Tips for Visiting Scholar Requests

Make sure you and the scholar are filling out the most recent form listed on OIS's website

Common Issues with DS-2019 Request Part A

- Incomplete fields
- Scholar did not sign/submit Rights and Responsibilities page
- No email address listed for spouse
- Copies of previous immigration documents are not included according to page 2

Common Issues with DS-2019 Request Part B

- Incomplete fields
- The answer to the question "Is this a temporary position?" is marked "no."
- Site of Activity does not include street name and number
- Description of Primary Activity is too vague
- Funding is listed with no documentation
- English certification page is not signed
- English certification interview date is not within last 6 months
- Not all required signatures are present

Start Date Tips

- J-1s are allowed a limited arrival window called a "grace period" during which they may arrive in the US & check-in.
- The grace period is 30 days before & after DS-2019 start date. E.g. Start date of July 1 has an arrival window of June 1 – July 31.
- If the J-1 cannot arrive within the grace period surrounding their DS-2019 start date, NCSU must change the start date, issue an updated DS-2019, and mail it to the J-1.
- Always advocate for a reasonable start date!
- A "reasonable" start date:
    - Allows all processes to take place in their normal timeframe
    - Includes a small buffer in the event of unforeseen delays
    - Designed for J-1 to arrive during the grace period prior to start date.
- OIS estimates a reasonable start date is ~2-3 months from the date you submit the request to OIS. It's definitely not in the past or within next several weeks. We will not process a DS-2019 request that has a start date within the next 30 days of when we receive a complete request.
- The benefits of a reasonable start date are many!
    - Can generally avoid need to change the start date and the issues associated with having to change the start date such as:
        - OIS reissuing/Dept. remailing DS-2019 (costing money, effort, and time)
        - HR Rep/Supervisor must rearrange their schedule to accommodate change
        - Stressful and more difficult to manage a moving target
    - Longer lead time facilitates J-1 travel and arrival due to cheaper flights, better housing options, time to "set up" before starting work
        - Cell phone, driver's license, utilities, kids in school/day care, get over jet lag, etc.

- If a reasonable start date is so great, why does OIS see so many unreasonable start dates?
  - Poor planning
  - Unreasonable expectations
  - Lack of knowledge and misconceptions
  - Mostly avoidable reasons!

Category Tips

- Can't change category after entering the US.
- For stays of exactly or close to 6 months, consider category carefully.
  - Consult with potential J-1 and Faculty Supervisor to ensure everyone's on the same page re: restrictions the chosen category will subject the J-1 to (max length of stay and 12/24 month repeat bars).
- Not possible to do back to back Short Term Scholar programs on same research as a way to avoid the 24 month bar associated with the Research Scholar/Professor categories.
- When multiple categories are possible, department and visitor may choose which category to use.
- Research Scholars are permitted to teach, and Professors are permitted to do research. Choose the category based on what they will spend the majority of their time doing.

Submitting Support Documents Tips

- Make sure that all required documents are included for each scholar's individual case
- Passport
  - Is it legible - not too dark, light, small, etc.?
  - Is it valid at least 6 months into the future?
  - Are dependent passports included if J-1 listed dependents on Part A?
- CV/Resume
  - Does it include current position and educational history?
- Funding documents
  - Can be scans/copies; originals not necessary
  - Must not be older than 6 months
  - Must be on official letterhead
  - Must specify the J-1 on the document
  - Must be in English (if not in English provide a translation with the document)
  - Must indicate specific amount of funding
    - Cannot say "XYZ University will cover all expenses."
  - If a range is expressed, OIS must use the lower amount:
    - E.g. China Scholarship Funding
    - J-1 must demonstrate additional funds if lower amount of range based funding doesn't meet minimum funding requirements.
  - Must specify the J-1 will actually receive the funding
    - Bad Example: "X is an employee of PDQ with annual salary of X. He will visit NCSU for 1 year and then return to resume his position at PDQ."
    - Good Example: "X is an employee of PDQ with annual salary of X. He will visit NCSU for 1 year, during which time we will continue to pay his salary, and then return to resume his position at PDQ."

- o Bank statements must be in J-1's name, unless accompanied by sponsor affidavit. J-2s are not eligible to be sponsors.
  - o All funding sources must be disclosed and documented
  - o Multiple sources OK as long as total meets minimum requirement
  - o NCSU funding may be subject to university guidelines (HR/OPA/etc.)
  - o Required support document is be different based on funding source:
    - ▪ Personal funds: bank statement in J-1's name
    - ▪ Family funds: bank statement plus sponsor affidavit
    - ▪ Home institution, government, employer: Letter on institutional letterhead
    - ▪ NC State – offer letter and proof of HR action such as completed JAR request
- Invitation/Offer Letter
  - o Has the offer letter been vetted/cleared by HR
  - o Does it include important info such as supervisor, dates or program, expectations, etc.?
- Documents for those receiving payment from NC State
  - o Post-Docs must include an approval email from the Office of Post-Doctoral Affairs
  - o All other positions must include HR approval such as a completed JAR or people admin job action
- Past immigration documents
  - o Copies of any DS-2019s issued in the past 3 years
  - o If the scholar is in the U.S. in any other visa status at the time of application, include copies of visa, I-94, and any other current immigration documents.
- Sponsored Programs and Regulatory Compliance Services questionnaire confirmation email
  - o *New Requirement*
  - o Must complete the Visiting Scholar Questionnaire and submit the confirmation email along with request.

Dependents Tips

- If J-1 completed dependent info on Part A page 3, make sure they also submitted sufficient funding and passport bio pages.
- Dependents may be legal spouse and unmarried children under 21… no aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents, multiple spouses, etc.
- Dependents may accompany the J-1 when the J-1 arrives or arrive later after the J-1 has arrived and gotten settled.
- Dependents are required to have health insurance for the entire length of their active J-2 record, whether or not they are presently in the United States.
- J-1 must request the J-2 DS-2019 directly from OIS if they want their dependents to join them once OIS has already processed the initial DS-2019 without the dependents
- OIS has a separate dependent check-in required for J-2 spouses. J-1, J-2, or department can email ois@ncsu.edu to request the J-2 be added to the next dependent check-in.
- J-2s are eligible to apply to US Citizenship and Immigration Services for a work permit (Employment Authorization Document, "EAD") if they want to work or volunteer anywhere.
  - o USCIS takes 90 days to issue EAD; filing fee is $410.
  - o J-2s cannot volunteer at NC State unless they obtain the EAD.
- Sometimes it is beneficial for both spouses to come as J-1 instead of J-1 and J-2 if they both want to conduct research and can each find a host department and funding.