



**International Center
for Language Studies**

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*A leader in Language Training &
International Exchange Programs since 1966*

Version 7.11.22

WIN in the USA Program

Intern and Trainee Exchange Program Guidelines for Hosts

INFORMATIONAL HANDBOOK



*Connecting global leaders,
creating lasting impact.*

International Center for Language Studies (ICLS) is designated by the U.S. Department of State as a sponsor of **BridgeUSA** for the **INTERN** and **TRAINEE** categories by the administrative regulations issued under the **Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961** (also known as the Fulbright-Hays Act). Its purpose is to build enduring bridges of friendship between peoples and nations, connect global leaders, and create lasting impact through educational and cultural exchanges.
Intern/Trainee Private Sector Exchange Program Sponsor since 2003.

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WELCOME

Welcome to the WIN in the USA Intern & Trainee Program at ICLS!

Dear Hosts:

Thank you for partnering with ICLS to host international interns and trainees from around the world and helping them to observe and experience American business culture, values, and practices in your workplace.

You give international interns the opportunity to bridge the gap between theory and practice and allow international trainees the opportunity to share knowledge, skills, add cultural diversity. This, in turn, enriches your workplace, improves your services, and helps your company to gain a fresh global perspective. And ultimately, these programs strengthen peace and stability. Your contribution is immense!

From a business perspective, hosting international interns and trainees brings the next generation of business leaders to your workplace, providing new perspectives and helping your company compete internationally.

We have created this booklet to help prepare you for hosting participants so that you and they can have a meaningful and exciting experience. We hope you will find this booklet helpful. To receive a quick introduction to our programs, please watch this short video: <https://youtu.be/nQV0iReb2do>

Please do not hesitate to contact ICLS with any questions related to the international participants, J-1 program rules, training guidelines, monitoring and evaluation procedures, or anything else. Thank you again for hosting international interns and trainees and sharing your valuable knowledge and expertise with them.

Best regards,

Jessica Hines

Director and Responsible Officer (J-1)
WIN in the USA Intern and Trainee Program
International Center for Language Studies

EMERGENCY AND IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

ICLS Address and Contact Information:

International Center for Language Studies (ICLS), Inc.
1133 15th St NW, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: (202) 639-8800
Main Email: winintheusa@icls.edu
Office hours: Monday to Friday, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

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WIN in the USA Intern and Trainee Program

Jessica Hines, Director & Responsible Officer (J-1)

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For life-threatening or medical emergencies, call 911.

For program-related emergencies, call the ICLS emergency customer service line: 202-964-7242

BRIDGEUSA PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The purpose of the BridgeUSA Program (J-1 Exchange Visitor Program) is for "Educational and Cultural Exchange," not employment. The 1961 Fulbright-Hayes Act created the J-category with the purpose of "increasing mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries by means of educational and cultural exchanges." At the end of the program, Exchange Visitors are expected to return to their home country to utilize the experience and skills they have acquired while in the United States.

The [Exchange Visitor Program](#) is administered by the Office of Exchange Coordination and Designation in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. You can learn more about this program at <http://j1visa.state.gov/basics/> and <http://j1visa.state.gov/participants/>.

U.S. Department of State

Office of Designation
Private Sector Programs Division
ECA/EC/D/PS - SA-5, Floor 5
2200 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037

TELEPHONE: (844) 300-1824

FAX: (202) 203-7779

EMAIL ADDRESS: jvisas@state.gov

The Department of State's BridgeUSA Program Brochure can be found at the end of the orientation handbook. A downloadable version can be found by following this link:

<https://j1visa.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Brochure-The-Exchange-Visitor-Program.pdf>

WIN IN THE USA PROGRAM

Intern and Trainee Cultural Exchange Program Purpose

The ICLS WIN in the USA Intern and Trainee Exchange Program* contributes to educational and cultural exchange as authorized by the Fulbright-Hayes Act (1961), the objective of which is to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries, and to assist in the development of friendly, sympathetic, and peaceful relations between the United States and other nations.

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The program offers a unique cultural learning experience through work-based guided internship and practical training at sought-after U.S. organizations.

