

# Application Information for Visiting Student Status

## For MISTI Faculty Hosting MISTI Seed Fund student conducting research at MIT

*(Special requirements for international students are in italics)*

As an awardee of a MISTI Seed Fund grant, you may be hosting international students in your lab. MISTI does not facilitate the logistics related to Visiting Students from abroad. Inquiries about bringing Visiting Students should be directed to the Visiting Student Program Manager in the International Students Office (<https://iso.mit.edu/about-iso/student-advisors-by-program/>).

The below information may be helpful if the students are scheduled to **visit MIT for academic research purposes**, as they might be eligible for the **Visiting Student Status** at MIT.

All Visiting Student forms and information on the [ISO website](#) under *MIT ADMINS* are available only to MIT staff (Touchstone login required). Please contact the ISO or the host MIT group if you are not a staff at MIT and need information.

### Eligibilities

Students who are:

- Pursuing an undergraduate or graduate degree at an institution of higher education in the US (other than MIT) or abroad; and
- Invited by an MIT faculty member from a department or laboratory to do academic research in their field of studies.

### Limitations

- Not eligible for academic course participation.
- Duration must be a minimum of 3 weeks and a maximum of 12 months.
- Current MIT regular, Exchange, or Special students, and MIT students who have withdrawn or are on a leave of absence are not eligible for the VS status.
- *Former MIT regular, Exchange, or Special students who have recently completed a program and have not been away from MIT for over a year are not eligible for the VS status.*
- *Research activity must be held on the MIT campus only.*
- Visa Restrictions
  - o *Foreign Visiting Students who are pursuing a degree abroad must apply for the J-1 Exchange Visitor visa (Student Non-Degree category) sponsored by MIT. No J-1 Academic Training can be authorized.*

- *Foreign Visiting Students who are requesting visa sponsorship must demonstrate that they are able to cover the average cost of living (\$3207/month for **AY 2020-2021\***) and expected university fees and tuition (Registration Fee and Student Activity Fee) during their visit. More than 51% of the total funding must be demonstrated by a source other than personal or family funds (i.e. Funding provided by the host MIT faculty member through MIT Seed Fund).*
- *Foreign Visiting Students who are pursuing a degree at an US institution must remain on their current student visa (F, J, or M visa) status sponsored by the home university, and maintain their full-time enrollment at the home university.*
  - *Student's current visa status must provide eligibilities for employment under the visa status*
  - *Student should consult with International Student Advisor at home institution to secure appropriate employment authorization to participate in MIT Visiting Student Program, and provide written confirmation of Employment Authorization*

## Fees

- \$1000 Processing Fee to VP for Research
  - Must be paid by the host MIT faculty
  - Research funds cannot be used
- Registration Fee and Student Activity Fee... charged by term (see Academic Calendar for dates <http://web.mit.edu/registrar/calendar/index.html>)
  - AY2020-2021\***
    - Fall \$1,684 (Sept – Dec, \$1,500 Registration Fee, \$184 Student Activity Fee)
    - Spring \$ 1,384 (Feb – May, \$1,200 Registration Fee, \$184 Student Activity Fee)
    - Summer \$900 (June – Aug, \$900 Registration Fee, no Student Activity Fee)
    - \*AY fee amounts subject to change without notice
- Fee Waiver Policy
  - All fees are waived for students enrolled in a degree program at Harvard or Wellesley.
  - All fees are waived for students whose visit is fully sponsored by Fulbright.
  - All fees are waived for students whose Visiting Student appointment duration is less than 5 weeks.
- Refund Policy
  - If the student's visit overlaps a subsequent semester for a short period, the full Registration Fee of the semester must be paid in advance. Partial refund (based on the Registrar's Pro-ration table) may be requested through the Registrar's Office upon the student's departure.
  - There will be no pro-ration for starting the visit after the semester begins.

- *International Students who require visa sponsorship from MIT must demonstrate funds covering the expected expenses (including estimated Living Cost, Medical Insurance, Registration Fee and Student Activity Fee) during their visit. See Expected Expenses: <https://iso.mit.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/VS-Estimated-Expense-AY-2020-2021.pdf>).*

## Registration

Although Visiting Students are not allowed to participate in any academic courses, they are required to register in Course (Department #) NIV (Non-Institute Visitor) for a specific NIV research subject **every semester**. The student will be given the Registration Letter for the initial term by the ISO after the mandatory orientation upon arrival. The Registration Letters for continuing students are issued by the host department/lab/faculty (sample format available on ISO website). Students must complete the Registration Fee payment first at the Student Financial Services, and submit the Registration Letter to the Registrar's Office to complete the registration before the beginning of each term.

## Duration of Stay

Visiting Students will be admitted for the period of time specified on the initial invitation letter (*Form DS-2019 for internationals*). However, as with all other students, they have to register each semester. A Visiting Student who wishes to continue beyond the period initially agreed upon has to request the extension to the International Students Office at least 30 days prior to the original appointment end date. Maximum duration of the appointment is limited to 12 months. Visiting Students who complete their research, or whose stay at MIT is interrupted by unforeseen circumstances, must inform the International Students Office before leaving the school and the US.

