

Home Institution Letter for U.S. Business Visa (B1)

We strongly recommend that when you apply for B-1 visas for the conference, you obtain a support letter from your home institution *in addition* to the invitation letter from the conference.

The following issues should be addressed in the Home Institution Letter:

1. It *must* explain who you are, your credentials. It also must confirm the dates of your visit, and that you will return to your home institution after the visit ends.
2. It *should* list:
 1. (if you are employed), your job title and department within the institution where you are employed, confirm the amount of your salary, and confirm that you will continue to be paid your salary by your home institution while you are visiting the U.S.
 2. (if you still are a student), your program of studies, level of studies and expected graduation date, as well as any wages or funding you receive.
 3. If the letter does not explain how you will finance the trip to the U.S. and support yourself while in the U.S., the Consulate will require other information about your means of support and funding.
3. It should be specific about the nature of your activities – research, meetings, analysis, discussions, conferences, etc. The letter should *not*:
 1. describe your activities in the U.S. as “work” because this can be misunderstood by immigration officers as being “employment” (which is prohibited to business visitors), or
 2. describe the event as “school” because this can be misunderstood by immigration officers, and they will require a “student” F-1 or J-1 visa. (To immigration officers, only institutions that issue degrees or certificates are “schools.”)
4. (if coming for a workshop, conference or school), confirm that the home institution is sending you to attend the event because the information and discussions will be valuable to the continued work you will perform for the home institution upon returning home.

If your Home Institution Letter does not properly address these issues, the U.S. immigration Office might not admit you into the U.S.