



**TEACH USA**

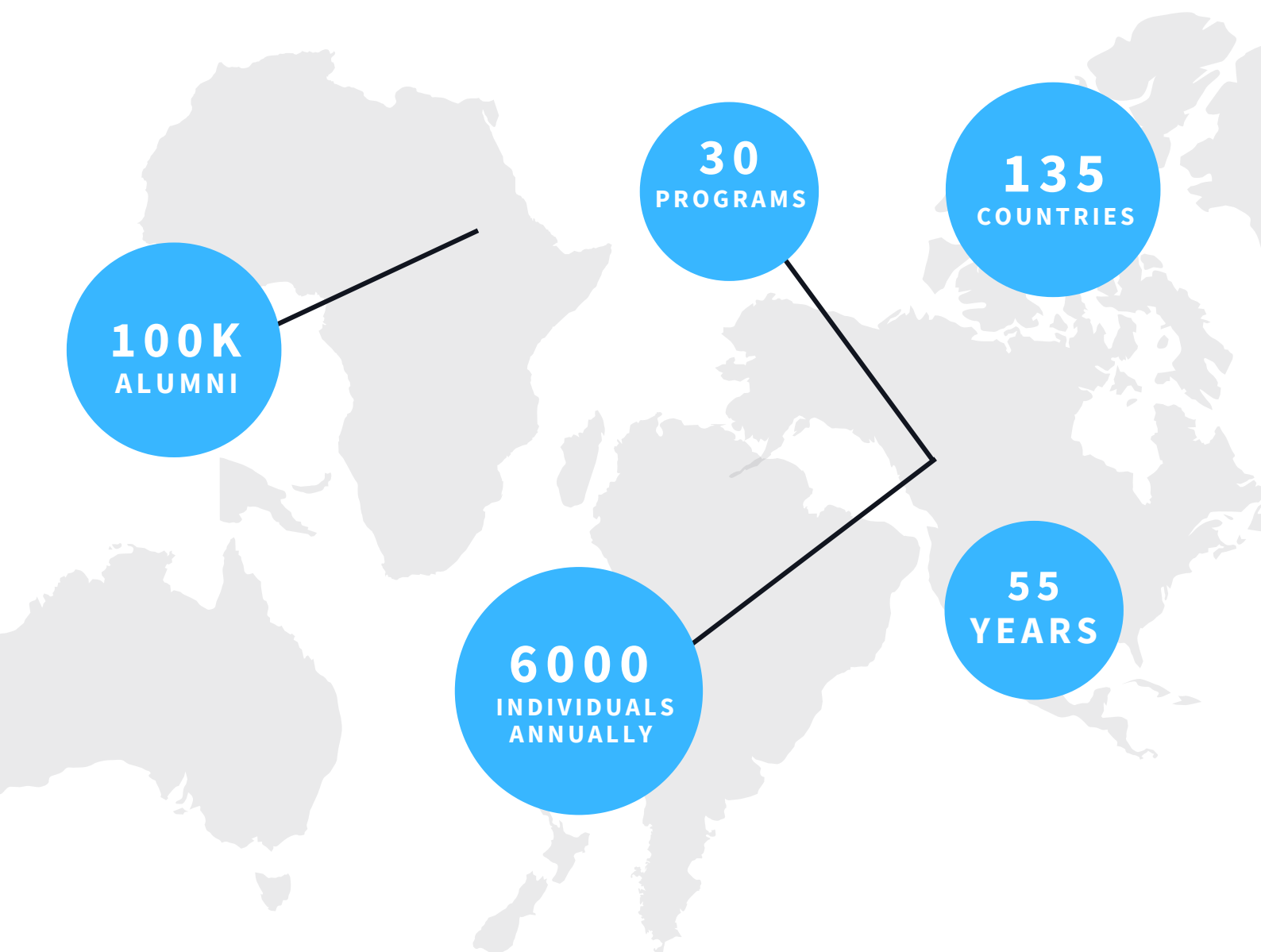
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**Searching for your next  
adventure**



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**WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW**



## A Global Reach

Every year our 30-plus unique exchange programs reach thousands of individuals and organizations in the United States and more than 130 countries around the world. We invite you to join us as we work together to reach thousands more.

