

Frequently Requested Information - Applying for a Business (B-1) Visitor Visa

Letter of Invitation

- A "Letter of invitation" is supplementary information that explains a visa applicant's intended purpose of travel. U.S. Embassies and Consulates do not have one specific format that these letters must follow. Consular officers look at the totality of an applicant's personal situation in determining visa eligibility. Supporting documents, such as a "letter of invitation", are often useful, but are not decisive in determining an applicant's visa eligibility. Mere possession of a letter of invitation from a U.S. source will not necessarily guarantee that the holder will receive a visa.
- A "letter of invitation" should state the specific purpose of the travel (conference, meeting, etc.), and the anticipated duration of the trip. The letter should be clear, concise and provide detailed information about the relationship between the inviter and invitee and the invitee's purpose of travel.
- Provide additional important information in the letter, specifically, whether the U.S. inviter will provide any funding for the traveler. Explain any sponsorship for the meeting (if applicable). The letter should explain if translators are being provided for the meeting or if the meeting will be conducted in a foreign language, it is helpful to explain this. Contact information referenced in the letter for both the inviter and invitee should be up-to-date.
- Consular officers expect that a "letter of invitation" will be both written and signed by the inviter. Typos, misspellings and grammatical errors detract from the credibility of an invitation letter.

Bring the Letter of Invitation and Supporting Documents to the Interview

- Any supporting documentation, including the letter of invitation, should be provided directly to the applicant to take with him/her to the U.S. Embassy or Consulate when he/she applies for a U.S. visa.
- Copies of "letters of invitation" should not be forwarded separately to the U.S. Embassy or Consulate.

Interview Preparation

- Applicants should be able to answer specific and detailed questions related to their purpose of travel, business dealings with the inviter, and their general business relations (as appropriate, depending on their job responsibilities).
- Applicants should be able to provide complete travel itineraries and (if appropriate) training schedules.
- Applicants who claim to have existing relationships with their inviters, or other U.S. entities, should provide clear proof of these relationships, for instance through purchase orders, correspondence, etc.
- Applicants should be able to explain how the applicant's visit will be funded.
- NOTE: Proof of purchase of an airline ticket is not an item requested by the embassy to document your itinerary for your trip. No assurances regarding the issuance of visas can be given in advance. Therefore, final travel plans or the purchase of non-refundable ticket should not be made until a visa has been issued and you are in receipt of the passport.