This is an instruction guide for the access and use of the new ISSIS visa sponsorship request portal, iStart. Department users should use this system to request sponsorships J-1 scholars, and international employees being sponsored for U.S. Permanent Residency. In the future, department representatives will also use iStart to request sponsorships for J-1 student – interns, and H-1B employees.

If you have questions about accessing this portal, please contact our office at 706 542-2900, or by email at issis@uga.edu.

Through the iStart portal, department representatives can request sponsorships, update their department contact information, and add a new international person to our case management system. Screenshots from the system are included in this document.

Email issis@uga.edu to request instructions on requesting access to iStart.

**LOGIN INFORMATION**

Once you are an approved user in iStart, you may login to the iStart portal to request new sponsorships, and manage current in-process cases. To do this, follow these steps:

1. Open your web browser and go to https://istart.uga.edu.
2. Click on “Administrative Services for University Departments”, in the lower left-hand corner of the screen.
Welcome to iSTART, the University of Georgia’s portal for benefit applications relating to international students, scholars, faculty, and staff at the University of Georgia.

Current Students and Scholars

Secure services requiring login with your institutional Network ID and password. These services include:

1. View and update information on file
2. Submit electronic forms (e-form) requests for travel signatures, reduced course load authorization, program extensions, etc.
3. Access alerts and notes on file that require action in order to maintain legal status

Prospective Students and Scholars

Limited services requiring login with your University ID number and date of birth. These services include:

1. Limited student services like registration for orientation or SEVIS transfer-in.
2. Limited initial intake forms for J-1 scholars or H-1B employees.

These services will NOT provide all the functionality of the full client services.

Limited Services

The following are additional services:

Administrative Services for University Departments
3. When the next screen opens click on “Departmental Services”, in the left-hand menu.

4. A sub-menu of items will open in the left-hand menu.
ADD A NEW PERSON:

This is the first step in requesting a sponsorship for an international NEW to UGA (red arrow). **Do not** request to Add a New Person if the international is already at UGA, or was here previously and has a valid UGA ID#. Note that a network ID at UGA is usually the part of the UGA email address in front of the @ sign. ie: rcatmur@uga.edu; network id is rcatmur. The name fields here are not case sensitive, but please be as accurate as possible when entering the name. Please enter it exactly as it is shown on the passport.

![iSTART Add New Person](image)

SPONSORSHIP REQUESTS

There are currently three types of visa sponsorship requests that departmental users can request. These are all listed in the left-hand menu (yellow arrow, above):

1. J-1 Scholar Application
2. J-1 Scholar Extension
3. U.S permanent residency

We will be adding addition requests for H-1B sponsorships and J-1 student intern sponsorships later in 2014.
When logged in, this home screen will show any active cases you have in the middle box, entitled “Current Cases” (green arrow). When you click on a name, it will display details of that person’s case in the right-hand box. This is where you will see the temporary ID number, if you had added a new person and did NOT have the University ID # (red arrow). If you are returning to an application you have already begun, click on the link “J-1 Application for a New EV Scholar” (orange arrow).

In addition to the sponsorship requests, there are two administrative functions in the sub-menu: “Update Your Information”, and “Add a New Person” (blue arrows).

The sponsorship requests are split into two sections. The first section must be completed by the sponsoring UGA department representative, and the second section can be completed either by the department rep as well, or by the international scholar or employee.

**J-1 SCHOLAR SPONSORSHIPS**

There are 5 sub-forms in the J-1 scholar request e-form group that must be completed by the department representative.

1. Dept. Applicant Access: the department representative should complete this form if he or she wishes to give the international scholar or employee access to complete the international scholar or employee personal, biographic, and immigration information forms. The department rep may choose to complete these forms instead. In the latter case, the Applicant Access form should not be completed and submitted.
2. Dept. Information: This form gathers information about the sponsoring department.
3. Dept. Program Information: This form collects information about the academic program or position. This form also collects information about funding sources and amounts.
4. Dept. Fees: This form gives information about the internal ISSIS fees for sponsorship, and requests department account information to charge these fees.
5. Dept. Compliance Certification: This form consists of a series of certification statements. After reading them, the representative must check a box to certify that he or she is in agreement with all statements. **Until this form is submitted, your sponsorship request will not be processed!**

When you click on the J-1 Scholar Application (red arrow), the new screen requests the University ID and the international scholar’s date of birth (green arrow) in order to perform a look-up in the system for that person. **IF NO RECORD IS FOUND, YOU MUST CLICK ON “ADD A NEW PERSON” IN THE LEFT-HAND MENU IN ORDER TO CREATE THE RECORD, BEFORE PROCEEDING.**

Enter the University ID and date of birth, and click “Find Record”
REQUIRED DEPARTMENTAL FORMS

If the record is found in the system, a new screen will open with the scholar’s ID # and Name (red arrow), followed by a list of the sub-forms that must be completed (blue arrow). Note the search for names is not case sensitive.

