

# DLCI Guide to the Visiting Student Program – January 2024

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## Process and Timeline

### Process

1. Department Administrator adds appointment to Visiting Student Portal
2. Student will need to submit the following documents to the Visiting Student Portal for review by the department:
  - Curriculum Vitae
  - Transcripts
  - Letter of recommendation
  - Certificate of English Proficiency form
  - Completed standard IPIA
3. Once the department reviews and approves the documents submitted by the student, the appointment request is sent to the Department Head and then the School/College/VPR for approval.
4. Once all approvals have been provided, the Office of Graduate Education reviews the application.
5. After the OGE review, *all* visiting students must submit an application in iMIT and begin completing their onboarding tasks. Please note that it will take up to 48 hours before Visiting Students are directed to iMIT. Visiting Students should not begin their research in the lab before completing all of their onboarding tasks:
  - Orientation with the International Students Office
  - iMIT Online Check in
  - Financial Payment of Visiting Student Fees
  - Sexual Harassment Training

### Timeline

- International students with MIT visa sponsorship: Submit applications at least 120 days in advance of the program start date.
- Students who do not require visa sponsorship: Submit applications in the Visiting Student Portal at least 60 days in advance of the program start date.

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## Length of Stay

### Visit Duration

- Minimum appointment period: 4 weeks
- Maximum appointment period: 12 months

Exceptions to this policy are made for Harvard and Wellesley students, and students coming to MIT with a newly hired faculty member (except for international students requiring MIT's J-1 visa sponsorship).

### Standardized Program Dates

Visiting students will be admitted for the period of time specified in the initial invitation letter with appointments beginning on 1st & 15th of a month and ending on the last day of a month. If the 1st or 15th falls on a weekend or holiday, the visit should start on the next business day (e.g. if the 1st falls on a Saturday, the official visit start date should be Monday, the 3rd.) Visits start dates should coincide with business days.

Upcoming start dates can be found in the Visiting Student Portal when adding a new student.

### Extending a Visit

If a PI host wants to extend a visiting student's length of stay, the DLC administrator should contact the International Students Office and update the visit dates in the visiting student portal. Additional fees will apply and the student will need to submit an extension request in iMIT.

Maximum visit length is 12 months, with the exception for Harvard and Wellesley students, and students coming to MIT with a newly hired faculty member. Please note that international students coming to MIT with a newly hired faculty member are still subject to the 12 month appointment limit due to visa requirements.

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## Fees and Payments

### Processing fee

- One time \$1,000 fee to be paid only by the host PI or host DLC's discretionary funds. Visiting Students are prohibited from paying or reimbursing the host for this charge.
- Waived for visits of six weeks or less.

### Visiting Student Fees

The Visiting Student Fee is a monthly fee of \$625 (increase effective Sept. 1, 2023) that includes research, required enrollment in the student MIT SHIP, and student life fees paid in full for the entire appointment, prior to the student's arrival. Please note that the Visiting Student Fee is charged per calendar month.

#### Fee exemptions:

- Harvard/Wellesley students are exempt from all fees.
- Visits of less than six weeks and Fulbright students are exempt from most fees with the exception of the cost of the MIT Student Health Insurance Plan per calendar month.
- Visiting students from home institutions located in Massachusetts do not need to pay and register in the student MIT SHIP.

Students will be invoiced for the total amount 14 days in advance of their program start date. Invoices can be located in the Visiting Student Portal. DLC administrators can view if payment has been made.

### Health Insurance

Required enrollment in the MIT Student Health Insurance Plan (MIT SHIP). Students may elect to enroll in additional coverage for their dependent(s) and/or partners. (Please note exceptions may be made for students enrolled at universities and colleges in Massachusetts if they can provide documentation showing that they are enrolled in their home institution's health insurance plan).

### Requesting Refund

- If visiting student's visit is canceled, DLC can request refund within the student's profile in the portal. Refund will be issued to either student or DLC, depending on who paid initial fees.
- If visit dates are changed within the portal, financial adjustment will be made automatically. Please allow 24 hours for the invoice to update.

### Paying a Visiting Student's Expenses

Some PI hosts choose to assist visiting students with their living expenses during their visit. The mechanism for doing so is to provide compensation through the student hourly payroll.

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## Paying a Visiting Student

To pay a Visiting Student, either the Director of Administration or the HR person for the department needs to set the student up as a non-MIT student worker. This is done as follows:

1. Go to: **Atlas >> Student Appointments >> Create Non-UROP appointment**
2. Select the job title **Visiting student prog-grad** or **Visiting student prog-undergrad**. Only one will be displayed based on the type of student. Enter their dates of appointment and other relevant details to create the appointment.
3. Student enters hours weekly via: **Atlas >> Time and Vacation Entry>> Time Sheet Entry**
4. The person/s in the DLC with the appropriate time sheet approval role approves hours weekly.

