

## VISITING SCHOLAR PROGRAM

### APPLICATION PROCESS & DEADLINES

Interested candidates should complete the application. Only complete applications submitted in English will be considered. A completed application includes:

- **Application:** Applications must be fully completed. Applications with incomplete sections will not be considered by the committee.
- **Current CV or Resume:** Candidates must submit a current CV or resume detailing their educational background, academic qualifications, publications, and any relevant awards or honors.
- **References and/or publications:**
  - *Student Candidates:* Two (2) Letters of Reference or Recommendation: Visiting Scholar Candidates who are currently pursuing their degree must submit two letters of reference or recommendation.
  - *Professors/Post-Doc Candidates:* Two (2) sample publications: Visiting Scholar Candidates who are professors or who have already completed their PhD must submit two sample publications.
- **Summary Statement of Proposed Research Project:** A statement outlining the candidate's proposed research project that will be conducted while in residence at the School of Computing and Information as a Visiting Scholar must be included.
- **English Language Proficiency:** As of January 5, 2015, the U.S. Department of State has updated the J-1 program requirements to include the following eligibility criteria: In order to ensure their success (both in their program and living in the United States), J-1 exchange visitors are now subject to English language proficiency requirements. Program sponsors (hosting departments) are required to determine if the incoming J-1 exchange visitor possesses "sufficient proficiency in the English language to participate in his or her program" AND "function on a day-to-day basis." The governmental requirements also state that an objective measurement must be used to determine the J-1 exchange visitor's English proficiency.

Please note that these requirements do not replace University policies—[University Policy 02-02-16: Certification of English Language Proficiency for Teaching](#) and [University Policy 09-02-01: Assessment of English Language Proficiency for Admission](#). Scholars who will teach or be enrolled in coursework as part of their J-1 program must continue to satisfy the applicable University policy in addition to meeting the new J-1 requirements.

- *Accepted objective measurements:*
  - Native English speaker - If the J-1 exchange visitor is from a country whose official language is English.
  - Recognized English test - Test results should be less than two years old. The Office of International Services recommends the TOEFL (minimum TOEFL score of 75 with all sub-scores in at least the intermediate or fair range) or the IELTS (minimum IELTS score of 6.5).

- Signed Documentation from an academic institution or an English language school - Acceptable documentation includes a transcript or diploma certifying completion of a degree at an institution where the sole language of instruction is English or official certification of completion of an English language program within the previous two years where proficiency attained is clearly indicated.
- Documented interview conducted by your faculty sponsor/host - An interview should be conducted when none of the above documentation is available or where documentation does not clearly indicate current, adequate English proficiency for the proposed program. The interview must be held in-person, through a video-conference, or telephone (if video-conferencing is not an option).
  - The provided J-1 English Proficiency: Interview Assessment Report must be used.
- **Intended Dates of Residence:** Clearly state the dates during which the candidate intends to be in residence. The Visiting Scholar Program requires a minimum of six weeks and a maximum of one year in residence. The standard residence period begins at the start of the academic year (August), but selected Visiting Scholars may begin their residency at any time as approved by the selection committee.
- **Demonstration of Available Funding:** Candidates must demonstrate that they have sufficient funds to support themselves while in residence here. Candidates selected to participate in the Visiting Scholar Program must arrive fully funded and are not eligible to be hired as research assistants or visiting professors. Living expenses in Pittsburgh are estimated at \$1,300 per month, plus an additional \$400 per month for each dependent the Visiting Scholar supports in Pittsburgh. Demonstration of funding may be in the form of a bank statement (in USD or with a bank-certified notation of the value in USD) or a letter from a funding organization detailing the amount of funds set aside for the candidate's research.

## APPLICATION DEADLINES

Due to visa requirements, candidates are strongly encouraged to apply at least three months prior to their intended start date. There are no official application deadlines, but the committee will not consider applications that arrive within thirty days of the proposed start date.

## PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS & DETAILS

- **Housing:** The School does not provide housing to Visiting Scholars. Accepted Visiting Scholars are strongly encouraged to contact their sponsor/host for assistance with identifying housing options. Hosts and school administrators will not obtain or reserve housing for Visiting Scholars. Learn more housing options at [Pitt's Off-Campus Living site](#) and [Cool Pittsburgh site](#).
- **Residence Details:** Visiting Scholars have access to the University of Pittsburgh Library System and may use the library at any time that it is open to students.

Due to space restrictions, the school provides shared office space (or individual office space if available), but Visiting Scholars will receive access to a shared workspace and to collaborative workspaces. Please note that you may audit classes with a professor's permission. Audited classes do not grant academic credit.

You are strongly encouraged to bring your own laptop, as there are no public computers at the School and computers in Hillman Library are limited. Visiting Scholars are given full access to the School's wireless network while in residence.

