

Are international students eligible to do an internship?

YES! F-1 and J-1 visa students are eligible to apply for practical training work authorization (CPT for F-1) to do an internship through their school or sponsoring organization, which in most cases would be the University at Albany. Generally, F-1 students must complete two semesters before they are eligible for an off-campus internship.

Why should I hire an international student?

International students have the *legal right, competence, and ability to do an internship in the United States.* They can provide a unique perspective that adds richness to your organization. Your organization will also be participating in the important principle of diversity, equity, and inclusion!

Do I have to sponsor an international student for their internship?

NO! *F-1 and J-1 students are sponsored by UAlbany or their J-1 program sponsor.* The University, along with the International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS) Office authorizes the practical training.

I do not want to fill out paperwork to hire an international student, what's required?

Beyond a basic offer letter that includes some key details (dates of internship, hours per week, duties & responsibilities) and I-9 Form, which an employer would customarily provide for any non-international interns or employees, ***no additional paperwork will be required!*** UAlbany will review this before granting the international student work authorization.

How quickly can an international student start their internship?

From the time a student submits a complete CPT request, students can expect to receive approval within one week from the UAlbany International Student & Scholar Services if they meet all eligibility requirements to start their internship.

How long can international students do an internship for?

Generally, enrolled students using CPT can obtain work authorization ***one semester at a time***, and generally are limited to ***working part-time (up to 20 hours/week) during the fall or spring semester.*** More hours are allowed in the **summer.**

Does it cost money to have an international student to do an internship?

No, practical training has no costs for the employer or the student. If it is a paid internship, the international student would be compensated accordingly.

What's OPT?

OPT, or optional practical training, is work authorization recommended by a F-1 student's University and approved by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS-USCIS). F-1 students authorized for OPT are issued an "EAD" (Employment Authorization Document) from DHS.

How long can a student work on OPT?

Students on an authorized OPT period are allowed to engage in training directly related to their major and typically will be able to work for 12 months. If a student has a STEM degree, they may be able to work up to 36 months if certain requirements are met.

How long does it take for the student to get OPT?

Processing times for DHS-USCIS vary, but tend to take between 1.5 to 3 months. Post-completion OPT employment (i.e. after a student graduates) may only begin *after* a student completes their course of study in their respective degree and has the EAD in hand.

Is there a cost to support the student's OPT?

No, the employer *incurs no costs* for the OPT. The student is responsible for the filing fee with DHS-USCIS.

What are the requirements for an employer to sponsor OPT?

***Employers do not have any additional reporting requirements* for students on Post-Completion OPT.**

What are the additional requirements to sponsor a STEM OPT?

Students with STEM degrees may be eligible *for an additional 24 months of employment authorization*. STEM OPT does have some requirements for employers, including helping a student complete and maintain an I-983 training plan; reporting an end in employment; and the employer must be enrolled in E-Verify.

What happens after OPT ends for a student?

In order for a student to continue working after the OPT ends, they must have some other form of U.S. work authorization, such as an employment-sponsored visa like a H1-B. ***Some employers sponsor for work visas beyond an OPT but this is not required.***