Please note:

- There is no limit on the hourly rate, but your Dean's Office may be concerned with high hourly rates as a result of having to translate the monthly stipend into an hourly rate (e.g., \$3K monthly stipend divided by 4 weeks, divided by 20 hours week = \$37.50 hour). Explain the reason for the high hourly rate in the transaction.
- Visiting students are eligible to work 20 hours a week. Timesheets should not exceed 20 hours.
- The student will need to fill out an I-9 form with the appropriate tax form at the Atlas Service Center in E17.
- Taxation of payments to visiting students is the same as when they were set up as support staff, under the previous system.
- The HR/Payroll DLC Representative will have to approve and complete the student's weekly timesheet.
- E.B. and Indirect Cost Rates apply.
- Immigration Laws do not allow International Visiting Students to be paid by a third party. Nextsource-MITemp's system cannot be used because the student is being paid by Nextsource and not MIT.
- The DLC needs to clearly communicate financial arrangements with the student (e.g., the department will pay you \$3K a month for six months while you are here – this will end if you depart earlier, or we would have to renegotiate if you were able to stay longer).
- RFPs are **not** the correct mechanism for paying visiting students.

For questions, please email [vsrequest@mit.edu](mailto:vsrequest@mit.edu).

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## International Students

### International Students from Other American Universities

Foreign Visiting Students who are pursuing a degree at an U.S. institution must:

- Remain on their current student visa (F, J, or M visa) status sponsored by the home institution.
- Maintain their full-time enrollment at the home institution.
- Intend to return to their home institution after their Visiting Student stay at MIT to complete their degree.
- Have a visa status providing eligibility for employment.

The Visiting Student Program requires employment authorization. *It is very important that the student is aware of this requirement early in the Visiting Student appointment process.* The student should consult with the International Student Advisor at their home institution to secure appropriate employment authorization to participate in the MIT Visiting Student Program (CPT, OPT, or on-campus employment at off-campus location). The student will be required to upload proof of employment authorization in their iMIT application.

### International Students requiring MIT visa sponsorship

Foreign Visiting Students who are pursuing a degree abroad must apply for the J-1 Exchange Visitor visa (Student Non-Degree category) sponsored by MIT. This is the only visa option available for Visiting Students.

- International Students who require visa sponsorship from MIT must demonstrate funds covering the expected expenses (including estimated monthly living costs and Visiting Student Fees) during their visit. See current “Estimated Expenses” on the ISO website.
  - Please note that at least 51% of funding of the total cost of attendance must come from a source other than personal or family funds. A student cannot be entirely self-funded. *It is very important that the student is aware of this requirement early in the Visiting Student appointment process.*
  - Additional information about funding requirements can be found here: [Financial Documentation Requirements](#)
- No J-1 Academic Training can be authorized.

### Tourist Visa Ineligibility

Please note that it is not possible for an international Visiting Student to come to MIT and conduct any research on tourist visa (B1, B2, or Visa Waiver Program).

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## Student Responsibilities

### Eligibility Requirements

- Be pursuing an undergraduate or graduate degree at an institution of higher education. Visiting Students must maintain enrollment in their degree program throughout the duration of their appointment at MIT.
- Be invited by an MIT faculty member from a department or laboratory to do academic research in their field of studies.
- All research must be conducted on the MIT campus.
- Visiting Students should be the primary beneficiary of the visit.

### Restrictions

- Current MIT regular or special students, or MIT students who have withdrawn or are on a leave of absence, cannot apply for visiting student status.
- Visiting Students cannot enroll in MIT courses which include audit or listener status.

## Responsibilities

Student will need to submit the following documents to the Visiting Student Portal for review by the department:

- Curriculum Vitae
- Transcripts
- Letter of recommendation
- Completed standard IPIA

After the OGE review, the student is then instructed to submit an application in iMIT and to begin completing their onboarding tasks:

- Orientation with the International Students Office. Available orientations can be found online in iMIT under the “Events” section
- iMIT Online Check in. The student must complete this after they arrive on campus.
- Financial Payment of Visiting Student Fees. The invoice becomes available 14 days prior to the student’s program start date.
- Sexual Harassment Training

## Housing

- Visiting Students are eligible to apply for vacancies in MIT dorms. Students should contact Graduate Housing with any questions.
- Off-campus housing resources can be found here: <https://www.mitoffcampus.com>

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## Department Responsibilities

### Requirements of Host Department

- Certificate of English Proficiency Form
  - This document is required by administrators to certify that a prospective J-1 student has sufficient proficiency in the English language to successfully participate in their program and function on a day-to-day basis.
- Mentoring Plan
  - Faculty-created mentoring plan required for visits longer than 6 weeks, with DLC contact designated to monitor progress / be a resource.
- Processing Fee
  - One time \$1,000 fee to be paid only by the host PI or host DLC's discretionary funds. Visiting Students are prohibited from paying or reimbursing the host for this charge.
- Final Evaluation
  - Host PI must complete a final evaluation at the conclusion of the student's appointment, even if shorter than six weeks for visa compliance issues.

### Responsibilities

- Add request to Visiting Student Portal.
- Interface with the PI host and the Visiting Student about details of the visit.

Attempts to circumvent program standards may result in a suspension of privileges to host visiting students (i.e. inviting students on a tourist visa to do research).

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## **Other Responsibilities**

### **ISO**

- Issues DS2019
- Conducts Visiting Student Orientation
- Conducts exit interview survey with departing Visiting Students

### **Office of the Vice Chancellor for Undergraduate and Graduate Education**

- Adjudicates policy exception requests
- Sets Visiting Student Fee

### **Student Financial Services**

- Processes refunds due to visit date changes after the Department Administrator has requested a refund via the student's profile in the VS Portal.

### **MIT Health - Student Insurance Office**

- Administers MIT Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP)