

# USC Summer Programs

GETTING STARTED

VISA &

IMMIGRATION



USC University of  
Southern California

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# ABOUT THE PROCESS

## WHAT IS THE F-1 VISA?

The F-1 visa allows a student to temporarily live in the United States for a defined period of time while studying at a school, college, seminary, or conservatory.

The requirements for an F-1 visa are:

- » Apply and be accepted into a course of study at a SEVP-approved school in the United States. USC Summer Programs is a SEVP-approved school.
- » You must be enrolled as a full-time student at the SEVP-approved school in the United States.
- » You must be proficient in English or be enrolled in courses leading to English proficiency.
- » Have proof of sufficient financial funds to support study in the United States.
- » Have ties to your home country that show an intent to return after you finish studying in the United States, since the F-1 visa program is a temporary visa.
- » Live outside the United States when you apply.

## WHAT IS AN I-20 FORM?

The I-20 form confirms your acceptance at a U.S. school and, therefore, confirms your eligibility for the F-1 visa. Once your I-20 form has been issued, you will use it to apply for an F-1 visa.

For USC to issue you an I-20 form, you must submit a request through USC's Trojan International portal. Because the visa process can be lengthy, we strongly suggest submitting your I-20 request as soon as possible and no later than April 26, 2024. Students who do not complete the request process by the April 26th deadline will be dropped from the program.

I-20 processing generally takes 10 business days. Once you receive your I-20 form, you may make an appointment with your nearest U.S. Embassy.

**If you are a CANADIAN CITIZEN, you will not need a visa, however, you will still need an I-20 to enter the United States and will, therefore, still need to undergo the I-20 request process.**

# REQUESTING I-20 (NETID & USC EMAIL)

## STEP 1: ACTIVATE USC NETID ACCOUNT & PASSWORD

In order to log into most USC systems, including Trojan International, you need to activate your USC NetID account. You may do this on or after January 1, 2024.

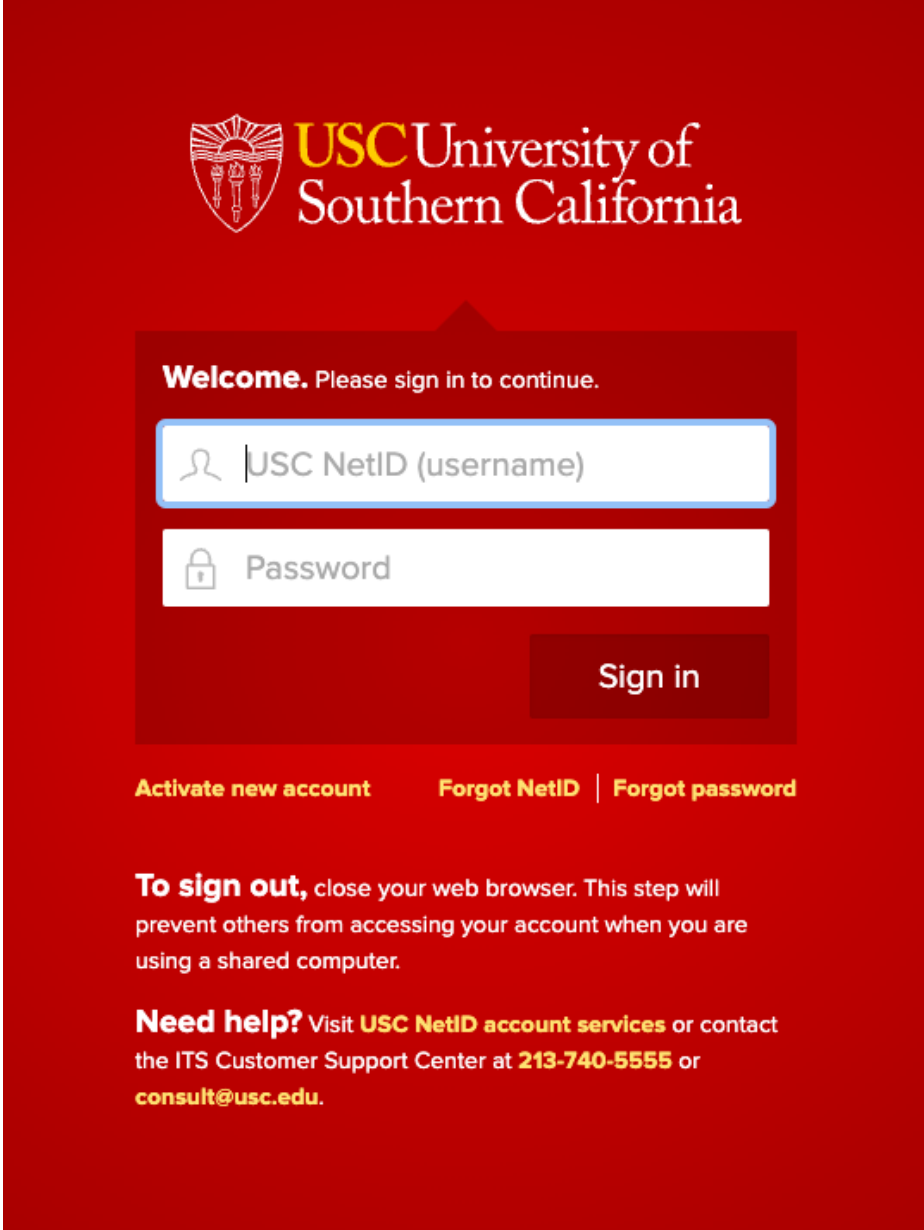
Follow all the directions below to activate your USC NetID (USC email username).

- » Activate USC NetID [HERE](#)
- » Fill in your 10-digit USC ID number and your date of birth. You can find your USC ID in “My Account” on the [Application Portal](#)
- » Click on the “Find USC NetID” button
- » Save the USC NetID
- » Enter a secondary email address
- » Click on “Confirm email address” button
- » Create a password (make sure to save your USC NetID and password)
- » Wait 45 to 60 minutes for account to be updated

## STEP 2: LOG INTO USC EMAIL

Log into your USC email account [HERE](#).

Be sure you can access this account and check it often. When your I-20 is ready, you will be notified only through your USC email account.



**Welcome.** Please sign in to continue.

USC NetID (username)

Password

Sign in

[Activate new account](#)   [Forgot NetID](#) | [Forgot password](#)

**To sign out,** close your web browser. This step will prevent others from accessing your account when you are using a shared computer.

**Need help?** Visit [USC NetID account services](#) or contact the ITS Customer Support Center at **213-740-5555** or [consult@usc.edu](mailto:consult@usc.edu).



# REQUESTING I-20 (TROJAN INTERNATIONAL)

## STEP 3: REQUEST I-20 VIA TROJAN INTERNATIONAL

- » Log into Trojan International and access the I-20 Request form [HERE](#).
- » Follow this [SAMPLE GUIDE](#) to ensure the correct completion of your I-20 Request form.
- » You will need a PDF of your Passport and a PDF of a financial bank statement.
- » Once submitted, please wait at least 10 business days for USC's Office of International Services to process your I-20. You will be notified when it is ready via your USC email.
- » The deadline to submit your I-20 Request is **April 26, 2024** (but please do this as soon as possible).

## REGARDING THE FINANCIAL BANK STATEMENT

The U.S. government requires international students on a student visa to provide proof of the ability to pay for the tuition and fees. Documentation must show that the student has the funds to cover the cost of the program, estimated at \$11,034. Example documentation includes a recent savings or checking account bank statement, or a signed bank letter verifying the ability to pay \$11,034 for educational expenses.

### **If you are submitting a BANK STATEMENT, please refer to the following requirements:**

- » If the bank statement is not in English, provide a translation.
- » Funding should be in U.S. dollars. If not, use a website like [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com) to convert currency amount, take a screenshot of the page, and include it with your bank statement.
- » Funds must be readily available, verifying the ability to pay the educational expenses to cover the cost of the program, estimated at \$11,034. Bank statement must show total balance of checking or savings account. (No investments, stocks, mutual funds, non-USC income letters)
- » Statement must be no older than 3 months from date submitted.
- » Online bank statements must indicate the account holder and identify the type of account.
- » Please have all documents (the statement, the translation if applicable, the currency conversation if applicable) all in one PDF document.

