

## How to obtain a Sofia University I-20

The International Student Office requires the following Visa-related documents to create an I-20:

- Copy of passport identification page (*passport should be valid for at least six months after the date of entry to the U.S.*)
- Official financial documents or certified bank letters (*please read our requirements for financial documents*)
- Financial affidavit of support (*if applicable*)
- Sofia Initial I-20 request form.

Additional documents for transfer students include:

- Most recent I-20
- Current F-1 Visa
- Employment Authorization Document (EAD) if applicable
- [Latest I-94](#) record
- I-797 Notice of Action (if applicable) for students who have a pending application or petition with USCIS

### **Proof of Financial Support:**

Federal regulations require incoming international students to provide proof of financial support for one academic year before issuance of the I-20 form for entry into the U.S. Proof of financial support must be a bank record or a certified bank letter showing readily accessible funds.

This official document may represent personal funds, family funds, an approved educational loan, and another type of sponsorship.

- When requesting an I-20 for a Sofia program of study, applicants must show all sources of financial support and ensure that the sum equals or exceeds the estimated expenses for the student and any dependents. Dependents are \$10,000 for spouse, and subsequently, \$5,000 per child.

- Bank statements/letters must be official and clearly state the name of the account holder, name of financial institution, and currency (which does not need to be U.S. Dollars) and must show proof of available balance.
- Documents must be issued within the last **three months and** must be in English or accompanied by an official English translation. Funds must be liquid (readily accessible without penalty).

*Financial sources must be readily available liquid assets such as:*

- Checking or savings account
- Certificates, term deposit, fixed deposits
- Educational loans (a loan application or pre-approval is not sufficient)
- Current Accounts

*The following documents/funds are NOT acceptable:*

- Paystubs or statements verifying employment and/or salary.
- Insurance premiums or policies
- Property or personal assets such as automobiles, land, buildings, jewelry, etc.
- Non-liquid assets such as stocks, bonds, equities, retirement accounts etc.
- Income tax returns
- Non-educational loans
- Funds that are not described in English and not accompanied by an official translation.

Students should refer to Sofia's Initial I-20 request form for the total available funds required for each program.

Students must specify sources of funding. Upon completion of this form, the DSO will then provide students with the initial I-20 with a SEVIS number. This will automatically enable applicants to pay the I-901 SEVIS fee.