa.state.gov/programs/teacher>.

Teaching Positions

U.S. host schools or school districts must provide a full-time position as teacher of record, with a minimum of 32 hours per week of teaching or teaching-related administrative activities.

Teachers must be employees of either their U.S. host school, host school district, or their home school during the exchange. Positions are temporary, do not lead to tenure, and are commensurate in responsibility and compensation to those of similarly situated U.S. teachers in the host school or school district.

Duration and Repeat Participation

The standard maximum duration for programs in the Teacher category is three years. Teachers may be eligible for an extension beyond maximum duration of up to two additional years, at the discretion of the U.S. Department of State. At the end of the program teachers must depart the U.S. to put their experience to

IIE Program Fees

Fees to be paid by the host school:

- Initial sponsorship fee (up to 12 months) = \$1500
- Extension of sponsorship, per year = \$500
- Extension Beyond Maximum Duration Application = \$617 (includes \$367 fee to DoS)
- Expedited processing service (optional) = \$750
- Enrollment in IIE group insurance (optional) = Inquire directly
- New host school fee = \$200

Fees to be paid by either the host school or the teacher:

- 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

Note: If you have worked with a placement agency, inquire directly about their fees and what each fee covers. Check with your host school to see if you are responsible for any initial visa costs or fees, or if you will be responsible for covering the cost of any state teaching licensure requirements.

use in their home country. Part participants are eligible to apply for another teacher category program with through BridgeUSA after a period of at least two years residency outside of the U.S.

Cost of Living

IIE recommends that each teacher have a minimum of \$2,500 per month available, either through wages or combination of wages and personal funds. Additional funding must be shown for J-2 dependents. Please be aware that wages and/or stipends from a host school, host school district, home school or home government might not cover all expenses and teachers should bring additional personal funds. At time of application to IIE U.S. host schools and teacher applicants must disclose if they have worked with any third-party placement organizations and any fees associated with the placement, sponsorship, or visa application process that have been paid, will be paid, or will be reimbursed by the teacher.

The cost of living can vary greatly depending on where the host school or school district is located. Prior to accepting a position, teachers should research online to budget accordingly. 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). In a single-family home, the tenant may also be responsible for water and trash collection, about \$150 - \$200 annually. Cost of food may range from \$200 - \$500 per month, depending on location and preference to cook or eat out regularly.

Transit

Most urban areas have public transit, such as subways, buses, and trains and this is a great environmentally friendly option. Price of a monthly public transit ticket may range from \$25 - \$125 for local service, or higher for regional service. Owning a car in the U.S. can be expensive, with gas prices between \$2 - \$5 per gallon depending on the region. Drivers need to make sure they have or obtain the proper license (through the Department of Motor Vehicles for the state) and vehicle insurance.

Work-Related Tax Deductions

If the teacher is being compensated by the host school or school district, taxes will be deducted from each paycheck. J-1 exchange visitors are subject to federal, state, and local income taxes but are exempt from FICA and FUTA.

For general guidance on expected federal tax deductions from an exchange teacher's salary, please review more information from the IRS on marginal tax rates for tax year 2021, by income- level:

Tax rate	Income level for single taxpayers	Income level for married, filing jointly
35%	over \$209,425	over \$418,850
32%	over \$164,925	over \$329,850
24%	over \$86,375	over \$172,750
22%	over \$40,525	over \$81,050
12%	over \$9,950	over \$19,900
10%	\$9,950 or less	\$19,900 or less

<https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/irs-provides-tax-inflation-adjustments-for-tax-year-2021>

Teachers are responsible for being aware of all personal tax filing requirements. Specific questions should be directed to a tax professional with experience in nonimmigrant filing.

Next Steps

Interested in exchange visitor sponsorship through IIE? A representative of the U.S. host school or school district should contact IIE to begin our online application process. IIE accepts applications for the Teacher program between March 1st and July 1st for the upcoming school year.

IIE recommends submitting the application at least 2-3 months in advance of the first day of school. Teacher programs must follow the U.S. academic year cycle.

All teacher candidates must have a high level of English proficiency.

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

Information from this Fact Sheet references from <https://j1visa.state.gov/> and **eCFR Part 62**