The following are screen shots of all required department forms. You must click submit after completing all required fields.

There are 4 required forms (blue arrow), and a final compliance certification statement (green arrow). These are:

1. Dept. Applicant Access
2. Dept. Information
3. Dept. Program Information
4. Dept. Fees
5. Departmental Compliance Certification Statement
There are 5 additional required forms to be completed by the international scholar (orange arrows), and two optional forms (purple arrows).
APPLICANT ACCESS FORM:

This form, once submitted, will give the international scholar access to complete all of the personal, biographic, and immigration history forms that we required. You must enter the scholar’s name and email address (red arrow), and click submit (green arrow). An automatic email is then sent to the scholar, with a link to the istart portal, along with his or her specific login information.
DEPARTMENTAL INFORMATION

Departmental Information

CLIENT RECORD: IMA TEST/SCHOLAR | TEMP483668

DEPARTMENT INFORMATION

College, School or Institute *
Sponsoring Department *
Departmental Contact Name *
Departmental Contact Email *
Departmental Contact Phone
Name of Dean, Director, or Department Chair *

DEPARTMENT ADDRESS

Street Address 1 *
Street Address 2
City *
State *
Zip Code *
Departmental Phone Number *
Departmental Fax Number *

SCHOLAR SUPERVISOR INFORMATION

Supervisor Name *
Supervisor’s Job Title *
Email *

DOCUMENT PICK-UP & MAILING

Express mail is required for any paperwork that must be sent to the exchange visitor or to the government. J-1 visa sponsorship paperwork that must be sent to the international will be forwarded directly to your office. You may also come to our office to pick it up in person if you wish. You will be responsible for sending it via express mail to the international visitor.

Please select your pick-up/mailing preference *

* required fields

Save Draft Submit

1224 S. Lumpkin Street, Athens, GA 30602
Phone (706)542-2900 | Fax (706)543-0196
PROGRAM INFORMATION:

University of Georgia Office of International Education

iSTART

UGA's online services for international students, scholars & staff

Program Information

DOCUMENTS TO PREPARE FOR UPLOAD

(documents must be in .pdf, .jpg, .bmp, .gif, or .png formats only)

DEEMED EXPORT ATTESTATION

Departments must submit a Deemed Export Attestation indicating whether an export control license is required for the release of any technology, technical data, or source code to the foreign national for whom UGA is providing immigration sponsorship. Please complete the form below and upload it at the end of this form.

Deemed Export Attestation

APPOINTMENT LETTER (must include)

• position title
• salary or funding source and amount
• any benefits information
• a brief description of primary responsibilities
• position start and end dates

Template Letters

• New J-1 position offer letter template
• Courtesy J-1 appointment letter template (No UGA funding or salary)
PROGRAM DATES

If the person is currently at UGA please use the day after the current immigration status end date as the UGA position start date.

Please enter these dates even for courtesy appointments for international visitors not directly paid by UGA.

Once paperwork is in process, it is difficult to change these dates. Please contact ISSIS immediately if there will need to be a change to these dates.

Will this academic program/period of appointment last six months or less? *

☑ NO

☑ YES

Requested Program/Position Start Date *

Month ▼ Day ▼ Year ▼

Requested Program/Position End Date *

Month ▼ Day ▼ Year ▼

POSITION/PROGRAM INFORMATION

Position Title *

UGA-funded J-1 scholar or professor sponsorship is limited to non-tenure track, and non-permanent positions.

Please confirm that this is a full-time position. *

☑

Provide a very brief job description, including primary responsibilities. (500 character limit). *

Minimum educational requirements for position *

Does this position include any clinical responsibilities or direct patient contact? *

☑ NO

☑ YES

ENGLISH PROFICIENCY CERTIFICATION

J-1 visa regulations require that the sponsoring agency assess and certify that the non-U.S. citizen has sufficient proficiency in the English language to fully participate in the academic program.

Can you certify that this person has sufficient English language ability to participate in his or her program at UGA? *

☑ NO

☑ YES

INTERCULTURAL ACTIVITIES
INTERCULTURAL ACTIVITIES

The J-1 visa requires that the exchange visitor have the opportunity for inter-cultural exchange while participating in the exchange program.

Please describe the intercultural activities that will be offered to your international scholar: *

SITE OF ACTIVITY

Please provide the physical street address where the scholar will carry out his/her program.

Campus where primary activities will take place

Department, Office, or Lab Name *

Street 1 *

Street 2

City *

State *

Zip Code *

Is this the only work-site for this scholar? *

YES

NO

OPTIONAL NOTES

Please include any comments that may be relevant to this program.

DOCUMENT UPLOAD

(PDF, JPG, BMP, GIF AND PNG files allowed)

Appointment or Invitation Letter *

Deemed Export Attestation *

* required fields

Submit
DEPT. FEES

University of Georgia Office of International Education

iSTART: UGA's online services for international students, scholars & crew

Secure Online Session

Dept. Fees

Last Name
First Name
Middle Name
University ID
Campus
Citizenship Country
Immigration Status
Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy)
Gender

GENERAL FEE INFORMATION

The above information under "Client Record", pertaining to your international scholar, is for informational purposes only.

Please review the information sheet for an overview of the applicable governmental and institutional processing fees for various categories of sponsorships.

Please complete the questions below with regard to the applicable ISSS fees for sponsorship.

ISSS FEES

As part of a Cost Recovery Program, ISSS charges an internal fee for visa sponsorship processing.

Indicate appropriate ISSS fee level

International Scholar Compliance Fee (ISCSF): International scholars on J-1 visas are required to pay a University International Scholar Compliance Fee (ISCSF) at the point of check-in at our office.

International Scholar Compliance Fee

BEFORE JULY 1, 2014:

J-1 scholars are required to pay a University International Scholar Compliance Fee (ISCSF) of $150/$300 based on the length of the program.

AFTER JUNE 30TH, 2014:

This fee will be an annual fee, but based on length of program, and on whether the scholar is receiving at least 50% of funding from UGA.

After June 30th, 2014, the fee will be as follows:

At least 50% funding from UGA: $150 per year, or any portion of a year.

Less than 50% funding from UGA: $300 per year, or any portion of a year.

Department may voluntarily choose to pay this fee on the scholar's behalf by indicating below.

NOTE: If the scholar fails to pay this fee to our office within 30 days of the annual fee due date, your department will be liable for the fee payment.

Sponsoring departments may also voluntarily cover this cost on behalf of the scholar if desired.

Does your department wish to pay the ISCSF fee on behalf of this scholar? Yes/No

BILLING INFORMATION

3-digit department code

Department Account Number (The ISSS Processing fee will be charged to this account.)

The Department Account Code will be set to "32052". If this is not correct, please contact our business manager: Sunnie Mueller.

Are you also the department's business or budget manager? Yes/No

* required fields
DEPARTMENTAL COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

**NOTE:** This final e-form will not be active (meaning you cannot complete and submit it) until all prior forms have been completed by both the departmental representative.

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University of Georgia Office of International Education

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**Departmental Compliance Certification**

***SUBMISSION/CANCELLATION BLOCKED***

You cannot submit this form until all prior required forms have been submitted.

The J-1 regulations require the institution to assume numerous legal responsibilities in order to be approved to sponsor an J-1 scholar. The international office has responsibility for ensuring institutional compliance with these regulations, but departments must agree to follow established University procedures in order to ensure compliance.

I attest to the following:

- I have the authority from my department or school to request this J-1 visa sponsorship for an international exchange visitor.
- The job position for which sponsorship is being requested is academic and temporary in nature and supports the research and teaching mission of the University.
- I understand that there is no guarantee of approval for a J-1 Exchange Visitor visa, and that the ISSS Processing fee is charged for services pertaining to the sponsorship paperwork, not for an approved visa.
- If there are any material changes regarding this employee’s appointment status with UGA, I will notify ISSS immediately.
- I understand that any such changes may have an impact on our ability to continue with a sponsorship for J-1 status.
- I also understand that failure to notify ISSS of any changes in the academic appointment may result in regulatory violations on the part of UGA and / or the international exchange visitor.
- I understand that I am to have the J-1 exchange visitor report to the international office for check-in and orientation within one week of arrival.
- To the best of my knowledge, I attest to the accuracy and truthfulness of all the information being submitted on this form.
**COMPLETION:**

When you have completed all the required department forms, your list will show completed status with a check box marked by each completed form (red arrow). Once the international scholar completes all of his or her required forms, they will also show completed. In this screen shot, those forms show INCOMPLETE status (green arrow).

Once ISSIS receives all required forms, we will process your request for a J-1 visa sponsorship within 5 to 10 business days. We will contact you if we need further information in support of your request.