

Guidelines for Hosting International Visiting Scholars

Purdue University, College of Agriculture

International Programs in Agriculture

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Overview

Purdue University's College of Agriculture has global reach and is highly regarded worldwide for its research, education and engagement programs. As a result, each year a large number of overseas scholars and scientists seek to visit our college to engage in collaborative research and other activities. Historically, the College of Agriculture has hosted thousands of visitors from all over the world. Visitors add demonstrably to the progress of collaborative science, while at the same time enriching the culture and diversity of academic departments. Many initial visits to campus have blossomed into long-term research and educational collaborations, expanding the dimensions of our global engagement far beyond what was originally envisioned. This document outlines best practices for inviting and hosting international Visiting Scholars as guests of the university. It is intended to serve as a resource for faculty and staff who plan to host international scholars, and to provide guidance to department heads and department business offices to streamline the hosting process. These guidelines have been developed based on documents in use campus-wide at the time of writing. For additional information as well as specific up-to-date advice and assistance on visa issues and current university policies related to visitors, departments and faculty members are advised to contact [Purdue's Office of International Students and Scholars](#) (ISS) or [Purdue International Scholar Assistance](#) (PISA).

Definition

Individuals who visit campus for short periods of time, and who do not need letters of invitation or visa assistance, are typically referred to as *Visitors*. In contrast, *Visiting Scholars* are defined as scientists, postdoctoral researchers, undergraduate and graduate students and others affiliated with institutions other than Purdue University who wish to spend an *extended* period of time conducting research on campus, at the invitation of a Purdue host. Visiting Scholars are those who are not otherwise classified as employees, undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, staff or postdoctoral researchers affiliated with Purdue University. The term "non-sponsored Visiting Scholar" is sometimes used to refer to individuals who are not US persons, but who do not require Purdue assistance to obtain the requisite permissions to visit Purdue or engage in activities on campus. Examples include individuals who hold Optional Practical Training (OPT) or other independent work permits.

Basic considerations when hosting a Visiting Scholar

Historically, host departments have had responsibility for helping Visiting Scholars acclimate to life at Purdue. The Covid-19 era has underscored this responsibility. A department sponsoring a Visiting Scholar is expected to engage fully in helping the scholar manage their visit. Individuals new to campus are not likely to know anyone when they arrive and will require considerable support after arriving and throughout their stay. Before initiating any invitation, the host should make certain that they can provide this support for the entire duration of the Visiting Scholar's expected stay.

The process for hosting a Visiting Scholar begins with the preparation of a PISA intake form by the host department. Before an intake form is submitted for approval, a general plan should be developed that indicates: (i) how the individual will obtain and furnish an apartment; (ii) how they will obtain food and supplies; and (iii) how the host will manage any health or other emergency situations. Although exact details may not be fully worked out at the time the invitation letter is issued (since this will likely precede the individual's arrival by many months), a reasonable plan for managing the day-to-day details should be developed. Often, in the excitement to invite a colleague to engage in collaborative research, details regarding daily life are overlooked and, once the Visiting Scholar arrives, the challenges of daily life can undermine research goals. Securing housing far in advance, in particular, can be a challenge. In addition, the host department should have a plan for managing any logistical or financial risks associated with the visit or changes in plans. The goal is to anticipate possible complications and to develop reasonable contingencies so as to avoid potential headaches and disappointments.

The goal in the College of Agriculture is to facilitate invitations to Visiting Scholars and support research operations, while safeguarding the health of those in the Purdue community. Those who intend to invite Visiting Scholars should understand and communicate to the invitee that plans are subject to change. Once invited, a Visiting Scholar could be barred or delayed from entering the U.S., and cancellation of an invitation or postponement of research activities could occur at any time prior to or after arrival. This may have financial implications for the Visiting Scholar or host, as well as implications for the Visiting Scholar's ability to conduct planned research.

