

About J-1 Visas

What is a J Visa?

The J visa's formal name is the Exchange Visitor Program (EVP). The EVP is administered by the U.S. Department of State for the purpose of fostering educational and cultural mutual exchange.

Yale's Exchange Visitor Program is reviewed by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the State Department every two years. It does not allow any patient care or clinical activities without express permission from OISS.

All sponsorship-required appointments must be full-time (100% FTE) on-campus or at Yale-affiliated business premises in Connecticut. Fully remote work is not permitted on the J visa. Exchange visitors can have a hybrid schedule but must participate in-person 60% of the time (e.g., three days out of five in any given week).

To learn more about the J Visa, please see our section for J-1 Scholars, [Understanding J-1 Status](#) [1], and its subpages.

This section serves as an overview of J-1 regulations relevant to professors and researchers, not to J-1 Student Interns. To learn more about J-1 Student Interns, visit our [J-1 Student Intern overview](#) [2].

What J-1 Cannot Be Used For

The J-1 visa **cannot be used** for ladder-track or tenured appointments as well as Managerial and Professional (M&P) or Clerical and Technical (C&T) positions.

M.D. Scholars

In most cases, M.D. students and scholars are prohibited from engaging in any clinical activities during Yale's J-1 Exchange Visitor visa sponsorship. International medical graduates will use the J-1 visa sponsorship of another agency, the [Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates](#) [3], for clinical residencies and fellowships.

J Visa Categories

Within the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program, there are two categories commonly used at Yale. Each particular category governs the terms and duration of the exchange.

J-1 Research Scholar/Professor

- Individuals who come to Yale primarily for the purpose of conducting research, lecturing, or clinical observation
- Individuals with a Yale academic appointment
- Maximum duration of 5 years

J-1 Short-Term Scholar

A J-1 Short-Term Scholar is defined as a professor or research scholar, who is coming to the United States for an academic visit of six months or less. The Short-Term Scholar category is similar to the J-1 Research Scholar or Professor, with a few exceptions. Departments will use the same OISS Connect process to appoint a J-1 Short

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Term Scholar.

- The J-1 Short-Term Scholar program may not be extended beyond six months. If there is any possibility the appointment will be extended beyond six months, then it is best to use the J-1 Research Scholar/Professor category.
- A J-1 Short-Term Scholar will not be subject to the 12 or 24-month bar, but could be subject to the Two-Year Home Country Residence requirement (see below for info on both). This is an important consideration if the individual frequently travels to the U.S. for academic or other employment-based assignments.
- The J-1 Short Term Scholar category can be used more than once, but each repeat visit must be based on a new academic objective.

J Visa Requirements

There are two visa-specific requirements that are unique to the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program: demonstrating English language proficiency, and maintaining health insurance.

Maintain Health Insurance

J-1 scholars and their J-2 family members are required to maintain [specific health insurance coverage](#) [4] during their entire stay in the U.S. J-1 student interns must upload a copy of their insurance plan to OISS Connect.

English Language Proficiency

[Federal regulations require evidence of an assessment of English language proficiency](#) [5]. Using OISS Connect, the host department indicates how the faculty supervisor determined the scholar's English language proficiency from the three choices below. Most host departments chose the interview option.

- If the faculty supervisor conducted an interview in English, the department uploads the [English Language Proficiency Assessment Form](#) [6] to OISS Connect (in the '[Documents](#)' tab [7])
- If the scholar has taken a recognized standardized test of English as a second language, the department uploads the [English Language Proficiency Assessment Form](#) [6] to OISS Connect (in the '[Documents](#)' tab [7]). In choosing the recognized test (TOEFL or IELTS) it is up to the department to decide on what test score is an acceptable minimum.
- If the scholar has a degree or transcript from an academic program conducted in English, no additional evidence is required.

J Visa Considerations

12 and 24 Month Bars

For the J-1 Research Scholar/Professor category, if they have previously been in the U.S. in a J-1 category (as listed in section 4 of the DS-2019) there may be a wait time before a professor or scholar can begin their program at Yale. These wait times are referred to as the 12 and 24 month bars. The J-1 Exchange Visitor program supports its underlying premise of fostering mutual exchange by preventing immediate repeat participation through these bars.

The bars do not apply to anyone coming from or to a J-1 Short-Term Scholar scholar category.

[Read more about the 12 and 24 month bars on our page for J-1 Scholars](#) [8].

Two-Year Home Residency Requirement

About J-1 Visas

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Some Exchange Visitors are subject to what is called the two-year home country physical presence requirement. It requires them to return home for at least two years after their exchange visitor program ends, or to have the requirement waived, before returning to the U.S. in either H-1B status or as a U.S. permanent resident. This “two-year residence” requirement may apply if the scholar meets certain criteria:

- Receive U.S. or home government funding
- Are in a high-demand field (Skills List)
- Are in Graduate Medical Training

Being subject to this requirement does not prevent a return in another visa status (for example as a tourist or F-1 student) at any time. Such a change of visa status, however, can occur only through international travel that involves either obtaining a new visa, or, in the case of Canadians who are visa exempt, admission to the U.S. at the port of entry in the new status.

[Read more about the two-year home residency requirement on our page for J-1 Scholars](#) [9].

Inviting a J Scholar

Starting the application process for a new J scholar.

[10]

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[10]

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URL:<https://oiss.yale.edu/for-departments/visa-options-for-international-faculty-and-researchers/about-j-1-visas>

Links

[1] <https://oiss.yale.edu/immigration/j-1-scholars/understanding-j-1-status> [2] <https://oiss.yale.edu/for-departments/visa-options-for-international-faculty-and-researchers/about-j-1-visas/about-j-1-student-interns> [3] <https://www.ecfmg.org/> [4] <https://oiss.yale.edu/node/631> [5] https://oiss.yale.edu/sites/default/files/files/Immigration/j-1_eng_regs.pdf [6] <https://yaleedu.sharepoint.com/:b/s/OISS2/EcbmFbv-MxNF16rQKv665U4B-oDdUgOlwbH8pQ1yxzwL3g?e=J6dgKM> [7] <https://oiss.yale.edu/for-departments/j-visas-step-by-step/uploading-documents> [8] <https://oiss.yale.edu/immigration/j-1-scholars/understanding-j-1-status/understanding-the-12-and-24-month-bars> [9] <https://oiss.yale.edu/immigration/j-1-scholars/understanding-j-1-status/two-year-home-country-residence-requirement> [10] <https://oiss.yale.edu/for-departments/inviting-a-scholar/next-steps-for-j-1-scholar>