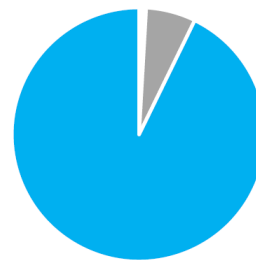
# ABOUT THE COMPANY

Founded in 1963, Cultural Vistas is a nonprofit exchange organization promoting global understanding and collaboration among individuals and institutions. We develop international professional experiences that create more informed, skilled, and engaged citizens. Our programs empower people to drive positive change in themselves, their organizations, and society.

We believe that sustained immersion in a country and language and professional experience, even more than travel or study abroad, promotes confidence and skills that create successful careers and nurture leaders, whether they are community activists or change agents at a global level. Our J-1 Teacher program is just one of 30-plus unique exchanges we do every year.



## Creating Value



**92%**

of teachers rated their school Excellent or Very Good\*

"Encourages exchange of ideas and pedagogical growth for visiting teacher and current teachers alike. Assists with bringing more diversity to our teaching staff."

\*2019-2020 evaluations

# THE BASICS

## BridgeUSA Program

Cultural Vistas is designated by the U.S Department of State to sponsor teacher exchange programs under the wider BridgeUSA Program which seeks to build connections between foreign visitors and Americans in support of public diplomacy. We can sponsor the J-1 Visa necessary for teaching in American primary and secondary schools. This means we are responsible for assessing your qualifications, facilitating your visa application and entry into the U.S. as well as providing resources and guidance throughout your program. Individuals are not able to obtain a J-1 Visa without first receiving approval from a designated J-1 Visa sponsor like Cultural Vistas. These are the basic eligibility requirements:

- ✓ Meets the qualifications for teaching in primary or secondary schools in his or her home country
- ✓ Minimum two years of full-time teaching experience at primary or secondary schools outside of the U.S. (student teaching, internships, etc. do not count)
- ✓ Possesses the equivalent of a four-year Bachelor university degree in education or the subject they plan to teach.
- ✓ Is currently teaching outside the U.S. or, if not, has had at least two years of full-time teaching experience within the past eight years and is currently pursuing an advanced degree in education or the subject you plan to teach/have received such a degree within the past 12 months.
- ✓ Seeks to come to the United States for the purpose of teaching full-time and sharing their culture temporarily and will return home to apply their learning.
- ✓ English proficiency

## Placements

Cultural Vistas is pleased to work with you and find a school position that suits your background. We will assess your resume to determine if you meet basic requirements and share your resume with schools with matching positions. If you have not already completed our Application of Interest and uploaded your resume, please feel free to do so at any time.

### [Application of Interest](#)

Please note that we cannot guarantee placement in specific cities or locales or specific salaries. If you have detailed criteria, you may wish to job search on your own and we hope this guide will help you prepare, research, and secure a position. There are many aspects of teaching in the U.S. you should consider before beginning your job search.

**\*\*Note:** This guide is not meant to be a comprehensive guide to the J-1 Teacher program but is designed to guide you in the search for teaching positions in the U.S. You should still review our website and FAQ for all program details and costs.

# POSITIONS

## What to look for in schools and positions

**School Eligibility:** The school must be a public school (including public charter schools) or accredited, private primary or secondary school offering a position in grades Kindergarten through 12th grade. Schools may offer teaching positions in pre-kindergarten if they are part of a regular course of study in an accredited language-immersion K-12 institution. Schools do not have to be pre-registered with us or have any prior experience hosting international educators.

