



Guidelines for Administration of the WEST (Work, English Study, and Travel) Program Eighteen-Month Intern Special Program

The Department is pleased to announce that on October 29, 2013 the Government of the Republic of Korea and the Government of the United States signed a Memorandum of Understanding to renew an eighteen month work, English language instruction and travel program known as the WEST (Work, English Study, and Travel) Program. This flagship exchange program is conducted as a five year special program under which qualifying university students and recent graduates from the Republic of Korea will enter the United States to study English, participate in internships, and travel independently. The Government of the Republic of Korea will provide reciprocal opportunities for U.S. participants under its Working Holiday Program (WHP).

WEST participants are required to devote no fewer than two months and up to five months of English language training by an American accredited language school or university. Participants will also take coursework in American business practices and gain familiarity with business procedures, corporate culture, and general office management issues. Upon completion of these educational requirements, participants will begin a work-based internship of up to twelve month's duration with a corporate, non-profit, academic or other employer. Upon conclusion of the internship, participants may have the opportunity to travel for one month.

The WEST program is conducted under the existing Intern category of the Exchange Visitor Program, unless otherwise noted below.

Designation

Sponsors approved to participate in the WEST Program receive a separate program designation under which the Special Program will be administered.

Sponsors currently designated for an internship program must apply for a new designation every two years for the Special Program and pay the applicable Pay.gov fee.

Sponsor applicants must follow the below instructions for processing a request to participate in the Exchange Visitor Program.

- Submit a Form DS-3036 via SEVIS
- Submit payment of the required non-refundable application fee (22 CFR 62.17, Fees and Charges) via the Pay.Gov website.
- Scan and email the signed and notarized Form, supporting documentation, and a copy of the Pay.Gov confirmation page showing payment of the fee to DoS.
- The supporting documentation must fully detail the sponsor's intended approach of administering the WEST program.

The materials should include the name and address of your agent/partner organizations in Korea, a copy of any agreement(s) with your partner organizations, specific training plans (DS-7002), which occupational categories are being requested, identification of staff to operate the program, and a breakdown of all costs and fees to be paid by participants.

Program Administration

Citizens of the Republic of Korea traveling to the United States to participate in the WEST program do so under the Department's existing Intern Program regulations, and applicable sponsor program rules. There are some aspects of program administration that deviate from the current 12-month Intern Program requirements (e.g., selection and screening criteria, program content, program length, program costs, program supervision, and reporting requirements).

Screening and Selection of Participants

Screening and selection of participants is the responsibility of designated sponsors and may be conducted by the sponsor or in cooperation with the sponsor's overseas partners/agents. All participants must be interviewed in-person and must meet the following program eligibility requirements:

- Be a citizen of the Republic of Korea.
- Be approved for participation by the Republic of Korea.
- Be a bona fide post-secondary student or recent graduate. A recent graduate is defined as a Korean citizen who has graduated from a post-secondary college/university in their home country no more than 12 months beyond graduation. The applicant must provide evidence from his/her post-secondary institution of student status or graduation.
- Vocational students pursuing studies at a tertiary level accredited academic institution are not eligible for participation.
- Provide proof of sufficient financial resources, prior to coming to the United States, to support themselves throughout their program and for their return home.
- Not be accompanied by spouse or dependents.

Pre-Arrival Material

Sponsors must state in their Pre-arrival Material that participants cannot be accompanied by their spouse or dependents.

Program Costs

Sponsors must ensure that program costs to participants are comparable to Americans participating in the Republic of Korea's 18-Month Working Holiday Program. Sponsors shall provide participants a cost breakdown of the following:

Program and Administrative Fees (including fees to be paid to foreign agents/partners):

- SEVIS I-901 Fee
- MRV Fee
- Insurance Costs
- Approximate Cost of (Round Trip) Air Fare
- In Country Travel Costs
- Educational Requirements
- Cost of Living expenses
- Other costs that exchange visitors will likely incur while in the United States

Participant Placement

Sponsors must complete Form DS-7002 – Training/Internship Placement Plan. Phase I must be completed and signed prior to issuance of Form DS-2019. Phase I must reflect the location of the English language and coursework. Phase II may be added or amended to reflect the internship location after arrival in the United States.

- **Phase I** – Up to five months of English language training (at least 90 hours of full-time, structured English language training per month at an accredited language school or university). While pursuing language instruction, participants should also take coursework in American business practices and gain familiarity with business procedures, corporate culture, and general office management issues.
- **Phase II** – Twelve-month Internship with a corporate, non-profit, academic or other employer.
 - Sponsors shall ensure that the internship being offered is viable and that participants' stipend is commensurate with that offered to Americans, confirm pay, number of work hours per week, supervision/oversight, and other details with employers as necessary.
 - Internship must be in the student's field of study.
- **Phase III** – Travel for up to one month.

Form DS-2019 issuance

When the Form DS-7002 is been complete, sponsors must adhere to the following steps in issuing Forms DS-2019:

- Create SEVIS records for a 12-month program. DO NOT PRINT THE FORM.
- The day following the creation of the 12-month SEVIS record, print the Form DS-2019. The printed Form will reflect the 18-month maximum special program duration.
- Sign the Form, in blue ink, and forward it to the potential participant in order to permit the individual to pay the SEVIS I-901 Fee and apply for a J-visa at the American Embassy in Korea.

No extension of program beyond the 18-month program duration will be permitted.

Monitoring of Participants and Participant Support

Within 10 days of the arrival in the United States, interns are required to notify the sponsor of their arrival, their U.S. residential address, and confirm that they have begun their program. After receiving the participants' information, the sponsor must validate the participant's SEVIS record to reflect the current U.S. address and primary site of activity.

Sponsors shall contact each participant and the language instruction provider within the first 30 days of arrival in the U.S. to monitor participant satisfaction and re-confirm participants' current U.S. address.

Sponsors shall continue to contact participants and host organizations every 30 days thereafter throughout the duration of their participation in the sponsor's program.

Sponsors shall promptly update SEVIS with any changes of U.S. address or approved changes of site of activity. Sponsors are reminded to identify the "primary" site of activity in the event the participant has multiple sites.

Sponsors must develop procedures for evaluating all interns. All required evaluations must be completed prior to the conclusion of an internship program, and the intern and his/her immediate supervisor must sign the evaluation form. For internship programs exceeding six months' duration, at a minimum, midpoint and concluding evaluations are required. For programs of six months or less, at a minimum, a concluding evaluation is required.

Sponsors are to update SEVIS records by using the "End the Program for EV" for a participant who leaves the program (without incident) prior to the expiration of the Program End Date by entering an effective date of completion (SEE: User Manual for Exchange Visitor Program Sponsor Users (RO/ARO) of SEVIS: Volume II, Sec. 2.7.1.4). This will ensure that the participant is not negatively impacted.

Program terminations will continue to be completed as stipulated by the regulations.

All other Intern Program regulations apply.