The exchange program enhances understanding of American culture and society and improves knowledge of career and occupational fields through exposure to American business culture, methodologies, and expertise. This goal is best met by ensuring that exchange participants return to their home countries to share the skills and knowledge acquired in the United States, thereby strengthening ties and communications between nations.

ICLS offers customized training programs for postsecondary students, graduates, and young professionals who wish to improve their English proficiency, gain professional training and cultural experience and build an international network through participation in one of our exchange programs.

*Designated by the U.S. Department of State's BridgeUSA Program as an exchange visitor sponsor in the Intern and Trainee categories (22CFR 62.22)

INTERN CATEGORY

Under the Intern category, current international students or recent graduates are permitted to enter the United States for a maximum of 12 months on a J-1 visa. During their time in the United States, interns participate in a structured internship program that directly correlates with their studies abroad. Interns are expected to return home upon completing their program and utilize newly acquired skills in further studies or careers.

ICLS is authorized to enroll interns in the following occupational fields:

Arts and Culture; Education, Social Science, Library Science, Counseling, Social Services; Management, Business, Commerce and Finance; Hospitality and Tourism; International Media and Communications; Public Administration and Law; The Sciences, Engineering, Architecture, Mathematics, and Industrial Occupations.

TRAINEE CATEGORY

Under the Trainee category, young international professionals are permitted to enter the United States for a maximum of 12 or 18 months on a J-1 visa, depending on the occupational field. During their time in the United States, trainees will participate in a structured training program to expand their existing knowledge and skills directly correlate with their experience abroad. Trainees are expected to return home upon completing their program and utilize newly acquired skills and methodologies in their occupational positions.

Please note: Hospitality and Tourism training is limited to 12 months

ICLS is authorized to enroll trainees in the following occupational fields:

Arts and Culture; Education, Social Science, Library Science; Health Related Occupations (12 months); Hospitality and Tourism Occupations (12 months); International Media and Communications; Management, Business, Commerce and Finance; Public Administration and Law; The Sciences, Engineering, Architecture, Mathematics, and Industrial Occupations.

INTERN AND TRAINEE ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

In order to participate in the J-1 exchange visitor program, all applicants must meet the following criteria:

LANGUAGE

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English language skills must be at a level that will allow participants to function in an American professional environment. ICLS Applicants may submit (1) a recent formal language test,* (2) a Partner-conducted test and interview results, or (3) take part in an interview with an ICLS representative.

*TOEFL, IELTS, CAE, CPE language proficiency tests

EDUCATION

Trainees		
Trainees must have a degree or a professional certificate from a foreign post-secondary academic institution AND a minimum of 1 year of prior related work experience in their occupational field acquired outside the United States.	OR	In the absence of a degree, Trainees must have a minimum of 5 years of work experience in their occupational field outside the United States.
Interns		
Interns must be currently enrolled in a degree or certificate-granting post-secondary academic institution outside the United States.	OR	Interns must have graduated from a degree or certificate-granting post-secondary academic institution outside the United States less than 12 months before their internship program starts.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

In addition to program costs, the BridgeUSA program requires J-1 applicants to prove that they have adequate financial resources to cover program fees, travel, living expenses, and medical expenses for the entire period spent in the United States.

HEALTH AND ACCIDENT INSURANCE

All exchange participants, both J-1 participants and J-2 dependents, traveling to the US must have health and accident insurance coverage for the duration of the program as outlined in the US Department of State's Code of Federal Regulations ([§62.14\(b\)](#)). Requirements include, but are not limited to:

- Medical benefits of at least \$100,000 per accident or illness
- Repatriation of remains for \$25,000
- Expenses associated with the medical evacuation of the exchange visitor to his or her home country for \$50,000
- A deductible not to exceed \$500 per accident or illness

Willful failure on the part of the J-1 participant and/or any J-2 dependent on maintaining current insurance coverage is grounds for termination from the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program followed by an immediate departure. ICLS offers health and accident insurance coverage meeting the above requirements.

APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

International students and young professionals applying for a J-1 visa must submit a complete application via Hanover CRM with supporting documents including, but not limited to:

- Participant Agreement
- CV
- Diploma and/or school transcripts
- Photocopy of passport
- Proof of Sufficient funds (can be a notarized bank statement, sponsor's letter, or affidavit of support)

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HOSTING J-1 INTERNS AND TRAINEES

Purpose

This program aims to enhance understanding of American culture and society and improve knowledge of career fields through exposure to American methodologies and expertise. This objective is best met by ensuring that participants return to their home countries to share knowledge and skills they acquired in the United States, thereby strengthening ties between nations.