### **If you are submitting a LETTER FROM YOUR BANK, please refer to the following requirements:**

- » The letter of financial support from your bank must be printed on bank letterhead stationary and signed.
- » Please see the following page for a [sample financial letter](#) which your bank may use as a guide.

## SUBMISSION ACCURACY

Please follow these instructions exactly as outlined. Any deviation, such as your name or birthdate not matching your passport, or not attaching a currency conversion to your non-USD bank statement, will lead to processing delays.

# SAMPLE BANK LETTER

## BANK LETTERHEAD

[Date]

To whom it may concern:

We hereby declare that our client [FULL NAME] who is the [RELATIONSHIP] to [STUDENT NAME] has enough funds with us, free of any restrictions as of today, to cover the cost of [STUDENT'S NAME]'s educational expenses of at least \$11,034.

This letter aims to provide information and is not intended to be legally binding. It cannot be construed as an engagement, undertaking, commitment, guarantee, liability or responsibility of any kind whatsoever on our part.

SIGNED  
[BANK INFORMATION]

# AFTER RECEIVING YOUR I-20 FORM

For more information about the visa process, please visit <https://ois.usc.edu/new-students/prearrival/visaprocess/>

## **Verify that the information in your I-20 form is correct**

- » Name
- » Birth date
- » Country of birth
- » Country of citizenship
- » If the information is correct, print the entire document, read the information on page 1 and 3 of the I-20, and then sign and date in the spaces that are provided on page 1.
- » If you find a mistake, mark it and notify USC Summer Programs immediately. We will correct the mistake and send the corrected I-20 to you as soon as possible.

## **Pay Mandatory SEVIS I-901 Fee**

- » Every international student who wishes to begin an “initial” program of study is required to pay the SEVIS I-901 fee to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS).
- » You will need information from your USC I-20 when paying the fee.
- » Print the fee payment receipt to present at the visa interview and at the U.S. Port of Entry.

## **Complete the DS-160 visa application**

- » Use only the “BACK” and “NEXT” buttons that are part of the application and not the web browser’s back and next arrows.
- » Be as accurate as possible with any questions asked and DO NOT submit the application until it is complete.
- » At the end of the online application, print the confirmation page with barcode that is required for all phases of the interview.
- » The U.S. Department of State provides additional guidance on completing the DS-160.

## **Schedule and complete a visa interview at U.S. Embassy/Consulate**

- » To obtain the most current and accurate information on the visa application and interview process, international students should

review the website for the U.S. consulate/embassy where they will schedule the visa interview.

- » Appointment wait times can be lengthy. You can check the estimated wait time for a visa interview at any U.S. Embassy or Consulate by visiting the [U.S. Department of State website](https://www.state.gov).
- » Bring the following documents to your appointment:
  - » All three pages of your signed USC I-20
  - » Confirmation receipt showing completed non-immigrant visa application form DS-160 with the assigned ID number
  - » Passport valid for at least six months after the proposed date of entry into the U.S.. Also regarding your passport:
    - » Make sure the name in passport accurately reflects formal name
    - » Name must be broken out into separate lines for given (first) name and family name (last/surname) unless there is only one name and no family name
    - » If the passport page does not accurately reflect the formal name, it is critical for students to get this corrected BEFORE the visa interview
  - » Visa processing fee payment receipt
    - » This fee is paid and receipt is issued when students go to the U.S. embassy/consulate to apply for the student visa
  - » SEVIS I-901 Fee Payment receipt
  - » Proof of funding for the amount listed on I-20
- » Use these [Interview Tips](#) during your visa interview.
- » When you successfully receive your student visa, the consular officer may seal your immigration documents in an envelope and attach it to your passport. Do not open this envelope! The officer at the U.S. port of entry will open it.

## **Once your visa is received, email the following documents to [visa.sp@usc.edu](mailto:visa.sp@usc.edu).**

- » A PDF of your visa
- » Your SEVIS payment receipt

# OTHER ACCEPTABLE IMMIGRATION STATUSES

## OTHER VISA STATUSES

Though most students will need to enter the U.S. on an F-1 visa, there are other acceptable immigration statuses in which you can study at USC Summer Programs. If you believe to have a valid immigration status, please email proof of your immigration status (any document issued by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services) to [visa.sp@usc.edu](mailto:visa.sp@usc.edu) to confirm whether or not it is acceptable for studying at USC Summer Programs.

