Financial Documentation Requirements

Purpose of the Requirements

Educational institutions in the US are required by Immigration to have documentary proof of adequate financial support before an international student may:

- Be admitted to the University and receive his/her Form I-20
- Extend or change program information on his/her Form I-20
- Change financial information on his/her Form I-20

A valid U.S. government form (Form I-20) is required to (1) obtain a visa and enter the U.S. (2) transfer from another U.S. school to Fisk University (3) or maintain F-1 visa status once a student is within the U.S.

What may be used as proof of adequate financial support?

Documents meeting the requirements below will be accepted at the discretion of the admissions or international student advisor.

All financial support documents submitted must be:

- Original documents or certified true copies (faxes and copies will not be accepted)
- Dated within twelve months of the intended date of enrollment or time of I-20 change/extension
- In English or with an official translation into English attached

Government, Scholarship, Graduate Assistantship Funding

- Must be on the official letterhead of the organization or department
- Must specify the amount, terms, and duration of the funding, including specific beginning and ending dates

Funding from Family or Friends

- Must complete Affidavit of Support
- Bank statement or letter must be on bank letterhead and include the name of the account holder, account number, and specific amount of funds
- The name of the sponsor on the affidavit of support must match the name of the account holder on the bank statement or letter

Self-Funding

- Bank statement or letter must be on bank letterhead and include the name of the account holder, account number, and specific amount of funds
- The name of the account holder on the bank statement or letter must be that of the student/applicant requesting the I-20

How much financial support must be shown?

New Fisk students - Must show adequate funding for at least one year at Fisk based on the Estimated Annual Expenses.

Continuing Fisk students - Amount of funding required may vary based on request and student standing. Contact International Education Office to determine the amount required.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can another F-1 student be my sponsor on the affidavit of support? No, a fellow F-1 student cannot act as a sponsor for the financial documentation.

Can I make changes to the financial documentation after it is completed? No changes or alterations may be made to the information on the document. The document cannot contain any cross-out marks (~~for example~~) or correction fluid/tape upon submission.

Are stocks, bonds, or life insurance policies acceptable financial support? All financial support must be readily accessible. That is, you must be able to access the funds within 24 hours. Therefore, stocks, bonds, and life insurance policies are generally not acceptable.

Are income tax statements, proof of property ownership, or employment letters acceptable financial support? No, income tax statements, proof of property ownership, and employment letters (except for Fisk assistantship letters) are not readily accessible funds. You must be able to access the funds within 24 hours. Exception: Fisk Graduate Assistantship letter are acceptable proof of financial support.

Do I need to complete an affidavit of support if I am self-funded? If you are providing your own bank statement as your only proof of funding, then you do not need to complete an affidavit of support.

Can the letter from the bank state that there is "sufficient financial resources" instead of stating the exact amount of money in the account? No, the letter must provide a specific amount of funds.

Can I print an account statement from my on-line bank account and use that as proof of adequate funding? A statement printed from an on-line bank account must be stamped by the bank in order for it to be accepted as proof of funding.