

Visa Application Process (Penn State)

The correct visa for this process is the **J-1 (Exchange Visitor) visa**. To obtain this visa you must attend an interview at the embassy in Stockholm. Times for a visa interview are organised at the embassy's website:

<http://stockholm.usembassy.gov/Consulate/book.html>

Remember to bring all the necessary documents; otherwise you will be wasting your time going!

Interview times specify the approximate time you will begin queuing to enter the embassy. Visa applicants queue in the street outside the embassy (expect at least an hour in the queue.) You will then go through a security check (they also perform an initial check of your documentation) before being admitted to the embassy.

Once inside, you submit your documentation to a member of staff and then wait (expect at least an hour here as well) until your documentation is processed. Eventually you are called to an interview. If all is in order with your application, your documents are returned to you and you are free to leave. Your passport, with your visa stamp, will be sent to you within a few days.

What you need for the visa application interview.

Here is an overview of the visa documentation requirements. You must bring ALL these documents with you to the interview. This list should be complete, but for more detailed info check out the embassy's website address given above.

Forms required

1: DS-2019 form: This is the ONLY form issued to you by Penn State!

2: Electronic DS-156 form: This is filled in on-line at the embassy's website and then printed out. Remember to sign it.

You also need a colour passport style photo attached to this form.

3: DS-157 form (Can be downloaded at [DS-157 in English/DS-157 på svenska](#))

4: DS-158 form (Can be downloaded at [DS-158 in English/DS-158 på svenska](#))

Fees to pay and associated documentation

5: Original receipt for visa fee: of **1050 SEK** paid into bankgiro 5452-8948. The receipt must state applicants' names, amount paid and bankgiro number. Internet receipts will not be accepted.

6: Proof of payment of the SEVIS fee. You must pay a fee called SEVIS, which is required for all student and exchange visa applicants presenting DS-2019 forms. This is done on-line and they post the receipt to you from the USA. However, once you complete payment you also get confirmation of payment online, which can be printed out and which (I THINK) is sufficient to show you have paid the fee. If so, it is unnecessary to pay for express posting from the USA...Instructions on how to pay can be found on <https://www.fmjfee.com/index.jhtml>.

Other documents

7: Personbevis: Ask for a "120-personbevis med alla relationer" from the Swedish tax authorities (skattemyndigheten). This can be posted or faxed to you.

8: Proof of funds to cover all expenses: You must prove that you have enough funds to cover your expenses in the USA. Examples of such proof may be a CSN letter, scholarship, or bank statement. The amount required is specified on the DS-2019 form sent to you by Penn State.

9: Passport: In good condition.

Other things

10: A self-addressed envelope: this will be used to send your visa-stamped passport back to you. You must attach the required stamps in advance. The envelope will only contain your passport, and should therefore be a suitable size. Postage must total 61 SEK.

And that's it!

A few other things:

(a) If you are a teacher student and are going to do a VFU at the local school (State College), officially you are going to be an exchange student on the teaching program at Penn State. It will only complicate your visa status to mention that you will not actually be attending classes at Penn State University. This applies to both the visa interview and when you are entering the USA at the airport.

(b) You will be required to fill in an address in the USA where you will be living. If you do not know this, perhaps you can use the home address of your contact (Professor Myers?) at Penn State.

(c) The process is a lot of work and organising all the required documentation can take an unexpectedly long time, so start early! However, it is all worth it in the end!