



Washington University in St. Louis is home to more than 3,000 international students from 85 different countries. International students bring a global business outlook, diverse perspectives and specialized skills to our community and their future employers. While hiring international students may seem like a daunting process, the reward is great. WashU Olin’s Weston Career Center will provide the bridge between these exceptional candidates and your business’ needs. There are many misconceptions about the sponsorship process. The reality is, it’s not as difficult as you may think.

**INTERNSHIPS**

International students have the opportunity to seek legal full-time employment (typically between spring and fall semesters) through Curricular Practical Training (CPT).

Internships that are an integral part of the student’s coursework or degree program are covered under CPT, meaning that international students **can work** and **do not need further sponsorship** for a summer internship. Approval of CPT is provided by Washington University—that means **it’s no more difficult, with no extra paperwork, to hire an international student than a domestic student.**

**FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT**

After graduation, Optional Practical Training (OPT) allows for all F-1 international students to pursue full-time employment in their direct field of study for up to 12 months in the United States. This period could be extended an additional 24 months if the degree qualifies for STEM extension.

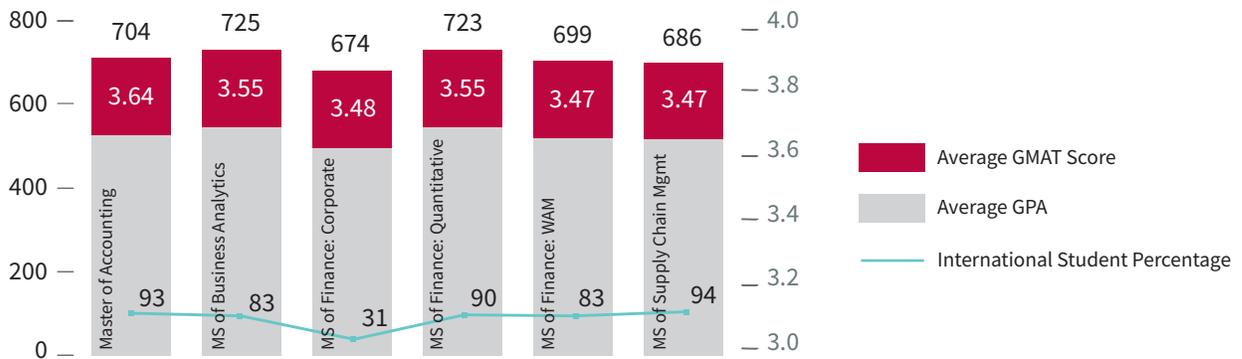
During this period of OPT, there is **no additional cost to the employer**, and the employee is lawfully authorized to work. Now is the perfect time to begin H-1B sponsorship applications.

**The Benefits of Hiring International Students**

**1. Fill the skills gap with STEM-designated roles**

According to Randstad Data findings, the United States has three million STEM jobs available without people to fill them. WashU Olin’s international students are considered some of the most talented in their countries, and they often have stellar academic performances. They are highly skilled and intelligent individuals who will add value to your organization.

**Specialized Masters Program Student Population Breakdown**



**2. Global business perspective**

Many international students have studied business in their home countries, as well as in the United States. They understand the global complexities of business and know that markets will only continue to globalize in the future.

**3. Bilingual and firsthand cultural experience of home country**

Exceptional language skills and an aptitude for cross-cultural relations are invaluable assets to any business looking to grow overseas.

**4. Distinctive and diverse perspectives lead to innovation**

International students increase diversity and bring unique perspectives that challenge the status quo and broaden horizons.