## Medical Service and Hospitalization Insurance

As is the case for all students at MIT, a Visiting Student must either purchase the MIT Student Extended insurance plan or provide proof of comparable coverage to the ISO.

*Federal Regulations require that all J-1 Exchange Visitors and their dependents (J-2s) have medical insurance effective from the date of arrival in the U.S. This Insurance coverage must meet the following guidelines:*

- *Minimum Coverage - At a minimum, insurance shall cover: (1) medical benefits of at least \$100,000 per person per accident or illness; (2) repatriation of remains in the amount of \$25,000; and (3) expenses associated with medical evacuation in the amount of \$50,000.*

- *Additional Terms - A Policy secured to fulfill the insurance requirement shall not have a deductible that exceeds \$500 per accident or illness, and must meet other standards specified in the regulations.*
- *Maintenance of Insurance - Exchange students must maintain the required insurance for themselves and their accompanying J-2 dependents for the duration of their program.*

*Coverage may not exclude benefits for any pre-existing injury, illness or condition per policy of the MIT Student Health Plan.*

## **Site of Activity and Compensation**

*International Visiting Student research must be conducted on the MIT campus only.*

*A Visiting Student may receive compensation for work done for the host research group. However, please note that J-1 visa regulations limit the number of hours a Visiting Student can be paid to 20 HOURS per week. Visiting Students are not allowed to have any other form of on-campus employment. International Visiting students are not allowed to have any other employment, on-campus or off-campus, under Federal regulations.*

## **Housing**

Visiting Students are not entitled to on-campus housing and, in most cases, should plan to find accommodation off-campus. However, they may apply for any vacancies that exist in the dormitories after the needs of regular students have been met.

## **Procedure for Admission**

The following steps must be completed **by the MIT HOST FACULTY/ LAB/ DEPARTMENT:**

1. VISITING STUDENT REQUEST FORM (download from ISO website – MIT staff only)
  - Send electronically to Vice President for Research Office ([vsrequest@mit.edu](mailto:vsrequest@mit.edu)). Approval signature from the department head and account number to be charged for the required fees must be included. Please note that fees cannot be charged to a Research Account.
2. Complete Inventions and Proprietary Information Agreements (IPIAs)
  - Download “Visiting Personnel and Students” IPIA form from TLO website (<https://tlo.mit.edu/disclose-protect-your-intellectual-property/forms-protect-ip-rights>) and provide to students.
  - Send the form to TLO directly.
3. Enter student’s biographic and academic information in the ADMISSIONS DATABASE
  - ADMISSIONS DATABASE entry instructions available on ISO website.

4. Complete *CERTIFICATE OF ENGLISH PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENT* (download from ISO website)
  - The host group at MIT must assess the student's English language proficiency by completing the certification and retaining the supporting documents. Send copy of the Certification of English Proficiency Assessment form to [isoforms@mit.edu](mailto:isoforms@mit.edu)
  
5. Send INVITATION LETTER to the student (sample format available on ISO website)
  - Letter should be printed on departmental letterhead. The letter must include the following information:
    - (a) name and date of birth of the student,
    - (b) student's home institution,
    - (c) name of the faculty member who will supervise the research,
    - (d) description of the research to be performed,
    - (e) classification of student as undergraduate or graduate,
    - (f) the length of stay proposed with specific dates (because dates are needed for immigration forms, general indications such as "one semester" or "one or two semesters" are not acceptable.)
    - (g) MIT ID number
    - (h) letter writing date and signature
    - (i) If the host MIT group is providing financial assistance list the total amount of funding provided, which expenses will be covered (living expense, health insurance, and etc).  
**For MISTI funds: Please include the specific, numerical amount of funds used from the MISTI funds to cover the student's living expenses, health insurance expenses, and/or term fees.**
  
6. Notify students to create MIT Email Address (<https://accounts.mit.edu/register/>), and navigate students to visit iMIT (<https://imit.mit.edu/>) after waiting for at least 48 hours after receiving their MIT email address.