- **Visa Requirements:** An invited visiting scholar will be required to apply for and obtain a United States Department of State J-1 Exchange Visitor (Scholar) visa. Upon receipt of your invitation, you should complete the J-1 Exchange Visitor (Scholar) On-Line Department Request Form and the J-1 Exchange Visitor Health Insurance Requirement Acknowledgment Form. Under U.S. immigration regulations, Visiting Scholars are required to maintain health insurance for the duration of your residence in the United States. The University of Pittsburgh has information for international visitors about obtaining health insurance, but does not provide health insurance and will not procure health insurance on behalf of any visitor. Please contact the University of Pittsburgh's Office of International Services with any questions concerning [health insurance options](#).
- **Fees:** There is a \$225 Visa Application Processing Fee that is charged when the [Office of International Services](#) prepares the scholar's DS-2019. This fee is non-refundable and must be submitted to the Office of the Dean, School of Information Sciences. Payments may be made through a check in U.S. Dollars made payable to the "University of Pittsburgh." Please write the name of visiting scholar on the check or money order. Visa Application Processing Fee is due upon arrival.

There is no mandatory monthly visiting scholar fee to cover the scholar's Pitt email account, access to the University's computer system, temporary university ID, library privileges, printing, and additional administrative costs.

- **Program Completion Summary:** Upon completion of their residency at the School, Visiting Scholars are encouraged to submit a completed research paper or provide a 1-2 page summary of the progress they made on their research while here.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Any questions or comments about the Visiting Scholar Program, past or present Visiting Scholars, or application process should be directed to [Sharon Bindas](#).

## VISITING SCHOLAR PROGRAM APPLICATION CHECKLIST

### Completed Application Form

- Current CV / Resume
- Summary of proposed research
- 2 Letters of Reference / 2 Recommendations (Student Candidates ONLY)
- 2 Publications (Faculty/Post-Doc Candidates ONLY)
- English Language Proficiency (Copy of current TOEFL score)

### [APPLY NOW](#)

### Visa Documents for International Scholars: Process Steps

- You must submit all application materials directly to the School of Information Sciences.
- Processing a submitted application (time for reviewing the application and making an admission decision) might take several months. Decisions are made by the School of Computing and Information Visiting Scholar Program committee, not by Pitt's Office of International Services.
- Once a decision is made, a copy of **your financial support information, Visitor Agreement, copy of current passport and your invitation letter from the School** will be reviewed by Pitt's Office of International Services. There is a **\$150 Visa Application Processing Fee** that is charged when the Office of International Services prepares your DS-2019. This fee is non-refundable and must be submitted to the School of Computing and Information's Office of the Dean. Payments may be made by check in U.S. Dollars payable to the "University of Pittsburgh." Please write the name of the visiting scholar on the check or money order. Visa application processing fee is due upon arrival.
- If the financial support information submitted is acceptable, a visa document will be prepared and sent to you.

### Certification of Financial Responsibility

Please review the following instructions before completing and signing this form.

- Review the cost estimates below.
- Complete the certification indicating the amount of support that will be provided from each source.
- All proof of financial support must be submitted in English.
- All proof of financial support must be stated in U.S. dollars and clearly state the date that the documentation was written or printed.
- All proof of financial support must be an original document.
- All financial resources must be in liquid assets. Stocks, bonds, or other investments with cash value may be accepted if evidenced by a portfolio on the managing firm's letterhead. Please note that retirement accounts cannot be used as a source of financial support unless the sponsor can provide evidence that he/she is, in fact, retired and able to access those funds without penalty for early withdrawal. Real

estate or other non-liquid asset such as automobiles, jewelry, or other personal property cannot be used as a source of financial support under any circumstances.

- Please be aware that evidence of financial support must also be shown to the U.S. Embassy or Consulate when applying for a visa. Therefore, you will need to have two sets of financial support documents—one to submit to the University of Pittsburgh and one for the U.S. Embassy or Consulate.
- More than one sponsor may be used. This form may be copied for use by more than one sponsor.

### **Estimated Costs Per Year**

Visiting Scholar, School of Computing and Information

12 Months Living Expenses\*: **\$18,823**

*\* Living expense estimates include the following*

- Rent: \$700.00/month
- Utilities: \$200.00/month
- Food: \$300.00/month
- Miscellaneous: \$100.00/month (clothing, laundry, dry cleaning, etc.)
- Insurance: \$1,400.00/year

*Please note that these are estimates of the minimum living expenses, based upon US poverty guidelines from the US Department of Health & Human Services. You must be able to demonstrate that you have sufficient funds to support your period of stay in the US in order for the Office of International Services to issue you the SEVIS Form DS-2019. Please note that the cost estimates are subject to change without notice.*

The following are **NOT** included in the above estimates: Initial settling cost (rental deposit, etc.) - \$1,500.00; Dependents – for each dependent, add an additional **\$4,350** per year per dependent.