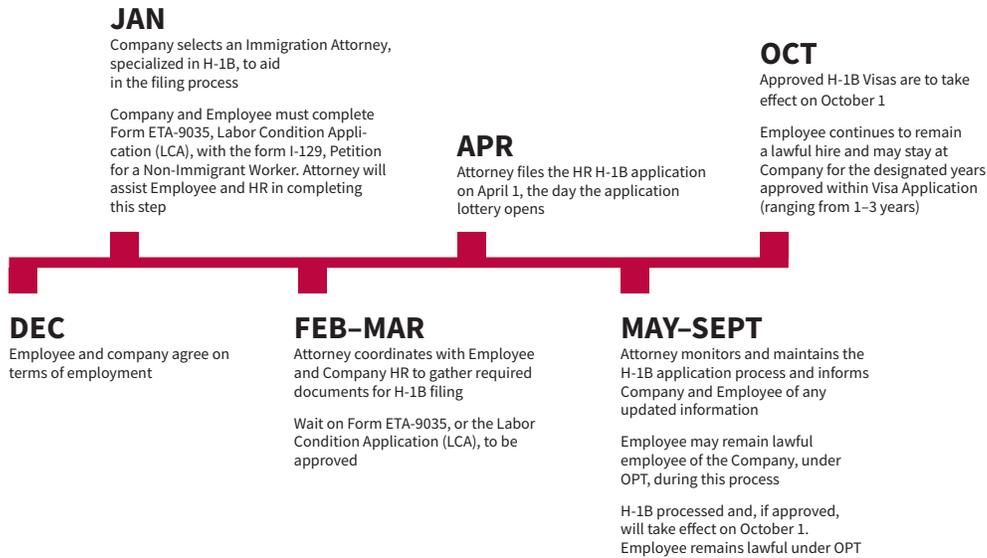
**5. International student retention rates far exceed that of US students**

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ 2018 Employee Tenure Report, international sponsored students are more likely to stay in a job two to four times as long as domestic students. And that’s for ages 20 to 24 and 25 to 34. **On the other hand, a student who is sponsored is more likely to stay the duration of their sponsorship, as the process of changing jobs is rather difficult. Sponsorship encourages loyalty and hard work in the sponsored employee, making them willing to work for their sponsoring employer for their three-year H-1B sponsorship period, which can be renewed for up to three more years, for a total of six years sponsorship.**

**Retention Rates of US Citizens to Sponsored International Students**

	US Citizens	International Students
Ages 20–24	1.2 years	3–6 years
Ages 25–34	2.8 years	3–6 years

## Typical Timeline for an H-1B Visa



## H-1B Visa Job Requirements

- Must have an employer and employee relationship
- Job must qualify as a specialty occupation, requiring a Bachelor's degree or the equivalent in specialized knowledge of a certain field
- Job must be in the prospective employee's direct field of study
- Pay must be at least the actual or prevailing wage for the occupation
- H-1B Visa must be available at the time of filing the petition

## Increasing the Odds of Sponsorship

While sponsorship is based on a lottery system, with applicants randomly selected based on a computer algorithm, there are ways you can increase the odds of your applicant making it through.

### APPLY EARLY

The preparation and application process usually takes about two to four weeks to gather and complete required forms and information. Attorneys can file H-1B petitions on the application window opening date of April 1. The cap for H-1B applications is generally reached within the first five days of the application window opening, so filing quickly is key. Being well prepared before the window will lead to fewer mistakes and misfiling, which can unnecessarily disqualify a potential applicant when the window opens.

### INCREASED ODDS FOR GRADUATE DEGREES

Starting in FY 2020, according to Bloomberg Law, students holding M.S. degrees have a 16% better likelihood of sponsorship compared to previous years. The new legislation states that M.S. and Ph.D. graduates will be placed first in the lottery pool of 65,000 applicants, which includes all applicants. If not selected within that pool, they are moved into the pool of 20,000 applicants of advanced degree holders from U.S. universities for further consideration. Based on the FY 2018 applications, 95,000 were M.S. and Ph.D. graduates out of 199,000—that would mean 5,340 more visas given to M.S. and Ph.D. graduates under this new legislation.

### APPLICANT DROP

FY 2018 saw a 15.7% drop in H-1B applications filed by employers (from 236,000 in FY17 to 199,000 in FY18). While the competition is decreasing and the odds of being selected are increasing, now is the opportune time to sponsor an international student.

**199K** total applicants

**95K** advanced degree applicants

**85K** annual visa quota

**16%** increased odds for MS students

**5,340** more visas for advanced degree holders

## Frequently Asked Questions

### WHAT DOES A SPONSORSHIP COST?

The total cost depends on each law firm but can generally be expected to cost approximately \$5,000 to \$7,000. This includes the immigration attorney fees as well as USCIS filing fees.

### WHEN DO STUDENTS NEED FURTHER VISA SPONSORSHIP?

At graduation, international students retain their F-1 visa status; through OPT, they can legally work full-time for 12 months—or up to 36 months with a STEM OPT extension. During this period, an employer can sponsor the international student for an H-1B visa. This allows an employer to retain talent for up to three more years of work-authorized employment, with a possible three-year extension, for total H-1B sponsorship time of up to six years.

Information is subject to change; we are not professional attorneys.

## For more information regarding visas, contact:

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Weston Career Center

OLIN BUSINESS SCHOOL AT WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY