

## J-1 Exchange Visitor Invitation Letter Guidelines

To ensure that our vital flow of scholarly collaboration continues in light of the increased scrutiny of all international visitors by the U.S. Department of State and of Homeland Security, we ask that the Faculty Sponsor provide the prospective J-1 scholar with a letter of invitation. Invitation letters generally follow a similar structure as an offer letter. The letter includes the details and purpose of the scholar's visit as well as the expectations of the department visit. It serves as a useful resource for OIS when reviewing an initial J-1 Scholar request and issuing a DS-2019 form, for the scholar when applying for their visa at a U.S. consulate/embassy, and at other stages in the immigration process.

Such an invitation should be extended thoughtfully and only when the Faculty Sponsor and academic department are certain the visit will be valuable for both the visitor and NC State. Additionally, the hosting department must be certain that they are able to provide the support necessary to attain the academic objective set forth. While a visitor may work with several faculty members across campus, sponsorship requires the commitment of a designated faculty member (referred to as the "Faculty Sponsor") who serves as the visitor's mentor and is responsible for overseeing the J-1 Scholar's activities in the U.S.

The invitation letter must be on departmental letterhead and include the information outlined below. Since the letter will accompany the visitor to the visa application at the U.S. consulate/embassy abroad, it is important that it is well composed and specific to the individual's planned J-1 visit to NC State . Please address the letter to the scholar and use the second person point of view "you, yours, etc." throughout.

### DEPARTMENTAL LETTERHEAD

Full Name of Scholar:

Scholar's Address:

Date:

Salutation, Title and Name of Scholar:

#### **1. Introduction and invitation:**

- a. Example: “I am a full-time faculty member at North Carolina State University in the Department of Chemistry and wish to invite you to come to my department as a visiting scholar, from August 15, 2023 to August 14, 2024”].
- b. The activity dates should be written exactly for the anticipated time period of the campus visit. Please avoid using start and end dates that correspond with weekends and university holidays.
- c. If a significant academic relationship exists or you have previously collaborated with the invited scholar, you can reference it here.
- d. Examples:
  - i. I look forward to continuing the collaboration that we started when I was a Visiting Professor at your home university last year
  - ii. Your visit will help to advance the collaboration that we have only been able to do remotely for the past five years
  - iii. I look forward to renewing some of the discussions that we had when we met at X conference last year
  - iv. Your visit will continue the over fifty year tradition of faculty exchange between our two universities
- e. If a significant academic relationship does not exist, please state that here
- f. Example:
  - i. I have never met you, but I received a letter from you asking to spend a year in my lab for the following reasons...

## 2. Details of the proposed visit:

- a. Example: The nature of your research to be performed at NC State will be as follows....
- b. Include details, such as the field of study, description of lab work, titles of courses to be taught.
- c. If the scholar is transferring from another J-1 Exchange Visitor Program within the U.S., also specify how the nature of the scholar’s work at our institution is directly related to the scholar’s activities at the current U.S. institution.
- d. If the visitor holds an MD or DVM, the U.S. Department of State requires an additional statement confirming there will be no patient contact
  - i. “This certifies that the program in which you are to be engaged is solely for the purpose of observation, consultation, teaching, or research and that no element of patient care is involved.”

## 3. Funding details:

- a. Examples:
  - i. Your work will be supported by your NC State salary of \$47,476 per year
  - ii. Your research will be fully supported by your home institution, Jiangsu University
  - iii. It is my understanding that you will support your stay in the U.S. using your personal funds.
- b. List any support that will be provided by the sponsoring department:
  - i. office/laboratory space,
  - ii. equipment,
  - iii. medical insurance,
  - iv. access to libraries or computers, etc.
- c. List any fees the visitor will be charged for participation (include amount) if applicable
- d. Clearly list if the scholar is receiving a salary from NC State, including the amount

- e. If the scholar is listed on a U.S. government grant or receives funding specific for international exchange such as the FOGARTY grant, then you would make that clear, so that the scholar is correctly made subject to the Two-year Home Residency Requirement based on their receipt of U.S. government funding.
- f. Please do not list NC State grant numbers or NIH funding that is not specifically allocated for this specific visitor.

**4. Qualifications:**

- a. Your assessment of the visitor's qualifications for participation in the particular academic activity based on degrees held, current position, papers published or other evidence of ability to benefit from the activity, etc.
- b. Example:
  - i. You are qualified for this Postdoctoral Research Associate position based on your degree in Molecular Biology and your experience working in Dr. XX's lab.
- c. If the scholar is from a non-English speaking country, confirm English language proficiency here
  - i. Example: Based on your TOEFL iBT score of 83 and our email correspondence, I am confident you have sufficient English language abilities to meet your research objectives and interact with our community in a meaningful way.

Complimentary Close,

Signature of Host Faculty Member

Full Name of Host Faculty Member

Title and Department of Host Faculty Member

Contact Information (email address and phone number)