Key questions to ask (and answer) before inviting a Visiting Scholar

The process of initiating an invitation, securing approvals and visas, and making logistical arrangements generates a considerable amount of work for numerous individuals. Before initiating an invitation for a Visiting Scholar, it is essential to think carefully about the motivation for bringing someone to campus and whether the benefit of bringing them outweighs the visible (and hidden) costs. Key questions to answer before inviting a Visiting Scholar to campus include the following:

1. Who is the person? What is purpose of the visit? Will the individual add value to Purdue activities? What will you gain from the visit? What will the individual gain from the visit?
 - Have clear expectations, especially regarding how the visit is being funded.
 - Set goals and discuss and agree upon expected outcomes (e.g., regarding coauthorship, grant activity) in advance.
 - If you do not know the individual personally, be sure to seek endorsements or recommendations from trusted colleagues. Vetting is important!
 - Ensure that the visitor does not pose a potential risk to the university. Be aware that before a letter of invitation can be issued, a potential Visiting Scholar's name and institution will be checked against a State Department database listing high-risk individuals or institutions of concern or those with U.S. Treasury department sanctions. Concerns regarding instances of

intellectual property theft are on the rise and should be taken seriously.

- Before extending an invitation, review the university's [foreign recruitment program information](#) and be sure that you and your prospective visitor are in complete compliance and that the proposed visit will not raise any concerns.
- Do you anticipate any kind of financial relationship with the visitor, either now or in the future? Such financial relationships must be transparent and must be reported.

2. Will the host be able to fulfill the responsibilities as outlined by the U.S. government? There can be serious consequences if the host neglects to communicate with the scholar once they have arrived on campus.
3. Does a support system for the Visiting Scholar exist in the department, lab and community?
 - Identify someone to guide and mentor the person.
 - Develop a clearly-defined written plan for hosting.
 - Address housing arrangements well in advance of the visit.
4. Does the individual have the financial resources necessary for the entire stay?
 - Visiting Scholars are NOT employees of the university. This basic point should be clearly understood by both sides.
 - Reach agreement on what expenses will be covered by the Visiting Scholar and what expenses will be covered by the host.
 - Visiting Scholars must demonstrate proof of financial resources (in advance) of approximately \$1885/month/person in order to issue a visa request.
 - It may be possible for a host to provide financial support in the form of a living allowance, but restrictions may apply, and in no case will the business office approve a total living allowance greater than the established federal daily lodging rate for West Lafayette. [Federal rates](#) are updated periodically. The approved rate for West Lafayette is currently \$118 per day. Details regarding financial support should be worked out with the host's business office in advance of the visit.
 - If other family members are accompanying the visiting individual, additional resources will be needed and other considerations will apply. ISS or PISA can provide guidance.
 - Depending on the type of visa on which an individual comes to campus, they may or may not be required to demonstrate health insurance coverage. In most cases, it may nevertheless be advisable to purchase insurance for an individual's stay.
5. Will there be any intellectual property or co-authorship concerns?

- Country- or institution-specific restrictions may be placed on the nature of work to be completed, intellectual property, patents and copyright protection.
 - Review and share in advance the Purdue [policy](#) on authorship and ownership of research or training outcome with the potential individuals.
 - Discussing these matters in advance will avoid confusion and conflict.
6. What type of visa will be required?
- Most Visiting Scholars come to the U.S. on a J-1 visa.
 - The duration of appointment is stated in the invitation letter and must comply with Purdue policy (see <https://www.purdue.edu/provost/policies/fellows.html>). Once an intake form has been submitted, an extension or change to the original period of stay requires that the department submit to ISS/PISA a new intake form with the updated information.
 - Campus visitors sometimes arrive on a B1/B2 (business or tourist) visa for meetings, conferences or other purposes. Given the heightened security concerns discussed above, it is important to ensure these individuals are properly screened and vetted and that their access to university facilities is supervised.
 - Visa processing is complicated and time consuming. When in doubt about what kind of visa a university-hosted visitor will require, save time and effort by getting clarity from ISS/PISA far in advance of the visit.

