



Early Career STEM Research Initiative

The Early Career STEM Research Initiative connects U.S. STEM businesses and research institutions across the United States with J-1 exchange visitors seeking STEM training and research experience through U.S. Department of State (Department)-designated BridgeUSA sponsors. J-1 exchange visitors participating in educational and cultural exchanges further the foreign policy interests of the United States by increasing the mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries.

BridgeUSA's Department-designated, public- and private-sector exchange partners (BridgeUSA Sponsors) provide exchange visitors with opportunities for academic studies and/or professional development, insight into the American know-how in their field, and a greater understanding of American society and culture through different categories of exchange.

The Early Career STEM Research Initiative utilizes seven existing educational and cultural exchange program categories focused on education, research, or professional development. Throughout their exchanges, participants hone existing skills and develop new ones, unlocking new and professional opportunities and gain first-hand experience at your company. Your STEM business benefits from hosting exchange visitors by enhancing your organizational network, diversifying your teams, and gaining international perspectives.

How to Connect with & Host Exchange Visitors:

Connect with a BridgeUSA Sponsor:

Interested STEM Host Organizations should reach out to a BridgeUSA sponsor listed on the "Get Started" page: <https://j1visa.state.gov/early-career-stem-research-initiative/#get-started>. Once you find a match, the BridgeUSA sponsor will be your primary resource and implementing partner for the duration of the exchange, including guiding you through the recruitment and sponsorship of exchange visitors for your organization.

Host a Successful Exchange Program:

For the duration of the exchange visitor's program, the Host Organization works in tandem with the BridgeUSA sponsor to monitor the exchange visitor's progress, welfare, and provide updates to the BridgeUSA sponsor. The Host Organization provides the exchange visitor with valuable skills, education, and experience in STEM fields while the Host Organization benefits from the exchange visitor's unique skills, talent, and perspective.

Helpful information and FAQs can be found at j1visa.state.gov/programs/early-career-stem-research-initiative.

Contact the Office of Private Sector Exchange at JVisas@state.gov with questions.



BridgeUSA



Eligible J-1 categories:

Research Scholar, Short-Term Scholar, Professor, College and University Student Intern, Specialist, Intern, and Trainee.

Exchange Visitor Program Category Requirements	Professor and Research Scholar	Short-Term Scholar	College and University Student Intern	Specialist	Intern	Trainee
Purpose of Exchange Program	Research Scholar: Research, Observe or consult in connection with a research project. Professor: Teach or lecture at university, observe or consult.	Lecture, Observe, Consult, Training, Demonstrate special skill(s).	Participate in a student internship program.	Observing, consulting, or demonstrating special skills.	Structured internship program that is in the student's field of study.	Structured training program that is in the trainee's professional field.
Position in Home Country	Professor, Researcher, Postdoc or Pre-doc, Graduate Students/ Similar (Doctors, attorneys, etc).	Professor, Researcher, Postdoc or Pre-doc, Graduate Students/ Similar (Doctors, attorneys, etc).	Internships must satisfy degree requirements, exchange visitor must be enrolled in a university or college outside of the U.S.	Recognized as an expert in a field of specialized knowledge or skill.	Enrolled in an academic university or college outside of the U.S. or graduated within 12 months of program start date.	Has a post-secondary degree or certificate from outside of the U.S. & 1 year of work experience; or 5 years of work experience.
Duration of U.S. Visit	3 weeks - 5 years.	1 day - 6 months.	12 months.	3 weeks - 12 months.	3 weeks - 12 months.	3 weeks - 18 months.