J1 VISA FOR WORKING IN THE USA

Student Fact Sheet

There are several options available to students wishing to obtain a J1 visa to work in the US. Of these, the following 2 are the most cost effective:

(Please note that students must have secured a work term in the US before this process can begin)

1. The SWAP USA program through Travel Cuts

Students going on co-op work terms during the Summer semester (May to August) can obtain J1 visas to work in the US through the Summer USA program. The cost for this is $840 CAD if you want the flexibility to find your own job. The Summer USA + Placement program costs $1,250 CAD. Please visit the Travel Cuts office on campus for more information, or check out the website at: http://www.swap.ca/summerUSA/

2. Cultural Vistas

Cultural Vistas is a not for profit J-1 Visa sponsor organization that can assist students to obtain J-1 visas to work in the US at any time of the year. Cultural Vistas sponsors the student for the J-1 Intern visa, and works with the student to prepare the application. Employer’s responsibilities include submitting a training plan for the student and completing a student evaluation after the work term. New host companies that have not previously been approved by Cultural Vistas are invoiced a $300 one-time fee to cover the cost of their evaluation and vetting process. Please note a student cannot pay this fee on behalf of his or her host company. Please see http://culturalvistas.org/j-1-resources/j-1-visa-categories-intern for details.

Cultural Vistas Administration Fees*:

As a result of a recent partnership between Cultural Vistas and the Canadian Association for Co-operative Education (CAFCE), students from CAFCE member institutions enjoy a reduced fee for J-1 visas obtained through Cultural Vistas. UVic Co-op and Career is a CAFCE member, so fees for UVic Co-op students are as follows, and may be paid by the J-1 intern/trainee, the host company, or a third party;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of work term</th>
<th>Regular Cost</th>
<th>CAFCE member cost</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 – 3 months:</td>
<td>US $ 750</td>
<td>US $ 750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 – 6 months:</td>
<td>US $ 950</td>
<td>US $ 800 (savings of US $150)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 – 12 months:</td>
<td>US $ 1250</td>
<td>US $ 800 (savings of US $350)</td>
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Expedited service is available:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regular Cost</th>
<th>CAFCE member cost</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>US $ 1350</td>
<td>US $ 1000</td>
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Plus SEVIS Fee

US$180 (Cultural Vistas collects this fee from the student and in turn pays this fee to the Department of Homeland Security’s Student and Exchange Visitor Program on behalf of the student)

Plus Health & Accident Insurance

US$68/month
*Please note that the fee structure shown was valid as of June 23, 2014 and is subject to change*

Detailed costs for students (that do not take into account the CAFCE member discount) and employers are posted at [http://culturalvistas.org/host-companies/programs-for-host-companies/train-usa/services-and-fees](http://culturalvistas.org/host-companies/programs-for-host-companies/train-usa/services-and-fees)

Detailed information for employers is posted at [http://culturalvistas.org/host-companies/programs-for-host-companies/train-usa/resources-for-host-companies/host-company-requirements](http://culturalvistas.org/host-companies/programs-for-host-companies/train-usa/resources-for-host-companies/host-company-requirements)

**Application process for J-1 Visa through Cultural Vistas:**

Students can apply online at [http://culturalvistas.org/programs-for-students-and-professionals/train-usa](http://culturalvistas.org/programs-for-students-and-professionals/train-usa), The host company will receive an application to complete and submit for review. If appropriate for sponsorship, Cultural Vistas will issue the necessary sponsorship documents, and guide the parties through the subsequent steps.

Important: UVic students applying for J-1 visas through Cultural Vistas are asked to answer the question on the application “How did you hear about the program” by responding as follows “University of Victoria (or university name)/CAFCE”. This will ensure that the student receives the CAFCE discount on the J1 application rates.

**Additional notes for students:**

1. Employers may be willing to cover the J-1 visa cost so students should discuss the possibility of this with their employers.
2. Once the student obtains the J-1 visa, and arrives in the US, s/he must inform Cultural Vistas of their arrival in the US and update their US address within 5 days of arrival. Once Cultural Vistas has this information, they update their SEVIS record and “validate” their J-1 visa status.
3. 10 calendar days after their arrival into the US, assuming they have contacted Cultural Vistas as above, students can apply for a Social Security Number at the Social Security Administration Office. Students may experience delays in obtaining their SSN if they do not update their information with Cultural Vistas, or if they apply for it in less than 10 days of arrival in the US. Once they apply, students should have their SSN within 2 to 3 weeks of application. If the employer requires that the student have the SSN before starting their job, the student will need to enter the US 2 to 3 weeks prior to the start of the work term. By law, they are allowed to enter the US on the J-1 visa up to 30 days before the official start of the internship (and visa). The above information is conveyed to the student by Cultural Vistas.

For additional questions regarding the application process, or program eligibility requirements, students can contact the J-1 team at train@culturalvistas.org

*Revised: June 23, 2014*