Steps involved in initiating an invitation

To initiate an invitation, follow PISA's established procedures:

1. Begin with a conversation with your department head that covers the issues listed above.
2. The Department Contact must access the appropriate intake form from their college/division page on the PISA [website](#). The Department Contact is responsible for ensuring the intake form is completed and routed for approval.
 - Before leaving the college, requests for Visiting Scholars in the College of Agriculture must receive approvals from the following: the host, the department business office contact and the department head. International Programs in Agriculture (IPIA) will receive a copy of the intake form. Once these approvals are obtained, the intake form is routed to PISA who is responsible for issuing a letter of invitation on behalf of the university.
 - Routing for approval takes time, so plan well in advance. The process should be based on your needs and reasonable expectations for the university, not on the demands of the potential Visiting Scholar.
3. Once the intake form is completed, the form is routed to [PISA](#). The Department Contact may choose to route the form via DocuSign by adding PISA to the DocuSign envelope as

“receiving a copy” OR the intake form may be emailed to PISA. Any additional documents/information should be emailed to PISA@purdue.edu. PISA will collect the scholar’s CV.

4. PISA will follow up with the Department Contact if there are questions.
5. PISA will submit information to MyISS for Export Controls screening. Once the office of Export Controls approves the screening request, PISA will draft the letter of invitation and send the letter to the scholar via DocuSign, adding the host, department head, department business office, department contact and IPIA to receive a copy of the signed letter.
6. Once the scholar accepts the invitation, PISA will submit the immigration request to MyISS and the International Scholars counseling team will process the request.
7. PISA will issue a DS2019 when the signed letter is received. Departments will be notified when the DS2019 is issued. Approximately 2 weeks prior to arrival on Purdue’s campus, PISA will schedule a check-in appointment for the scholar at Purdue to take place immediately after the scholar’s arrival.
8. PISA will submit an employment ticket 3-4 weeks before scholar is scheduled to arrive.
9. The host department is expected to maintain communication with PISA and the scholar as it relates to travel, housing and other logistics in preparation for the scholar’s arrival.

Steps for receiving a Visiting Scholar

Insufficient advanced planning can ruin a visit and create headaches for everyone involved. Note the following:

1. In advance of the arrival date, provide or seek assistance for the Visiting Scholar’s housing.
 - Finding convenient and affordable housing can be a challenge. This is a recurring problem, particularly for those who will be on campus short-term (less than one semester) and those with families.
 - Providing advance information on housing can reduce stress and increase productivity.
 - Consider housing availability when arranging for the visit. Housing during the regular semesters, particularly for short-term Visiting Scholars can be difficult. It is somewhat easier to find short-term housing during the summer months.
 - IPIA and the campus [Office of Global Partnerships and Programs](#) may be able to provide current information on housing availability on and off campus.

2. Arrange transportation upon arrival.
 - If possible, meet the individual yourself upon arrival at the airport.
 - If meeting the individual is not possible, arrange transport and communicate a clear back-up plan.

3. Those arriving from overseas are likely to be tired and disoriented upon arrival. Signage and instructions may be unfamiliar. Make it as easy and comfortable for them as possible. Be a considerate host, especially in the early days following arrival.
 - Consider providing non-perishable food and snacks for the first 24 or 48 hours.
 - Provide a local map, written instructions for local transportation and essential businesses, and several phone numbers in case of emergency.
 - If the individual is arriving in winter, especially from a tropical country, they may not be fully equipped to deal with inclement weather. Consider providing essential items such as a warm hat, gloves, etc.

4. Plan to guide or lead them to visit the ISS office to document their immigration and visa status.
 - The individual must visit ISS in person early upon arrival to be officially checked-in and entered into the immigration system.
 - PISA will schedule this check-in appointment 2-3 weeks prior to the scholar's arrival. During the scholar "check-in" with PISA, the arrival is validated to the U.S. government. The Scholar is approved within Purdue systems. The scholar then can obtain their PUID card.

5. Accompany the individual to the department business office to take care of Purdue formalities.

6. When the Visiting Scholar is settled and any jet-lag has worn off, arrange a welcome reception or meet and greet to introduce them to colleagues with whom they will interact.