The following information should be submitted online (<https://imit.mit.edu/>) **by the VISITING STUDENT:**

- A. PASSPORT INFORMATION
  - Upload PASSPORT biographic page
  
- B. PROGRAM INFORMATION
  - Upload LETTER OF ENROLLMENT from the home institution  
 Documentation from applicant's home institution certifying the student's **current enrollment in a degree program, expected graduation date**, and good academic standing. Document must be issued within the last 6 months.
  - Upload INVITATION LETTER FROM THE HOST DEPARTMENT/LAB (step #5 for host)

### C. ADDRESS INFORMATION

### D. FINANCIAL INFORMATION\*

- *More than 51% of the total funding must come from a source other than personal or family funds.*
- Upload FUNDING DOCUMENTS  
*Document specification available on ISO website (<https://iso.mit.edu/getting-started/requesting-an-i-20-or-ds-2019/financial-documentation-requirements/>)*  
*Not applicable for US Citizens/ US Perm. Residents/ Non-MIT sponsored visa holders.*

### E. MEDICAL CERTIFICATION

- *All Visiting Students must either purchase the MIT Student Extended Insurance Plan or provide proof that their insurance meets the requirements specified by Federal Regulations for J-1 student visa holders. The MIT Student Health Plan Office requires all Visiting Students insurance to cover preexisting conditions.*
- Upload PROOF OF HEALTH INSURANCE ENROLLMENT
  - *Student must submit one of the following documents IN ENGLISH;*
    - *Completed Enrollment Form for the MIT Student Extended Health Plan submitted upon arrival or;*
    - *Completed J-1 Visiting Student Health Insurance Provider Certification Form or;*
    - *A letter from your health insurance provider confirming that your plan covers your Visiting Student dates and meets all requirements for a J-1 Exchange Visitor.*
- *All MIT Student Health Plan related questions should be directed to the MIT Student Health Plan Office at [stuplan@med.mit.edu](mailto:stuplan@med.mit.edu).*  
*Not Applicable for US Citizens/ US Perm. Residents/Non-MIT sponsored visa holders.*

*When these documents are received and the request is approved by the VP for Research Office, ISO will process the Certificate of Eligibility (Form DS-2019) for foreign students requesting visa sponsorship from MIT. The processing time for the Form DS-2019 is 30 days.*

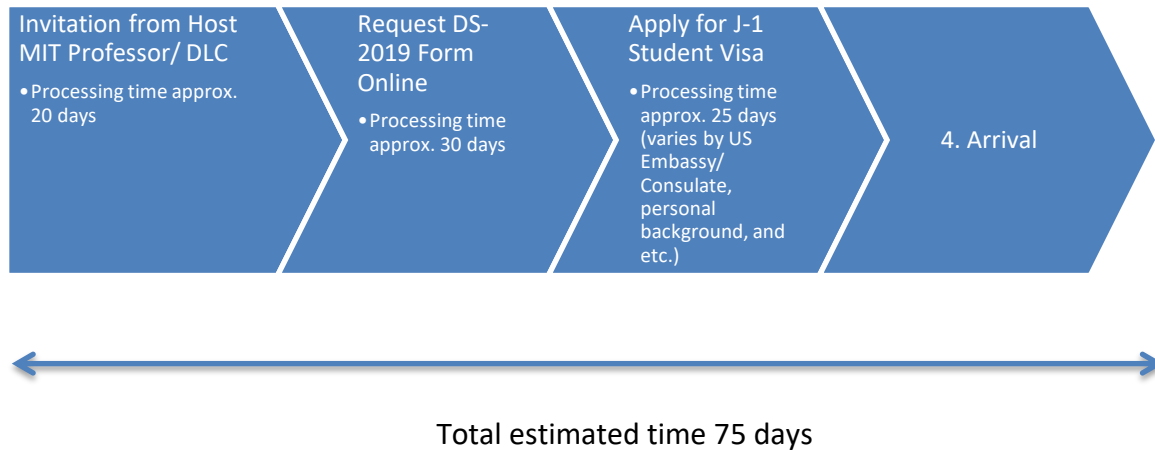
**The appointment start date should be at least 75 days from the day ISO receives the required application documents.** Please note that ISO cannot guarantee the requested start date if the application was received later than above mentioned time period.

**\* Minimum Funding Requirement...***Sponsoring departments and international applicants should be aware that Federal regulations require that the Certificate of Eligibility for J-1 students be issued only if "the exchange visitors are supported substantially by funding from any source other than personal or family funds" [22 CFR 62.23(c)]. See "Estimated Expenses for Visiting Student Application" (downloadable from ISO website under MIT ADMINS > Visiting Students Process) for more information.*

## Additional Requirements for J-1 International Students

*Please note that international Visiting Students are eligible to arrive up to 30 days prior to the Start Date on the Form DS-2019, and are required to attend the mandatory Visiting Student orientation no later than 10 days from the start date. Visiting Students cannot begin research/Visiting Student activities before the Start Date on the Form DS-2019. If there are any changes to the Start Date, the host department or inviting MIT faculty member **MUST** inform the ISO and student so that a new Form DS-2019 can be issued. Students who fail to attend the orientation within the grace period will risk losing their immigration status.*

### Overall Process Timeline (estimated)



**\*\*NOTE:** Due to MIT's efforts to de-densify campus in response to the current COVID-19 pandemic, MIT's VP for Research Office has paused the Visiting Student Program for the Fall 2020 term. The Spring 2021 and Summer 2021 plans for the Visiting Student Program have not been determined yet. Please be in close contact with the MIT host department/lab's Visiting Student contact as updates on the Visiting Student Program will be first communicated to them.