

Guidelines for Non-U.S. Citizens

U.S. citizenship is not required for participation in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Research Participation Program. (Note: U.S. citizenship may be required for some positions.) All appointment offers are contingent upon having a valid immigration status.

ORAU is an approved sponsor of an Exchange Visitor (J visa) Program and will work with participants and their families to obtain a valid immigration status. Recent graduates with an F-1 status may also be eligible for participation.

Lawful Permanent Residents

Lawful Permanent Residents (green card holders) may participate in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Research Participation Program. ORAU does not sponsor green card applications, nor do we assist with the process.

J-1/J-2 Status

ORAU can sponsor J-1 status (research scholar and short-term scholar categories only) for selected, eligible participants who do not already have another appropriate authorization. If a candidate already has a J-1 status and is currently in the United States as a “research scholar,” he/she may be eligible for a transfer from his/her current sponsor’s program.

The maximum duration of a J-1 status depends on the category. ORISE participants generally fall under the category of research scholar. In this case, the J-1 duration can be for up to, but not to exceed, five years. ORAU also uses the short-term scholar category which allows for up to, but not to exceed, six months of participation.

A J-1 exchange visitor’s spouse, and unmarried children under the age of 21 years, may be eligible to apply for J-2 status. A J-2 dependent (if age appropriate) is eligible to apply for authorization to work by requesting an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). ORAU cannot help to obtain visas for other, non-immediate family members who wish to visit, but we can provide a letter that confirms the J-1 participant’s association with our organization.

J-2 dependents with valid EAD cards are eligible to participate in this program, assuming all other requirements (degree, discipline, etc.) are met.

The J-1 program is a non-immigrant program and as such recipients are expected to return to their home country after completing their exchange visitor program. All J-1 recipients in our program are subject to the two-year home physical presence requirement due to receiving government funding. It is possible to request a waiver of this requirement. ORISE does not assist with the application process. *If a participant receives a favorable recommendation for a waiver, he/she will **only** be eligible to finish the currently authorized J-1 time **without** extensions or transfers to a different J-1 program.*

Health insurance is required for the J-1 recipient and for all J-2 dependents. Failure to maintain the appropriate insurance would result in termination of J-1 authorization for the participant and dependents. Such circumstances would require leaving the program and the United States.

Travel outside the United States is permitted for J-1 recipients, subject to the following conditions:

As the sponsoring organization, ORAU must validate your DS-2019 form, showing that you are currently in good standing in the Exchange Visitor (J-1) Program. We also prepare a letter that describes your association with our organization and includes approximate dates of departure and return.

If the travel is for official program business (related to the research project) you will need to obtain ORISE approval of the trip. For more information, please refer to the ORAU\ORISE travel policies at www.orau.org/travel.

F1 Status

Under certain circumstances, candidates with F-1 status may be eligible to participate. ORAU\ORISE will work with those participants to determine eligibility. *For candidates planning to use an F1 immigration status for participation in this program, pre- or post-completion F1-Optional Practical Training (OPT) is acceptable; however, you are not eligible for the 17/24 month STEM OPT extension because you will not be entering into an employee/employment relationship with ORAU, ORISE, DOE, or your hosting facility.*

H-1B Status

Because the Research Participation Programs are educational/training programs, and not employment programs, ORAU cannot sponsor participants with H-1B status. A selected participant who already holds H-1B status would need to apply and qualify to change to J-1 status in order to join the program. (H-1B status is employer- and site-specific.)

B-1/B-2 Status

B-1/B-2 statuses are not appropriate for these ORISE programs.