Settling in, mentoring, and guidance on campus

Providing a good start to the visit is essential to achieving the goals for the visit. Consider the following:

1. Early-on, review objectives and expectations related to the visit.

2. Assist the Visiting Scholar in getting settled on campus.
 - Provide guidance for email accounts, bench space, office space, campus IDs, etc.
 - Visit common facilities.
 - Introduce the Visiting Scholar to the department head and colleagues.
 - Assigning a temporary mentor/guide can be very helpful if you are busy. Remember

there is a legal responsibility for the host to be engaged with the scholar during the invitation.

3. Review the University's [visitor policies](#) and ensure the Visiting Scholar adheres to them.
4. Mentoring and coaching is crucial for the successful outcome and the professional and personal development of the Visiting Scholar. Take time to develop a plan that is reasonable based on the timeline for their stay on campus.
5. Note that the host is legally responsible for having a regular check-in meeting with the scholar. There are serious consequences if the host neglects communication with the scholar.
6. Create opportunities for Visiting Scholars to share their personal and professional experiences (e.g., department or IPIA seminars; lunchtime talks; cultural exchanges; guiding or interacting with students and colleagues; etc.).
7. Get in touch with IPIA to explore opportunities to highlight or showcase the Visiting Scholar and their work and to engage with others in the college.
8. Encourage your Visiting Scholar to present their work on campus and at national meetings (if funds are available).
9. Utilize the opportunity to build and develop a long-term professional relationship with the Visiting Scholar. Think about the process of hosting as an investment in both of your professional futures.

Extension or Completion of the visit and departure

Your work doesn't end when the Visiting Scholar leaves. Follow-up should include:

1. Follow university rules and communicate with ISS upon departure of Visiting Scholars according to immigration guidelines.
2. If an extension of stay is needed, the department contact initiates an electronic workflow called "Current J-1 Scholar Extension" no sooner than 90 days before the program date as listed in Box 3 of the DS-2019. If there are questions or concerns about the extension, please email intlscholars@purdue.edu. Be aware that, in the case of individuals who are funded by their home countries, there are no guarantees that the federal agency, funding agency, or home institution will approve the request.

3. When the department ISS Liaison initiates the Current J-1 Scholar Extension, both the J-1 scholar's supervisor and the J-1 scholar themselves will receive electronic forms to complete. As part of this, you must upload the following documents-
 - Proof of your current health insurance, in English
 - Proof of any non-Purdue financial support for the time period requested for the extension. (The department will provide proof of any Purdue financial support proof.)
 - This proof must be less than one year old at the time of the request.
 - The Financial Info electronic form will provide additional guidance based on the type of financial support
 - If you have new or different immigration or travel documents (passport, visa, etc.) since the last DS-2019 issued, you must upload these when completing your electronic forms
 - Current Form I-94 record, obtained at <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94>
4. Within 10 business days of completion of *all* required electronic forms, International Scholar Services will process the program extension request. Once complete, a new DS-2019 will be issued. We will email the scholar to advise when it is ready to pick up.

Caution: While the process of requesting an extension of J-1 program at Purdue is the department contact's responsibility, the scholar bears responsibility for complying with the terms and conditions of their stay in the USA. The scholar must collaborate with their department to ensure that a program extension, if mutually wanted, is timely pursued.

5. Without program extension, the J-1 scholar must
 - cease their J-1 program activities (research, teaching, etc.) on the end date of the J program as listed in Box 3 of the DS-2019, and by no later than the end of their grace period (which lasts 30 days beginning on the day after their program end date) either depart the US or otherwise extend their stay.
6. Report the timely departure of the individual to your business office and ISS as needed (this may vary but it is a good policy to inform business office).
7. Plan for a follow up and a long-term engagement strategy with the individual and their institution.
8. Maintain regular communication with the Visiting Scholar after departure.
9. Consider a reciprocal visit with the Visiting Scholar at their institution.

