

# The VISA WAIVER PROGRAM

The Visa Waiver Program allows citizens of certain countries to enter the U.S. as non-immigrants for 90 days or less for business (WB) or pleasure (WT). This status cannot be extended or changed under any circumstances.

As of November 2008, citizens of the following countries are eligible for the Visa Waiver Program:

Andorra	Iceland	Norway	
Australia	Ireland	Portugal	Czech Republic
Austria	Italy	San Marino	Estonia
Belgium	Japan	Singapore	Latvia
Brunei	Liechtenstein	Slovenia	Lithuania
Denmark	Luxembourg	Spain	Hungary
Finland	Monaco	Sweden	Republic of Korea
France	the Netherlands	Switzerland	the Slovak Republic
Germany	New Zealand	United Kingdom	

Citizens of the countries above do not need to obtain visas at a U.S. consulate. They need to:

- Carry a valid passport issued by one of the above countries;
- Show evidence they plan to return home in 90 days (roundtrip airline ticket);
- Show proof of financial support while in the U.S. (bank statement);
- Show letter of invitation from PI at Scripps; see letter examples on back
- Complete a Visa Waiver Form;
- Apply for Visa Waiver Program at any port of entry including Tijuana or the Canadian border.

Visitors for pleasure (tourists) will receive "WT" status; visitors for business will receive "WB" status.

**Prospective WB visitors to Scripps must be prepared to clearly state intended activities at Scripps and avoid the "WT" designation.**

WB visitors can be reimbursed for expenses and, if eligible, honoraria. Consult with the International Office for more information.

**This status should not be used if there is any possibility the visitor may want to stay longer, change status or accept U.S. employment.**

## Sample invitation letters from PI to prospective WB

1. Dear

It is a pleasure for me to invite you to collaborate in my Laboratory of **Name** at The Scripps Research Institute (TSRI) between **Specific Dates**. As a guest researcher in my lab, it is my understanding you will focus on **description of research activity**.

There will be no salary paid to you from TSRI. However, provided you have entered the country in WB status, we will reimburse you for your travel expenses and some incidental cost associated with your stay in La Jolla.

I am looking forward to hosting you.

Sincerely Yours

2. To Whom It May Concern:

This is to certify that Mr/s **Name** been invited to spend two months (**specific dates**) in my laboratory at The Scripps Research Institute, La Jolla, California, USA. The purpose of this temporary stay is to carry out an educational and practical training in the field of **discipline/area of study**. **Name** will also attend seminars regularly held in our Institute.

No salary will be paid to **Name** by the Institute.

This stay should greatly benefit **Name** and her present career as a biology student as well as her future career as a scientist.

Sincerely

-----

3. Dear

I am pleased to offer you an opportunity to collaborate on your science project in our laboratory at The Scripps Research Institute (La Jolla, CA). It is my understanding that your visit will have an estimated start date of **date** and will last no more than 90 days. During your temporary stay no salary will be paid to you. You will, however, be reimbursed for reasonable incidental expenses.

As one of the foremost research institutes in the world, I believe our facilities at TSRI will assist you greatly in completing your project. I am looking forward to collaborating with you.

Sincerely yours,

**The International Office is available to review your letter of invitation to a prospective WB visitor. Email the letter to [tsri\\_global@scripps.edu](mailto:tsri_global@scripps.edu).**