

Dear Chairs and Center Directors,

As we approach the coming academic year, I am sharing important information from both the Controller's Office and the Office of the Vice President and General Counsel regarding visa payment restrictions for foreign nationals coming to Brown. This information has serious implications for how we invite international researchers, visiting scholars, and prospective students to Brown and we strongly recommend that you review this and share it with members of your department, including relevant faculty and staff.

**Foreign National visitors who enter the United States with a B-2 visa or the visa waiver equivalent, Visa Waiver Tourist (VWT), are not permitted to receive payment or reimbursement.** Per the U.S. Customs and Immigration Services (USCIS) a B-2 or VWT non-immigrant is one who is seeking admission for activities relating to pleasure, namely touring, vacations, or family visits. An honorarium for services performed on behalf of an organization or the reimbursement of travel expenses is not consistent with the interpretation of the visitor for pleasure.

**Key action items are as follows:**

- When you invite a colleague or prospective student to visit Brown, let them know that they should **not enter the U.S. on a B2 visa or its visa waiver equivalent, VWT: They cannot receive any payment or reimbursement with this visa type.** Generally, a person coming to the U.S. in B-1 status or under the VWB has far fewer reimbursement/payment restrictions. In their letter of invitation, which they will require for a B-1 visa, state the business reason that they are visiting Brown University. Sample letters can be found on the OISSS [website](#).
- The [University has created a useful chart](#) regarding payment and related implications for different visa holders that we encourage you to consult when preparing to invite a foreign national to campus.
- Consult with your Department Manager before the invitation and/or arrival of your visitor. Department Managers have received training on these requirements and know whom to contact in the Controller's Office if they have any questions.

Please also feel free to reach out to the Office of Global Engagement 401-863-9720 if you have any questions about this information or future invitations.

Best wishes for a successful academic year,

Shankar K. Prasad  
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