

VISA APPLICATION INFORMATION

New Students: Apply for and receive an F-1 or J-1 student visa

STEP 1: Pay the SEVIS Fee.

Once you've received your I-20 or DS-2019, you will need to pay a SEVIS fee to the [US Department of Homeland Security](#). In order to pay, complete the [Form I-901](#) along with the payment via mail or the Internet (dependents in F-2 or J-2 status are not required to pay the fee). The SEVIS fee must be paid at least 3 business days prior to a visa interview or the filing of the change of status application in the US. [Learn more](#) about the SEVIS fee. **Keep a printout of the receipt confirming the I-901 fee payment.**

STEP 2: Apply for your Visa

Use your I-20 or DS-2019 issued by Rutgers to apply for your visa. Review these NAFSA [tips on applying for a student visa](#), then [apply for a student visa](#) from a [United States consulate](#) in your country of citizenship or country of permanent residence.

Be Prepared

- Find out in advance what information you will need to supply on your visa application. All non-immigrant visa applicants must complete Forms DS-160 (online non-immigrant visa application) and DS-158 (contact information and work history for non-immigrant visa applicant). Others will need to submit DS-157 (supplemental non-immigrant visa application) as well. You can access all of these forms at: <https://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/forms.html>
- Applicants will also need to appear for an in-person interview in English and will have to pay a visa application fee

Current Students

If your visa has expired, you need to get a new visa from a US consulate or embassy **outside of the US**. You can't apply for a new visa inside the US.

Be Prepared:

- Visit the website of the [US consulate](#) you plan to apply at. You may also want to read the [Department of State information on visa denials](#), and [tips on how to apply for a visa](#).
- Review information on [how to make a visa appointment](#), and to check on [visa wait times](#) in the city you plan to apply. If you have applied for a visa and have been waiting for more than one month for the results of a security advisory opinion, be sure to [contact us](#).

Note:

Some visa applications require additional [administrative processing](#) beyond the consular interview. Most administrative processing is completed within 60 days but in some cases it may take longer. Apply for your visa well in advance of your anticipated travel date. If your application is undergoing administrative processing and you are unable to arrive at Rutgers in time for your program/session start date, please make sure you [contact us](#).

If your field of study or research is technology or science-related, we recommend you get a letter (on letterhead) from your supervisor, department chair, center director or graduate program director to submit with your visa application. The letter should explain as much about your program of study and research as possible with the goal of demonstrating that your research does not threaten national security. If you are working on a grant, the letter can name the Principal Investigator and the granting agency, grant number and grant name. It should also explain the purpose of the grant research. *The more information or evidence the letter can offer to convince the US Department of State that your work does not threaten national security, the better it will be.* The letter does not assure a waiver of the administrative processing, but can assist in the process.

If you experience a problem when applying for a visa or at the port of entry, contact your [international student adviser](#) immediately!

Suggested items to take with you when applying for a visa

- Unexpired passport valid at least 6 months in the future
- I-20 or DS-2019 recently signed by your international student adviser along with all previously issued I-20s or DS-2019s. For more information about how to get a travel signature/ endorsement read our hand out titled: [Obtaining a Travel Signature for F-1 & J-1 Registered Students](#). Make sure the information (spelling of name, major, degree level, funding) on your most current document is accurate
- Current [Proof of financial support](#) (this may include personal or family bank statements, any affidavit of support, or copies of your fellowship or scholarship letter), matching the information on your I-20 or Ds-2019
- [SEVIS fee receipt](#)
- Unofficial [unofficial transcript](#) with your name on it (preferably showing proof of registration for the following semester if you are traveling during the winter or summer break.
- [Enrollment Verification](#)
- [Center letter clarifying Rutgers full-time policy](#), if applicable
- If on OPT or Academic Training (AT), your OPT or AT authorization
- Letter from academic official, if applicable (see note on page 1)
- For graduate students, a resume or CV, including a list of publications (if any) and a summary of past and present research. If applicable, a letter from your GPD/academic adviser discussing how your research is NOT technologically sensitive (see #2 above)
- If dependents are accompanying you, make sure their I-20s or DS-2019s are signed for travel and that you have a certified copy of your marriage certificate or birth certificates for children
- Evidence showing your intention to return to your home country upon program completion, including evidence of compelling social and economic ties to your home country.

More Travel Links

- [Obtaining a Travel Signature](#)
- [Travel and Visa Information](#)
- [Bring Family to the U.S.](#)
- [Inviting Relatives or Friends as a B-2 visitor](#)