



EXCHANGE VISITOR PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Participation in the FACC Exchange Visitor Intern/Trainee Programs assumes acceptance of, and adherence to, these guidelines by both the host company and the Exchange Visitor. In addition, host companies and Exchange Visitors must abide by all federal, state and local occupational health and safety laws.

I - Exchange Visitor Eligibility Requirements

1. An **intern** candidate must be enrolled as a full-time student in a foreign post-secondary ministerially -recognized institution or have graduated from such an institution no more than 12 months before the internship start date.
2. A **trainee** candidate must have a post-secondary foreign diploma or certificate and one year of relevant work experience outside the U.S. or have five years of relevant work experience outside the U.S. if he or she has no post-secondary degree.
3. The internship or training program must correspond to the candidate's academic course of study, as well as his or her previous work experience, if any.
4. The candidate must be proficient enough in English to function in an English-speaking professional environment. English language ability will be assessed during an interview with the FACC.
5. All Exchange Visitors and dependents must have valid health insurance for the entire duration of their stay in the United States. All VIE program participants will automatically have qualifying coverage through Business France. All other participants must purchase the FACC's approved [Envisage Global Insurance Plan](#) which meets all U.S. Department of State requirements. Full details of coverage can be downloaded [here](#).
6. The candidate must have a foreign passport valid for the entire length of the training, plus an additional six months.
7. The maximum duration of an intern program is 12 months; the maximum duration for a trainee program is 18 months.
8. If a candidate maintains active full-time student status outside the United States, he or she may be eligible for repeat intern visas with a minimum of 90 days between internships. U.S. federal regulations call for a minimum two-year interval between an intern and trainee visa, or between two trainee visas.

II – Host Company Eligibility Requirements

1. The host company must have at least:
 - Three full-time permanent employees to host an intern
 - Five full-time permanent employees to host a trainee

Two of the full-time employees must be American citizens or permanent residents to ensure a true cultural exchange experience.
2. The host company must expose the Exchange Visitor to cross-cultural activities.
3. The Exchange Visitor must be paid at least minimum wage. The amount paid should be comparable to the amount paid to other individuals having similar education and experience. All VIE program participants will automatically receive a qualifying stipend from the French parent company.
4. The host company providing the training or internship program must be a member of one of the FACC chapters for the entire training period.
5. All host companies must agree not to hire the participant at any point during or immediately following the Exchange Visitor Program for a period of at least one year.
6. All host companies must submit a final program evaluation signed by the supervisor and exchange visitor. For programs of more than 6 months, a midpoint and a final evaluation is required.
7. Host companies must contact the FACC with any concerns or problems about their intern or trainee. Any program updates should be reported to the FACC immediately.

III - Candidate Documentation

1. **Certificate of Eligibility (Form DS-2019)**

This official document from the U.S. State Department (DOS) is issued by the French-American Chamber of Commerce in New York. The Certificate allows the candidate to apply for a J-1 visa at a U.S. embassy or consulate in his or her home country. The DS-2019 Certificate of Eligibility determines the exact duration and category of the program.

2. **J-1 Visa**

A candidate must apply for the visa at a U.S. embassy or consulate with a valid passport and a DS-2019 Certificate of Eligibility. The candidate should check the website of the U.S. embassy in his or her home country for further information. All candidates must fill out the Form DS-160 (electronic visa application) found on the embassy's website. The visa is an entry document only and does not always determine duration of stay.

3. **Record of Admission (I-94)**

Upon entry to the United States, Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Customs & Border Protection (CBP) officials will provide Exchange Visitors with a CBP admission stamp in their

passports. This stamp will indicate the Exchange Visitors Date of Entry, Class of Admission, and Duration of Status (D/S).

Exchange Visitors will be able to access their Record of Admission (I-94) at www.CBP.gov/I94.

This information will be accessible to the Exchange Visitor as long as they are in the United States. Once the candidate leaves U.S. territory, this information will no longer be accessible.

We urge all Exchange Visitors and host companies to pay careful attention to the validity of these three documents, because they are not always granted for the same time period. In case of discrepancy, the admission stamp always determines duration of stay for the Exchange Visitor.