Opportunity

Provide structured work-based training to international interns and trainees while promoting the value of cross-cultural exchange. Two distinct programs help U.S. organizations to create a more dynamic workplace and an opportunity for American employees to expand their knowledge of foreign business culture.

THE ROLE OF THE HOST ORGANIZATION

To become a great host for J-1 interns and trainees, your organization is required to provide a structured, practical training experience while abiding by key program regulations. Because the purpose of the program is to foster cultural and skills-based training exchanges, the host organization is expected to ensure that the DS-7002 Training/Internship Placement Plan is followed by the assigned host supervisors and the J-1 participants from the orientation through the last day of the program.

Interns must receive supervised training in their current field of study, and trainees must receive mid-level to advanced training that expands their existing knowledge and expertise in their professional fields. Thus, upon completing the program, the participant should return to their home country better equipped to meet new challenges at school or the workplace.

This program is not intended to fill a labor need within your organization. The training plan should reflect an understanding of the participant's needs. As a host organization, you are expected to provide a balanced exchange of skills and knowledge between your organization and the J-1 participant. However, we understand that certain occupations require familiarity with unskilled and clerical activities as part of the standard procedures. Therefore, participants may engage in limited office support and clerical activities to a maximum of 20% as part of the project activity resulting in learning a set of management skills.

THE TRAINING/INTERNSHIP PLACEMENT PLAN (“T/IPP” OR “TRAINING PLAN”)

The Training/Internship Placement Plan is sometimes referred to as the T/IPP, the DS-7002, or the “training plan.” This government-issued DS-7002 Form is the most critical J-1 Intern and Trainee Program component. This form is used to outline the proposed training and to serve as an agreement between the host organization and the J-1 participant about specific training goals, objectives, and tasks are expected to learn during an internship program through guided training, observations, shadowing of the supervisor(s), and reinforcing learning experience through regular discussions, evaluations and feedback on completed tasks.

The internship training placement plan helps determine the correlation between the training and the participant's background and the overall appropriateness of the training program for participants in compliance with the J-1 program requirements.

The DS-7002 Form will be reviewed by all parties involved in vetting and evaluating the exchange participants – from sponsor organization (ICLS), U.S. consular officer, and the State Department's Educational and Cultural

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Affairs and BridgeUSA Program. For this reason, it is essential that you take the time to design the proper training plan you intend to provide.

TAX INFORMATION

If receiving a stipend, J-1 Program participants are required to pay the following taxes:

- Federal Income Tax
- State Income Tax (if applicable)
- Local/City Income Tax (if applicable)

J-1 Program participants are NOT required to pay the following:

- Social Security & Medicare (FICA)
- Federal Unemployment Tax (FUTA)

FLSA AND OSHA REGULATIONS

Hosts must observe and follow all applicable local, state, and federal labor laws including occupational safety and health regulations.

Hosts must pay participants according to Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) requirements including minimum wage and overtime pay. In the event that the Intern or Trainee is participating in an unpaid program or includes a stipend package that is less than minimum wage, the host must ensure it meets the Department of Labor standards on internship programs as outlined in DOL Fact Sheet #71:

(<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fact-sheets/71-flsa-internships>).

HOST ORGANIZATION RESPONSIBILITIES

In order to have a great hosting experience and provide your participant(s) with a rewarding cultural and learning experience, host organizations are required to follow J-1 Intern/Trainee Program (T/IPP) rules and ICLS guidelines.

Host organizations are required to:

- Provide a safe environment that meets the CDC requirements during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Sign a Host Agreement and completed Form DS-7002 to verify that all placements are appropriate and consistent with the objectives of the trainees or interns as outlined in their program applications and as set forth in their training plan.
- Notify sponsors promptly of any concerns, changes, or deviations from training plans during training and internship programs.
- Contact sponsors immediately in the event of any emergency involving trainees or interns. Our after hours emergency line is 1-202-270-9280.
- Abide by all federal, state, and local occupational health and safety laws.
- Abide by all program rules and regulations set forth by the sponsors, including the completion of all mandatory program evaluations.
- Have sufficient resources, physical business office, equipment, and trained personnel available.
- Provide continuous on-site supervision and mentoring by experienced and knowledgeable staff.
- Ensure that interns and trainees obtain skills, knowledge, and competencies through structured and guided activities such as classroom training, seminars, rotation through several departments, on-the-

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job training, attendance at conferences and similar learning activities, as appropriate in specific circumstances.