**Positions:** The J-1 Teacher program allows for full-time positions as teacher of record where the teacher is responsible for delivery of instruction, lesson planning, grading and assessment of student progress. Positions, including duties, responsibilities, hours of employment, and compensation, must be commensurate with those of similarly situated teachers in the school or district. Teachers are expected to meet all applicable state licensing and background check requirements.

- Assistants, aides, administrative positions or other non-instructional positions are not permitted.
- Speech, Language and Hearing pathologists or other occupational services are not permitted.
- Special education teachers may qualify depending on the position.
- Teachers should be assigned to one school and cannot act as itinerant teachers.

### Public, Private or Public Charter?

The type of school where you teach is up to you and your experience.

- Public, tuition-free schools- these are your local schools financed by federal, state and local taxes. Public education in the U.S. is regulated and overseen by each state's department of education and is not a federal system (though there are federal laws that govern some aspects). **We can only sponsor programs in certain states for public schools.**
- [What is a charter school? FAQ](#) Take a look if this term is new to you. These are also public schools. [Additional information](#)
- Private or independent schools are not publicly funded, and families pay tuition to attend at their own choice. Each school governs itself and is not subject to most state education regulation and curriculum. Private schools must be accredited by a third-party academic accrediting body. This is important to ask because many are not due to the cost of this process.



# THE SEARCH

## Hiring timelines

Hiring in the U.S. is an on-going process conducted directly by schools and districts and has no regional or national process. It will start to heat up in the spring after the new year for most schools and goes through the summer. It is very important to keep an eye on timelines and once you get to June, it will become more difficult to obtain a visa in a timely manner and arrive by the start of school. The U.S. academic year generally runs from August-May/June though teachers are often required to start back two weeks before students. It is generally expected that you start at the beginning of term or after winter break in January. Note: We have limited spaces available every year.

[Public vs. Private hiring](#)

## Third-party recruitment agents

In your search you may come across other organizations that specialize in placing international teachers in the U.S. and many of these carry fees for their service, yet they cannot actually sponsor the visa. Please note that we may not be able to accept a position you secure through one of these agencies. In order for J-1 Visa sponsors to work with third parties, we must have an agreement in place. Thus, before you use such an agent, check with us.

## Job Ads

Most schools will directly post available positions on their website or job boards where you can search many positions. Start perusing ads even before you get serious and see what stands out in terms of requirements and terminology. Pay attention to education and experience requirements as well as licensing. Salary information is not necessarily posted but you can find public school salary data online that should give you an idea. Some ads may be for an on-going pool of candidates for the school to draw from when positions become available. Be sure to check if the position is for the current school year or the next since you will likely be applying well in advance.

## Teacher licenses

J-1 Visa holders need to follow state laws regarding licenses, tests, background checks or other mandates for hiring teachers. This is true for public schools and rarely for charter or private schools. Thus, the latter options are a bit simpler if you can skip the license. Applying for a state teaching license will include an application, a fee, documentation from your university including paying for a credentialing expert to assess the equivalency of your degree in U.S. terms, knowledge tests and a criminal background check. The order and timing of these steps vary by state and is very important for you to verify with the school in order to be hired.

# THE SEARCH

## Resume tips

Standards vary across the globe but here are a few tips for U.S. resumes.

- Do not put age, gender, religion, salary, marital status, photos, or non-business/professional social media.
- Do not use a personal email address that is not professional or contains language not appropriate to the workplace.
- Do specify grade levels and subjects when listing positions. It may be helpful to mention ages you taught to clarify your experience. You may use different terms at home than we do to describe levels. Ex. Does Year 5 = 5<sup>th</sup> grade?
- Do list specific dates for your various jobs. Ex. 8/2020-6/2021

## Specialty areas

Math and Science teachers, Special Education and language teachers are in demand in many areas of the U.S. Though you may have experience in these areas, some positions in the U.S. may require a specific degree or number of credit hours in certain courses for you to qualify or obtain the license you need despite your work experience. Be sure to pay close attention to education requirements.