IV - Specific Exchange Visitor Program Regulations

1. DURATION OF STAY:

The length of the training or internship program is defined by the dates on the DS-2019 in box 3 and/or the dates on the admission stamp. The participant may stay until the end of this period, plus an additional 30 days for travel, tourism, and preparation to leave. Extensions may be granted upon written request of the host company to the FACC, not to exceed the maximum duration of 18 months for trainees and 12 months for interns.

2. RE-ENTRY INTO THE UNITED STATES:

Exchange Visitors must notify the FACC at least 3 weeks before their travel to ensure that they get their Form DS-2019 signed before they leave the United States. The travel validation signature is valid for 12 months.

Exchange Visitors should send their original Forms DS-2019 along with their travel validation cover sheets by UPS to the FACC in New York. Exchange Visitors must include a prepaid UPS return label addressed from the FACC to their U.S. mailing address.

Upon re-entry, the Exchange Visitor must show a valid J-1 visa and the DS-2019 to immigration officials. The Exchange Visitor must not re-enter the U.S. without having the DS-2019 signed, or he or she risks being denied entry or falling out of status.

3. INCIDENT REPORTING:

Incidents involving hospitalization, serious injury, or death of an Exchange Visitor must be communicated to the FACC within 24 hours. Insurance companies must also be contacted prior to the arrangement of emergency services (repatriation, medical evacuation, etc.) to ensure coverage.

4. CHANGES IN PROGRAM LOCATION & ACTIVITIES:

If the host company wants to transfer the participant to another location, they must submit a request to the FACC prior to the date of transfer. The FACC will determine whether the request complies with program regulations.

Beyond location, any material training program changes not previously discussed with the FACC Responsible Officer must be immediately reported. In addition, any change in the Exchange Visitor's home address while in the U.S. must be reported to the FACC in writing for SEVIS updates.

5. **PROGRAM TRANSFERS:**

Participants may not transfer from one company to another. The J-1 status is dependent on the Exchange Visitor remaining with the same host company for the entire duration of the program.

6. **EXCHANGE VISITORS & THE PUBLIC:**

With respect to the federal regulations that govern this program, we strongly recommend that the participants identify themselves as trainees or interns in any dealings with the public. As an Exchange Visitor, the trainee or intern does not have work authorization in the United States and therefore business cards should not be issued to the participant. If cards are necessary, then his or her name only should appear on the card without title or position.

7. **EARLY END OF ASSIGNMENT:**

The FACC is required to report to DOS the date of training completion through the SEVIS tracking system. If the training or internship program ends prior to the date indicated on the Form DS-2019, the host company must write to the FACC in New York a brief statement indicating the intern or trainee's full name, date of termination, and reason for early departure.

8. **EXTENSIONS:**

Extension requests must be submitted at least one month prior to the end of the original scheduled date. In addition, the host company must submit the processing fee to cover administrative costs, as well as a new Form DS-7002 that provides justification for an extended program. Documented proof of medical insurance coverage during the period of the extension must also be submitted.

9. **DEPENDENTS:**

The Exchange Visitor's spouse and/or children are eligible for J-2 visa status for the same period of time as the J-1 visa holder. The fee for an additional Form DS-2019 for J-2 status is \$250 per participant. Additional application materials are required for a J-2 request.

If you have any questions concerning program regulations or specific arrangements for your trainee or intern, please contact the ICDP Department by e-mail at coordinator@faccnyc.org.

About the French-American Chamber of Commerce

The French-American Chamber of Commerce (FACC) has been granted authority by the U.S. Department of State (DOS) to sponsor practical training and internship programs for foreign Exchange Visitors on assignments at FACC member companies in the United States.

The FACC reserves the right to withdraw J-1 visa sponsorship if any of the conditions of the program are altered without permission, or if it is discovered that the program violates the federal regulations governing the J-1 visa. If the FACC withdraws sponsorship, the Exchange Visitor must stop his or her program immediately and leave the United States.