

Instructions for Visa Application

1. Fermilab must issue an Invitation Letter to each attendee. The Invitation Letter must confirm the general reason for the invitation (to attend meeting) and the general duration of the attendance. The invitation letter should refer to the meetings as a symposium.
2. The visitor's home institution also should issue a letter. The letter MUST explain who the visitor is, and (briefly) his/her credentials. The letter must confirm that the individual's connections to the home institution (title, job, tenure, nature of appointment, etc.) and confirm that it is anticipated that the individual will return to the home institution at the conclusion of the meetings. If possible, the letter also should say that the home institution wants the individual to attend the meetings because the information and discussions will be valuable to the continued work the individual will perform for the home institution upon return back home after the meetings.
3. The visitor then can apply to the consulate in his or her home country or country of current residence for a B-1 visa, or enter without a visa using the Visa Waiver Program. If they cannot get a visa appointment soon enough, they should look into the consulate's "expedite" procedures, or call back frequently as appointments will open up because of cancellations. During the interview at the Consulate, they should ask when a decision might be made. If the decision will be made too late to enable the individual to come to the school, then they should explain this during the interview so that the consular officer knows. If it appears that the decision will be too late regardless, they should contact us and we will see what we can do. If the "anticipated" decision date passes and there is no news, they again should contact us and we will see what we can do.
4. When the visitor enters the U.S., it is EXTREMELY important that the immigration officer at the airport writes "WB" or "VWB" or "B-1" on the I-94 card. Whatever is written should not have a "T" in it. "T" represents tourist status, and we cannot let visitors into the Lab facilities if they hold tourist status, so if a "T" status is issued we would have to send the visitor back to the Chicago airport to get this corrected. It is much easier if the visitor simply reads the card while still with the immigration officer, and if there is an error to have it corrected then.

If anyone has questions, they can contact the Visa Office at visaoffice@fnal.gov.