

**Expansion of National Interest Exception Travel**  
**Students, Business Travelers, Investors, and Academics**  
**UPDATED: 15 JULY 2020**

**Eligible Travelers**

On July 10th, 2020, Washington announced that certain travelers from Schengen area countries could resume traveling to the United States if, as determined by a Consular Officer, they qualify as a National Interest Exception (NIE) to President Trump's March 11, 2020 Presidential Proclamation that suspended routine travel from the Schengen Area to the United States. Those traveling as students (F1 and M1), researchers (certain J1 programs), investors (E2), or business travel (B1) may be eligible for the exception. Effective July 15, 2020, the following travelers may apply to be considered for the NIE:

- **Economic:** Temporary travel that provides a substantial economic benefit to the U.S. economy. Examples may include:
  - **Technical experts and specialists** to install, service, maintain, or receive training for vessels, machinery and other specialized equipment used by U.S. and foreign firms with a substantial investment in the United States. Travel is temporary in nature and of a defined period.
  - **Senior-level managers and executives**, and their dependents, who provide strategic direction necessary for the success of the company or venture.
  - **Professional athletes, dependents, and essential staff** who enter the United States to participate in major sporting events, which bolster the U.S. economy.
  
- **Investors:** Travel in connection with investment or trade in the U.S. economy that generates a substantial economic impact, including **investors** and **treaty-traders** and the senior-level employees who provide strategic direction or expertise essential to the success of the investment, and their dependents.
  
- **Students:** All students, and their dependents, traveling to the United States to:
  - Pursue a full course of study per INA 101(a)(15)(F);
  - Pursue a full course of study per INA 101(a)(15)(M); or
  - Participate in an exchange program as a bona fide student.
  
- **Academics:** All exchange visitors and their dependents traveling to the United States under INA 101(a)(15)(J) in the following categories:
  - Professors
  - Research Scholars
  - Short Term Scholars
  - Specialists

### Students with Valid Visas

Students with an existing F or M visa may travel to the United States and apply for admission on their current, valid visa, so long as they are in possession of a valid I-20. Students are advised to contact their Designated School Official (DSO) to ensure their course of study meets all DHS requirements before they book their travel.

### Non-Student Travelers with Valid Visas or ESTA

Travelers that already have valid visas or ESTAs and believe they qualify for an NIE for economic, investor, or exchange visitor related purposes must verify with a Consular official that they qualify. To do so, travelers should send the following information, along with supporting documentation, to [luxembourgconsular@state.gov](mailto:luxembourgconsular@state.gov) (**Luxembourg only** – if you are outside of Luxembourg, you should send the information to the embassy or consulate that originally issued the visa. In the case of an ESTA, travelers should send the information to the embassy or a consulate in their home country.) Supporting documents may include letter of invitation, confirmation of participation in a conference, etc. Please allow three business days to review your documents and qualifications. You will be notified by e-mail if you meet the NIE requirements. Print out that e-mail as confirmation of your excepted status.

Name as It Appears on Passport:

Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY):

Passport #:

Passport Date of Issuance:

Reason for Travel:

Proposed Itinerary:

E-mail:

Phone #:

### Travelers Without a Visa

Travelers that do not yet have their required visas and that believe that they fall in to one of the excepted travel statuses should apply for their visa as normal. Please visit the Embassy website or [travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov) to begin your application process.

### Limitations of NIE Travel

Although travelers approved for a national interest exception for **economic and investor** related travel will be issued full validity visas, the exception is valid only for 30 days from the date of approval and is valid for a single entry to the United States. An individual who departs the United States and wishes to return must be re-assessed for a national interest exception.

**Students and academic researchers** do not need to be re-approved for each entry to the United States. F and J visa travelers are reminded that they must still meet all Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) requirements.

*All individuals are reminded that their admission remains subject to a determination by Customs and Border Protection officers at ports of entry and that they may be subject to a 14-day quarantine upon arrival. DHS requires travelers using a NIE waiver to fly into one of 15 specifically designated airports found [here](#).*