Responsibilities of a Host to a Purdue sponsored J-1 Scholar

Upon a host's request to host a visiting scholar, you are agreeing to support Purdue's compliance with US law relating to J-1 Exchange Visitors, and agree to undertake the responsibilities describe below.

- **J-1 Status is a LIMITED permission to research:** The Scholar's permission to engage in professional activities is LIMITED only to the precise details in the paperwork submitted to International Scholar Services.
 - Purdue shares the details Hosts provide with the US government, and the final immigration paperwork and approved status is based specifically on those precise details.
- **Reporting Responsibilities:** Hosts are responsible for reporting - *before the change occurs* - to International Scholar Services (intlscholars@purdue.edu) any of the following-
 - Changes to any aspect of the Scholar's presence at Purdue, including but not limited to their activities, location they work from, supervisor/host, work hours, or other aspects of their activities at Purdue, before the changes take effect.
 - If the Scholar will be away from the work location that ISS was told about for more than 21 days, before the travel occurs. (ISS knows about changes in work / activity locations only if we are told. The Host / Hiring Manager is ultimately responsible for telling ISS about changes.)
 - If the Scholar is not succeeding in their appointment or role, if the Host is unsatisfied with the Scholar's performance, or if the Scholar is dissatisfied with the circumstances of the appointment, as soon as such concerns are apparent.
 - If the Scholar will leave their placement / position with the Host more than 60 days before the originally anticipated end date, regardless of circumstances and before the Scholar leaves the placement. Specifically, the Host must report: early completion of objectives, resignations, terminations, and all other situations involving an early ending.
 - If the Host decides to delegate to someone else the task of reporting to International Scholar Services, the Host is still ultimately responsible for ensuring this notification occurs. International Scholar Services will respond to the notification by either approving the situation or providing recommendations as to how to the Host should proceed that support the University's immigration and related obligations.
- **Hosts are responsible for reviewing and understanding Purdue policies and procedures** relevant to hosting an international person, including:
 - The International Scholar Services procedures relating to early endings of hosted / sponsored international persons at <https://www.purdue.edu/ippu/iss/scholar/hosts/procedures/early-endings.html>.
 - The Export Controls Office's policies at <https://www.purdue.edu/research/oevprp/regulatory-affairs/export-controls/> relating to the presence of non-US persons in research endeavors.
 - Information relating to international staff and students at <https://www.purdue.edu/research/oevprp/regulatory-affairs/export-controls/international-staff-students.php>.

- The HR Policy on Background Checks at <https://www.purdue.edu/policies/human-resources/vif6.html>. NOTE: Purdue's screenings of international Hosted Persons for Export Control Office purposes are different from and do not substitute for background checks or any other screenings required by a Purdue administrative unit.
- The University policies relating to ethics at <https://www.purdue.edu/policies/ethics/>
- **Hosts are expected to be present on campus and able to interact as needed with the sponsored scholar.** If the Host departs the campus for more than 22 business days (such as but not limited to a sabbatical or temporary assignment to another institution), the Host must
 - Arrange for a substitute host for the sponsored scholar, and
 - Notify ISS at intlscholars@purdue.edu of (1) the Host's departure (including dates and location), and (2) the name and email of the substitute host
 - Note it is a violation of Purdue policy and US law for a sponsored J-1 scholar to be without a host / advisor / mentor while active on the sponsored institution's campus
- **US law prohibits the Host from using a J-1 visa holder to directly or indirectly displace a US worker.** The Host and the hosting unit must not:
 - Host a J-1 Exchange visitor *in order to* terminate a US worker,
 - Choose not to replace a departing US worker because a J-1 Exchange Visitor can perform the tasks instead,
 - Ask a J-1 Exchange Visitor to take on more or different tasks so that the unit can avoid the need to hire a worker.
- **All information and documents presented by the Host to International Scholar Services are true, accurate and complete**

If you have any questions about these legal responsibilities, please contact intlscholars@purdue.edu. As noted, by continuing the request to sponsor a J-1 scholar, you are agreeing to comply with these responsibilities.