

Applying for an F-1 Visa

To provide time for visa processing, students are encouraged to apply for their visa as soon as they receive their I-20 issued by Sofia University. U.S. Embassies or U.S. Consulates are able to issue F-1 entry visas up to **365 days** before the program start date listed on your I-20.

In most countries, student visa applicants must appear in person for the visa interview. However, each U.S. Embassy or U.S. Consulate sets its own interview policies and procedures. Students should consult the specific embassy website or call for application instructions; visit the [Website of U.S. Embassies, Consulates, and Diplomatic Missions](#) for more information.

The following documents are typically required for the F-1 visa application:

- Online Non-immigrant Visa Application Form (DS-160) confirmation page
- Visa application fee payment receipt (visit the U.S. Embassy or U.S. Consulate website for specific instructions)
- Form I-20 issued by DSO
- Valid passport (the passport should be valid for at least six months after your date of entry into the U.S.)
- Evidence of financial support (proof of sufficient funds for estimated cost of one academic year)
- Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) I-901 fee payment receipt
- A copy of your acceptance letter from Sofia University
- One photograph ([see the U.S. Department of State website for photo requirements](#))

Additional Documents to consider:

- Personal Curriculum Vitae
- Program acceptance letter
- Academic Advisor's Curriculum Vitae
- English TOEFL Test Scores or Transcripts if needed

All applicants should be prepared to provide additional information, such as transcripts or diplomas from previously attended institutions, or documents which demonstrate that the applicant intends to return home after their studies. Dependents will receive their own I-20 with a SEVIS identification to apply for the F-2 visa. Dependents are not required to pay the SEVIS fee. While it is encouraged that applicants be prepared with additional supporting documents, it is important that they only present the documents requested by the visa officer. Applicants should be prepared to answer questions of the visa officer, directly and honestly.

We recommend that visa applicants review this information on [preparing your application and attending your visa interview](#).

No assurances regarding the issuance of visas can be given in advance. Therefore, final travel plans, or the purchase of non-refundable tickets should not be made until a visa has been issued. After the visa has been issued, please be sure the F-1 visa stamp in your passport is accurate and that your original I-20 has been returned to you as you will need to have it in hand when entering the U.S.