### Please note:

- » “B” visa is a tourist visa and is **not acceptable** for study at USC Summer Programs.
- » “F-2” visa is only eligible for part-time study and is **not acceptable** for USC Summer Programs.

## STUDENTS WHO ARE ALREADY STUDYING IN THE U.S. UNDER ANOTHER INSTITUTION'S I-20.

Students who are already in the U.S. with an F-1 visa that was obtained with another school's I-20 need not request a new I-20 from USC. In this case, please email a permission letter signed by a school official (generally a counselor) on school letterhead to [visa.sp@usc.edu](mailto:visa.sp@usc.edu). Please see the example letter on this page.

## SCHOOL LETTERHEAD

[DATE]:

To USC Summer Programs,

This letter confirms that [STUDENT NAME], who has been accepted for the University of Southern California Summer Programs from [START DATE] to [END DATE], is able to attend the program based on their current SEVIS I-20 issued by [NAME OF CURRENT SCHOOL]. The current high school year will end on [ENDING DATE] and the next school year will begin on [BEGINNING DATE]. This student is in good standing and has met all the academic, financial, and personal responsibilities to the school. The student will graduate with their class in [GRADUATING YEAR].

The student's immigration data is listed below:

FULL NAME:

PREFERRED NAME:

DATE OF BIRTH (mm/dd/year):

PASSPORT COUNTRY:

PASSPORT #:

SEVIS #:

Sincerely,

[SIGNATURE OF HIGH SCHOOL OFFICIAL]

[NAME OF HIGH SCHOOL OFFICIAL]

[TITLE OF HIGH SCHOOL OFFICIAL]

[PHONE AND EMAIL of HIGH SCHOOL OFFICIAL]



# ARRIVING IN LOS ANGELES

## ENTERING THE UNITED STATES

You can enter the United States up to 30 days before the program start date listed on your USC I-20. Be sure to have the following documents in your carry-on luggage and ready to present to the immigration officer at the airport:

- » Form I-20
  - » CANADIAN CITIZENS - Be sure to show your I-20 at the Port of Entry to avoid being stamped in as a tourist.
- » Passport
- » F-1 visa
- » SEVIS I-901 fee payment receipt
- » Please check <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel.html> for the latest information on U.S. entry restrictions and requirements

## FORM I-94

Most students will not receive a paper I-94 card upon entering the U.S.; this process is mostly electronic. As soon as you enter the U.S., go to the [DHS website](#) and download your I-94. Immigration officials will/may stamp your passport with your admission category, date of entry, and duration of status. However, if you do receive a paper I-94 when you enter the U.S., do not lose this form! We will make copies of the paper I-94 and/or the stamp in your passport during Orientation and you may need it to leave the country. To access the I-94, please click [HERE](#).

## ENTERING THE UNITED STATES ORIENTATION

All international USC Summer Programs students MUST attend the International Student Orientation. More information about Orientation will be emailed to you before the program start date.

## AT ORIENTATION, YOU WILL:

- » Check-in to the Program
- » Submit your immigration documents into the Trojan International portal
- » Fill out important health forms for your immunization schedule

## WHAT TO BRING TO ORIENTATION

- |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Passport   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Visa (or proof of valid immigration status, including current institution permission letter) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Signed I-20 (if under an F-1 visa)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I-94   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Laptop   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | NetID and password   |

# Securing an F-1 Visa to study at USC Summer Programs

1



Request a USC I-20 by submitting valid passport and financial document via Trojan International

2



Access your USC I-20 via Trojan International (processing time can take up to 10 business days)

3



Pay SEVIS fee

4



Complete DS-160 visa application

5



Schedule and complete a visa interview at US Embassy

6



Email PDF of your visa and your SEVIS payment receipt to [visa.sp@usc.edu](mailto:visa.sp@usc.edu)

8



Bring your visa, passport, signed I-20 form, and I-94 form to USC Summer Programs' check-in/orientation

7



After entering the United States, access and save your I-94 Form