- Introduce participants to U.S. culture and business practices.
- Abide by all federal, state, and local labor and wage laws, including laws related to withholding applicable tax returns. J-1 visa trainees and interns do not pay FICA (Social Security/Medicare) and FUTA (unemployment) and are required to obtain Social Security Number (SSN) for receiving a stipend. The host organization agrees to pay participants while they wait for SSN.
- Provide "real life" experience through exposure to various aspects of the field and activities corresponding to the participant's education or career field.
- Assist participants in submitting arrival documents to ICLS for J-1 status activation.
- Provide orientation during their first week of the program to ensure participants are prepared to begin their training; become familiar with host company rules and standard operating procedures, internship schedule, lunch break, monthly stipend, training plan, monitoring, and evaluation procedures.
- Provide full-time (32-40 hrs per week), skill-base, professional training, including lunch break.
- Encourage speaking English in the office and network with American peers and interns.
- Review progress reports and provide feedback to interns and trainees.
- Notify ICLS of any training discrepancies, interruptions, incidents and concerns.
- Ensure timely completion of the program and return to home country safely.

EXCLUSIONS

- Interns and Trainees cannot work in unskilled or casual labor positions, in positions that require or involve childcare or elder care, or in any kind of position that involves medical patient care or contact.
- Host organizations must not place trainees in positions that require more than 20 percent clerical or office support work.
- Use of the J-1 BridgeUSA Program for ordinary employment or work purposes is strictly prohibited.
- Interns and Trainees must not be placed in positions filled or would be filled by full-time or part-time American employees.
- Training plan cannot duplicate a trainee's prior work experience or training. Training plan must provide training and tasks that develop new skills and expand knowledge.

Please do not revise training plan without the approval of ICLS or offer employment at the end of their program.

ORIENTATION FOR INTERNS AND TRAINEES

To make the internship experience more beneficial for you and your Intern or Trainee, we suggest you discuss the following topics with your Intern or Trainee during the first week of the internship program.

1. Office policies/culture. This might include information about:

- a. Your organization's mission, goals, objectives, standard operating procedures, work, business ethics, safety
- b. Participant's benefits and responsibilities as an intern or trainee
- c. Use of office equipment
- d. Dress code

2. Schedule

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- a. What are the regular business hours for your office? Please note that the J-1 participant's internship and training hours should not exceed 32-40 hours per week so that they have time for cultural activities.
- b. Do you have regular staff meetings that the participant will be expected to attend?
- c. What special events are on the calendar that the participant should be aware of? Is the participant expected to assist? To attend?
- d. Which holidays does your office observe? What cultural activities does your office provide to participants?

3. Internship tasks – Training/Internship Placement Plan (DS-7002)

- a. Discuss the training plan and critical functions for which the participant will be responsible.
- b. What projects do you expect the participant to complete within the first 4-8 weeks, 3-6 months, 9-12 months, etc.? By the end of the internship/training?
- c. Discuss possible new projects or areas of research with which the participant might assist.
- d. Discuss the supervisory roles of each supervisor with which the participant will train.
- e. Describe opportunities and procedures for observations and shadowing of the supervisor and staff.
- f. Discuss monitoring/evaluation procedures, completion of the tasks, submitting reports.
- g. Discuss training conditions and work safety environment, work culture shock, expectations, different communication styles (high vs. low context.)

4. Neighborhood orientation

- a. Life and customs in the United States
- b. Local community resources - public transportation, schools, libraries, banks, recreation centers, post offices, grocery stores, dry cleaners, shopping malls, arts, and cultural centers.
- c. Local medical facilities, emergency clinics, pharmacies, police stations, safety information.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

All ICLS exchange participants and hosts should follow the Training/Internship Placement Plans (DS-7002) to maintain their status and complete their programs successfully.

