

INTERNATIONAL FACULTY & SCHOLARS

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GUIDELINES FOR APPLYING FOR PERMANENT RESIDENCY

The International Faculty & Scholars (IFS) office assists departments wishing to support individuals in the permanent residency (PR) petitioning process. There are several categories which may be used to petition US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for PR. The two (2) categories used by IFS to petition USCIS for PR for University employees are “Outstanding Professor/Researcher” and “Optional Recruitment” formerly known as “Special Handling.”

For a university department to support a foreign national (FN) in the PR process, in either of the above categories, the following criteria *must* be met:

- Full-time position;
- FN must have no plans to cease employment while the PR petition is pending; and
- Position must be permanent in nature. The sponsoring department must write a Department Letter of Support (template available) stating the permanent nature of the position. USCIS defines permanent as “tenured, tenure-track or for an indefinite or unlimited duration of which employee has expectation of continued employment unless there is good cause for termination.” Permanent does not mean forever.

Some departments may wish to sponsor FNs who do not hold a permanent position with the University. Such cases must be handled by one (1) of the outside immigration attorneys at the expense of either the department or the individual. Only UA approved attorneys are authorized to represent the University of Arizona in immigration matters. IFS will not sign documents prepared by unauthorized attorneys, nor may individual departments. Please contact IFS for list of authorized attorneys.

To ensure appropriate deadlines are met, departments should initiate the PR process as follows:

Optional Recruitment: Immediately upon the start date of the faculty employment at UA, but no later than eighteen (18) months from the date the selection committee chose the FN for the position.

Outstanding Professor/Researcher: After (3) years post Ph.D. and the completion of one (1) full year in H-1B status, but no later than the beginning of the FNs fifth year in H-1B status. For example, if Dr. Smith’s H-1B status began 3/1/2005, begin the PR process on 3/1/2006, but no later than 3/1/2010.

To determine which category is the most appropriate, please contact IFS via email and include updated CV, and Google Scholar Report, <https://scholar.google.com/>.

IFS does not guarantee favorable adjudication of any petitions submitted to USCIS.