We get a lot of inquiries from people who have years of teaching English in their country. This does not necessarily mean you can be hired to teach English to native English speakers or to speakers of other languages learning English in the U.S. It may be necessary for you to have a specific degree such as [ESL or TESOL](#). It also does not mean you can teach your own language just because you're a native speaker. Remember, you must have a 4-year bachelor's degree in education or the specific subject you teach.

## Finances

Before you begin searching, consider all the costs associated with moving abroad including visa related costs. Many schools may be interested in hiring you but may not have a budget to support your relocation of visa costs. Please review [this article](#) to think this through as well as the [Cultural Vistas fees](#) to figure out how much you can afford to spend up front before you start receiving a paycheck. You may need to support yourself for a month. You will likely need a few thousand dollars in savings to go through this process and get settled.

# THE SEARCH

## Start reading!

It's a good idea to start reading blogs and articles in the U.S. education space to get a sense of the current issues and trends. This will help you identify areas you may want to learn more about, additional trainings that would be helpful, navigate interview questions and be prepared for what's current once you get to school.

## Job boards and career fairs

There are lots of great resources online for finding jobs and going through the hiring process. I collected a few here which should be helpful.

This is a comprehensive resource: <https://blog.getselected.com/2020/04/07/the-teacher-job-search-resources-to-land-your-next-role/>

<https://www.topschooljobs.org>

<https://aaee.org/job-board>

<https://www.getselected.com> job board, resume review, articles and resources, courses

<https://www.edjoin.org/Home/Index>

<https://www.charterschooljobs.com/jobs.aspx>

<https://www.teachingjobs.com/index.php>

<https://www.schoolspring.com/search.cfm>

<https://www.teachaway.com/teaching-jobs-abroad> (worldwide)

<https://www.teachaway.com/online-fairs> (worldwide)

<https://careers.nais.org/> (private schools) *(also look for the regional associations of independent schools such as New York Association of Independent Schools)*

## Talking about your immigration status

It's important for you to articulate your need for a J-1 Visa and feel comfortable explaining the process to schools. As mentioned, schools don't need to have prior knowledge or experience, and many may be unfamiliar with the program. However, many position postings may state you must have work authorization in the U.S. or schools may tell you "visa sponsorship" is not available for this position.



# THE SEARCH

If the school is not familiar with our program, they may not realize 1) you can't get J-1 status without having an offer or 2) that we are the actual visa sponsor. This second point may change their mind.

You should be prepared to state that you plan to apply for a J-1 Visa with Cultural Vistas and explain the steps involved and what they can expect. You can always refer them directly to us for more information and we can send you additional resources. Here are a few phrases:

- The J-1 Visa is a cultural exchange program administered by the U.S. Department of State which allows educators from abroad to teach in American schools and bring their culture to the classroom and community in support of intercultural learning and public diplomacy.
- I can initially apply for up to 3 years with the option to extend for 2 more.
- The school does not sponsor the visa. Cultural Vistas is a non-profit designated by the U.S. Department of State to act as sponsor.
- The school will need to submit an application outlining the role and terms and conditions of the position. The school will also need to occasionally respond to communication and complete teacher evaluations for Cultural Vistas.
- I will need to follow any state rules on teacher licenses or other requirements.
- There are fees for Cultural Vistas sponsorship which we can discuss based on your budget. (You should seriously consider what you can afford to cover yourself and be prepared to discuss this.)
- If I receive an offer, then we will submit a formal application to Cultural Vistas. Upon approval, I need to then apply for the visa with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate in my country before I can proceed to the U.S. (Canadian citizens skip this step after our approval). Thus, I need at least 2 months for this process.

Note: It is best not to accept an offer without first ensuring you have a potential sponsor. As mentioned, sponsors only work in certain states for public schools and they also have a limited number of teachers they can accept. It would not be very professional to accept an offer and then not be able to find a sponsor and have to withdraw your acceptance.

## GOOD LUCK!

**Visit the website for details on the program and costs**

# Thank you!



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