

Visa Checklist Overview

We have prepared the following guidance to help you plan your visa application and ensure successful attendance to your scientific meeting. Our most important piece of advice is to:

APPLY EARLY!

When to Begin the Visa Process

To ensure U.S. visas are received in time for travel, applicants are advised to apply **as soon as you decide to travel to the United States**, ideally at least **six months in advance** of the event start date. Due to global staffing shortage and administrative delays, many U.S. embassies and consulates have long visa interview wait times. We recommend [reviewing the interview wait time for the location where you will apply for a B-1 visa](#), if applicable. If you need help expediting the process, the [National Academies International Visitors Office](#) can assist but only *after* you schedule your interview.

Steps to Complete as soon as you decide to travel

1. **Ensure your visa and passport are valid** for six months *beyond* your planned travel dates. Request renewal if needed.
2. **Identify the type of visa needed** (i.e., Does your country participate in the [Visa Waiver Program](#) or is a B-1 Visa needed?).
 - *If your country is in the Visa Waiver Program*, follow steps for requesting Electronic System for Travel Authorization outlined on the [Visa Waiver Program website](#).
 - *If B-1 Visa is needed*, continue with the steps below.
3. **Be prepared to submit a photo** for DS-160 application that meets the [U.S. State Department requirements](#).
4. **[Visit the website for your country's U.S. embassy or consulate](#)** to review country-specific information (including application fees) and prepare required documents.
5. **[Complete DS-160 - Online Visa Application](#)**: You must: 1) complete the online visa application and 2) print the application form confirmation page to bring to your interview, if applicable.
6. **Schedule a Visa Interview Appointment** (if applicable) at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate, ideally in the country where you live. It is important that you **apply for visa interview as**

soon as possible since, in many cases, the earliest availability for an interview could be *after* the time of the event (e.g., some countries have wait times of 400+ days). If this is the case, we ask that you still **schedule an appointment at the soonest available interview time** so that you are in the U.S. State Department system and eligible for rescheduling. Again, we recommend [reviewing the interview wait time for the location where you will apply for a B-1 visa](#).

7. **Contact the National Academies International Visitors Office (IVO)** (visas@nas.edu) if your visa appointment time needs to be expedited to accommodate event dates. The IVO can only assist with expediting your interview after you have scheduled your initial appointment time in the system.
8. **Attend the visa interview.** Bring the printed application of the DS-160 form, invitation letter provided by the National Academies, and all required documents for your country. A consular officer will typically ask the following questions:
 - a. Who are you?
 - b. What do you want to do in the United States?
 - c. How will you fund your travel?
 - d. What are your plans for after your event ends?
9. **Check your U.S. visa application status** on the [Consular Electronic Application Center website](#).
10. **If visa is not approved**, contact the International Visitors Office (visas@nas.edu) at the National Academies for further assistance.