Visiting Students and Scholars (VSS)

Step by step instructions for the new process
What is Global Engagement?

• The Office for Global Engagement is a hub for information about the University of Rochester's international activities.
• Global engagement at Rochester comprises the Office of the Associate Provost and the International Services Office (ISO).
• We are the central point of contact and coordination for international activities undertaken by Rochester’s schools and units, and for external institutions that want to engage with Rochester.
• We also consult and advise at all stages of partnership development, including identifying funding opportunities, hosting visitors and delegations, and coordinating with internal and external stakeholders.
How is Global Involved in the VSS Process?

The Office for Global Engagement will coordinate logistics for onboarding visiting graduate students and scholars. This includes managing communication about the application, intake, and registration processes as well as providing the visitor with information about key needs and services such as living arrangements in Rochester, transportation, and health insurance. The International Services Office (ISO) will continue to provide essential visa-related services to those visitors requiring UR’s visa sponsorship.

In Short:

ISO = Immigration and Visa related questions.

Global = On-boarding/ process/ resource questions.
Who are Visiting Students?

- Visiting Students pursue **activities of an educational or academic nature**, often to further their undergraduate or graduate studies at their home institution. These individuals primarily benefit from learning new skills and techniques under **direct supervision** or mentorship. While at Rochester, **they are registered as full-time, non-matriculated students** and are eligible for standard UR support services. For immigration purposes, international visiting students may be hosted under the F-1 Student (recommended) or J-1 Exchange Visitor visa categories.
Who are Visiting Scholars?

- Visiting Scholars come to pursue activities of a professional or collaborative nature, often related to research or publications of shared interests with Rochester colleagues. Visiting researchers or faculty are frequently professors, researchers, and other individuals with similar education or accomplishments, who benefit from temporary access to labs, equipment, and other University resources. For immigration purposes, international visiting researchers or faculty are hosted under the J-1 Exchange Visitor visa category as a Short-Term Scholar. To determine the appropriate next steps when hosting a visiting scholar, ask yourself:
  
  Will the visitor will have a faculty or post doc appointment?
  Is the host unsure how the visitor will be categorized?

- If you are unsure how the visitor will be categorized, our process will help determine the appropriate visa category, and our office will assist in on-boarding the visitor.
Beginning the Process

For international visitors, it can take six months- sometimes longer – to formally complete the pre-arrival process. We recommend you begin the VSS registration process as early as possible. Once a faculty member has decided to host a visiting student or scholar, the first step is to visit the Office for Global Engagement’s website and click on ‘Resources and Services.’
Continue to the VSS section and select “Learn More”
Step 1: Faculty Member Submits **Indication of Interest**

This form requests details about your visitor’s background and your plan for their placement while they are under your supervision. The link to the **Indication of Interest** is found at the bottom of the VSS page. For more information about the process select the link “How to host a visiting student/scholar.”
Step 2: Student Submits **Online Application**

Once the Indication of Interest is submitted, if the faculty member has not already done so, Global will e-mail the visitor with a link to the **online application**. This application provides us with background information and the visitor's plans for their time at Rochester. This link is also provided on the VSS page.
Step 3: 
Department Head Approval

After both the Indication of Interest, and Online Application have been completed, the Global Office will e-mail the Department Head for approval, attaching the Indication of Interest and ccing the Faculty member and department administrator.

Step 4: 
ISO Visa Category Determination

Having received the approval from the Department Head, Global will forward all documents to ISO and they will proceed with the appropriate Visa category determination.
Once the appropriate Visa Category has been determined for the visitor, Global will draft an Offer Letter. Global will send the letter to the administrator and faculty member. The faculty member/admin will then send the approved letter to the visitor to sign, cc'ing Global. The visitor will sign the letter and return it to Global. Global will inform the department of receipt.
Step 6:

New Student Request/ Questionnaire for I-20/ DS-2019

Global will package all materials and forward the documents to ISO in preparation of the creation of the I-20/ DS-2019. Global will request ID number from registrar. Visitor receives an email with resource information from Global. Global will prompt the administrator to collaborate with the visitor to fill out the New Student Request/ Questionnaire. The visitor fills out the first part of the form, and faculty member/admin completes the rest and submits the form **directly to ISO**. The link to these documents can be found on the VSS page.

**Timeline**

For international visitors, it can take six months—sometimes longer—to formally complete the pre-arrival process. Because of the multiple University and government offices involved, we recommend you begin the visitor/student/scholar registration process as early as possible.

For domestic visitors, the general placement process averages one to three months.

**For Rochester faculty and department administrators: How to host a visiting student/scholar**

**For Rochester department heads: How to review and approve an indication of interest form**

**For visiting students/scholars: Your pre-arrival information and instructions**

**Online and Electronic Forms**

For Rochester faculty or staff to complete:

- **Indication of Interest:** Request to host a visiting student or scholar. This form requests details about your visitor's background and your plan for their placement while they are under your supervision. Do not issue a letter of invitation. Global will provide you with assistance in issuing a letter once the Indication of Interest has been received and approved, and the student has completed an Online Application.
  - PDF of Part II (University Use Only section, on back) of the New Student Request for I-20/DS-2019 (print and complete PDF once Part I is completed by the Visiting Student)
  - PDF of J-1 Scholar Departmental Questionnaire (print and complete once J-1 Scholar Exchange Visitor Questionnaire is completed by Visiting Scholar)

For visiting students/scholars to complete:

- Online Application
  - New Student Request for I-20/DS-2019 (PDF)
  - J-1 Scholar Exchange Visitor Questionnaire (PDF)
Step 7: Visitor Applies for Visa

Once ISO reviews all forms and documents submitted, ISO will issue an I-20/DS-2019 to the visitor. The department will send the I-20/DS 20-19 and the **Health History and Immunization** packet to the visitor. The visitor will then apply for a Visa. Once the visitor receives the Visa, they will inform the hosting department and Global. The Arrival date is sent to the registrar and a check-in with ISO is scheduled.
Step 8: Visitor Arrives!

The visitor will schedule a check-in and orientation with ISO to review immigration material. Please continue passing out resources previously provided.

Don’t forget, we are here to help!