
POLICY

Scholar Sponsorship Policy

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE

International Students and Scholars Office

Boston University policy generally limits immigration sponsorship to research and teaching positions. The Office of Human Resources provides guidelines for research appointments, whether paid or unpaid, in the [Academic Research Job Family Matrix](#), so please review this information to determine the appropriate appointment and follow the procedures specific to your school/college for appointment conferral. Casual (temporary) research or teaching positions may also qualify for limited sponsorship.

Many administrative and support staff positions do not meet minimum eligibility requirements for immigration sponsorship. On occasion, some professional staff positions in specialized fields may meet minimum federal requirements and thus warrant consideration for institutional sponsorship. Departments wishing to hire an international employee for a professional staff position are advised to consult with us to determine immigration sponsorship options. If the position and the candidate appear to qualify for immigration sponsorship, approval from the hiring authority and the Office of the Provost may also be required. Casual (temporary) staff positions are not eligible for immigration sponsorship.

All requests for the employment of foreign nationals must be processed through the ISSO, which is authorized to sign the legal documents and forms required to sponsor international scholars on behalf of Boston University. The ISSO processes most non-immigrant based paperwork/petitions in-house. Therefore, neither prospective employees nor host departments

are authorized to retain outside immigration counsel to represent the international employment needs of BU. If you receive any forms requiring an authorized signature, [please forward them to the ISSO](#).

When determining the most appropriate immigration sponsorship category, the ISSO will evaluate the needs of the host department and the principal objective of the prospective scholar in the U.S. (study, research, employment, etc). While the ISSO will take any employee and department preferences into consideration, ultimately, the ISSO will make the final determination on how and when to proceed with sponsorship.

Processing

For Scholars who require immigration sponsorship. Please forward the completed processing request packet to the ISSO well in advance of the proposed employment start date for new and continuing scholar who require either J-1, H-1B, TN, F-1 OPT STEM or O-1 sponsorship.

For Scholars with Independent Employment Authorization. Some prospective and continuing employees may have obtained employment authorization from USCIS (F-1 Optional Practical Training, J-2 employment authorization, pending permanent resident employment authorization) or other permission granted from their sponsor as a benefit of their current immigration status (i.e. J-1 Academic Training, F-1 Curricular Practical Training).

To initiate processing, the host department must obtain an official academic appointment on behalf of the international scholar through the standard appointment channels at the school or college. All prospective scholars, including recent Boston University graduates who will work at the university after graduation, must check-in with the ISSO prior to employment and present valid U.S. Employment Authorization as well as a copy of the academic appointment or job offer letter so that the ISSO can complete I-9 [Employment Eligibility Verification](#).

For Scholars in a Visitor Classification. For short term, unpaid appointments, it may be appropriate (and a lot faster) for your scholar to come to Boston University in a Visitor classification. The ISSO recommends that you speak with your [Scholar Advisor](#) to determine situations where this may be preferred.

After speaking with your scholar advisor to see if a visitor classification is ideal for the given

situation, please send the ISSO the following documentation and an invitation letter will be sent with further instructions to your scholar:

- The type of Boston University appointment – in most cases, this is “Visiting Researcher”.
- Copy of the biographical information page(s) from the scholar’s passport, including the passport expiration date.
- Brief statement explaining the specific details of the Boston University affiliation (e.g., faculty host name, type of research).

All visitors are required to check-in with the ISSO upon arrival in the U.S. The ISSO does allow individuals in Visitor classifications to check-in remotely rather than coming into the ISSO office. Please contact the ISSO for more information on how to do this.

Other resources:

[Immigration Overview](#)

[Instructions for Sponsoring Foreign Nationals for Permanent Residence](#)

END OF POLICY TEXT

Categories: Employment, Faculty Handbook: Human Resources Keywords: application, government, ICE, specialist, USDHS