Host organizations monitor participants to ensure that their activities are consistent with those listed on their DS-7002 Training/Internship Placement Plans. This plan should be the primary guide to participants' training. **If there are any plans to alter training activities significantly, ICLS should be notified immediately.**

Any changes to host supervisors should be reported to ICLS right away so that ICLS can ensure all hosts are qualified, adequately oriented to the program, SEVIS records are updated, and amended DS-2019 and DS-7002 forms are provided.

Both participants and host supervisors must submit evaluation reports to ICLS by the end of each phase of their training. If either party fails to provide their evaluation promptly, the participant's SEVIS status will become "Invalid," and he or she will be forced to leave the program and the United States.

Monitoring and evaluation of the participant's development and learning outcomes are aimed to help ICLS monitor the participant's J-1 status and program compliance, on-the-job training conditions and verify that the terms agreed to in the participant's training/internship placement plan (DS-7002) are being met. Furthermore, these procedures will help you to track the progress of your Intern or Trainee and keep ICLS informed of any issues that may arise.

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OBSTACLES

Obstacles may arise when hosting a J-1 Intern or Trainee. Although the training plan can often appear clear on paper, some issues can occur unexpectedly.

CULTURE SHOCK

One common issue for J-1 Interns and Trainees is culture shock. Culture shock is the physical and emotional discomfort one feels when coming to live in another country or a place different from one's place of origin. You can help your J-1 Intern or Trainee by making sure that you communicate with them regularly and making yourself available to offer support if and when necessary. Notify ICLS so we can provide timely support, advice, and counseling as well.

DIFFERING EXPECTATIONS

Sometimes Interns and Trainees have different expectations than their hosts. It is critical that you discuss the approved DS-7002 internship training plan with your participant during the orientation phase and make sure they fully understand their training plan and have realistic expectations.

Should you have any questions or require assistance, please feel free to contact our office. Thank you for hosting international participants and sharing your experience with them. Your contribution to their development is immense!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Please contact ICLS or visit our website at www.icls.edu for additional resources.

LINKS TO IMPORTANT WORKPLACE AND SAFETY INFORMATION

Non-Immigrant Rights Pamphlet	Sexual Harassment & Retaliation Information
Protecting Personal Information (OIG)	Human Trafficking Information
Social Security Information for Non-Citizens	DOS Exchange Program Brochure
Employee Rights	DOL Fact Sheet #71

LIST OF PROHIBITED UNSKILLED OCCUPATIONS

Appendix E to Part 62; 22 CFR (c) (1) – Excerpt from the Exchange Visitor Program, Bureau of Educational & Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State: Internships and Traineeships are not allowed by the Exchange Visitor Program under the following “unskilled occupations:”

Assemblers	Attendants, Parking Lot
Automobile Service Station Attendants	Bartenders
Attendant (Personal Service)	Attendant (Recreation Service)
Attendant (Amusement)	Ushers, Recreation, and Amusement
Basic Accounting and Bookkeepers	Caretakers
Cashiers	Charworkers and Cleaners
Cleaners, Hotel, and Motel	Chauffeurs and Taxicab Drivers
Clerks, Hotel, Restaurant	Clerks, General
Clerks and Checkers, Grocery Stores	Clerk Typist

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Cooks, Short Order	Counter and Fountain Workers
Dining Room Attendants	Electric Truck Operators
Elevator Operators	Floor workers
Groundskeepers	Guards
Helpers, any industry	Material Handlers
Hotel Cleaners	Nurses' Aides and Orderlies
Household Domestic Service Workers	Packers, Markers, Bottlers, and Related
Hotel Housekeepers, Room Service, Guest Service	Laborers, Farm
Janitors	Laborers, Mine
Key Punch Operators	Loopers and Toppers
Kitchen Workers	Porters
Laborers, Common	Receptionists
Sales Clerks, General	Sailors and Deck Hands
Sewing Machine Operators & Hemstitchers	Streetcar and Bus Conductors
Stock Room and Warehouse Workers	Telephone Operators
Truck, Yacht Drivers	Yard Workers
Typist, Lesser Skilled	Restaurant Cleaners, Kitchen Workers, Food/Beverage Delivery, Valley Parking, Hostess
Spa Massage/Nail Technician	