About Visa Categories

Listed below are the visa categories most often used by Yale international scholars. There is also a very brief explanation about the category and an indication of how the category is used for Yale appointments.

J-1 Research Scholar/Professor and Short-Term Scholar [1]

- Research Scholar/Professor maximum stay of five years
- Short-Term Scholar maximum stay of six months
- Used by majority of researchers (postdoctoral and postgraduate appointments, visiting fellows and laboratory associates) and visiting faculty
- Takes the least amount of time to process
- May be subject to the two year home country resident requirement [2]
- Dependents hold J-2 status and can apply for work authorization.
- J Transfers: [3] The J visa holder may transfer between different schools inside the U.S. There can be no gap between employers, and with new hires at Yale we need to make sure the new employee background check [4] is completed before the person can start. This has been a problem with some cases in the past.
- More details about J-1 scholar visas [5]

H-1B Temporary Worker [6]

- Immigration application fees for a new H-1B are around $3500 ($460, $500, $2500)
- Processing times are three to six months even with the expedited process
- Maximum stay of six years
- Must be employed by Yale – most commonly used for ladder track faculty and associate research scientist
- The employee can not change any terms of employment, or receive any money from other sources
- The salary paid must meet a Department of Labor “prevailing wage”
- Start an H-1B application [6]

O-1 Extraordinary Ability [7]

- Applicant must demonstrate sustained national or international acclaim and recognition for achievements
- Must be a Yale employee – used for faculty appointments
- Application must be assembled by department and individual, a process that can take several months
- Spouse on O-3 cannot work
- Few advantages over H-1B

TN USMCA Free Trade Agreement [8]

- Canadian and Mexican citizens only
- Must be employed by Yale
- Profession must be on the USMCA list [9]
- Authorized in one year increments and must be extended annually.
- Spouse in TD status cannot work

E-3 [10]

- Australian citizens only
- Must be employed by Yale
- Spouse of E-3 can apply for work authorization
- Rarely any advantages over J-1 or H-1B

J-1 Student Intern [12]

- Used by undergraduates students who come to Yale to participate in the Visiting Student in Research (VSR) program
- Maximum stay limited to 12 months or duration of VSR appointment, whichever is shorter
- Requires a detailed contract-type document (DS-7002) which can take 30-60 days to complete
- Requires formal evaluations to be completed at the beginning, middle and end of the internship
- There are many students who will not qualify for the J-1 Student Intern program.
- More information about J-1 Student Intern [13]

F-1 Optional Practical Training (OPT) [14]

- For those in F-1 status who have completed study in the U.S. and have received authorization from USCIS to work in a field related to their field of study
- Maximum period of employment is 12 months (unless in a STEM field)
- Must consult with OISS about future plans for Yale employment
- Read about how Yale graduates can use OPT [15]

F-1 STEM OPT [14]

- For those who graduated with a degree in a STEM field (as listed on the government site)
- The work at Yale must also be related to a STEM field
- Can extend OPT for up to a total of 3 years in some cases
- Similar to the J Student Intern, requires a contract-like form (I-983) and evaluations
- Read details about how to hire a student using STEM OPT [17]

J-1 Academic Training [18]

- For those in J-1 student status who have completed study in the U.S. and have received authorization to work in a field related to their field of study
- Maximum period of employment is 18-36 months
- Must consult with OISS about future plans for Yale employment
- Read about how Yale students can use Academic Training [19]

B Visitor Visa (B-1, B-2, WB, WT) [20]

Visa Waiver Program Update - New Procedures/Restrictions

- Used for short visits, e.g. giving a lecture, participating in a conference, or conducting independent research
- Restrictive criteria on payment of honoraria and/or reimbursement of expenses [21].