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WHO NEEDS AN F-1 STUDENT VISA?

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) requires any student who is not a U.S. citizen participating in the college credit track of **Aspire: Five-Week Music Performance Intensive** to enter the U.S. in F-1 status. In order to do this, you will first need to obtain an I-20 from Berklee and then an F-1 student visa from the U.S. embassy or consulate in your home country. These documents together will allow you to enter the U.S. in F-1 status.

Do not enter the U.S. on a tourist visa or ESTA visa waiver to participate in the college credit track of this program. You will be ineligible to attend until you are admitted in F-1 status, and you may need to exit and re-enter the U.S. to obtain the proper status. Berklee assumes no responsibility, financial or otherwise, for additional travel or accommodations that may be required due to entry in the incorrect visa status.

All registrants, including registrants from a previous year's program, must apply for a Form I-20 from Berklee. If you received an F-1 student visa in the past, entered the U.S. with this visa, **and** your visa has not expired, you may travel with your existing visa. Read about the U.S. Department of State's visa application recommendations: travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/student-visa.html.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Complete your Aspire: Five-Week registration** at apply.berklee.edu. Be sure to provide a valid email address because this is how we will contact you.
2. **Read this entire packet carefully** before filling out any of the forms. This packet is designed to walk you step by step through understanding and completing the I-20 application process.
3. **Complete all required forms** in the I-20 Request Packet.
4. **Gather all required financial documents**, such as bank statements, as indicated on the Funding Worksheet.
5. **Submit your complete I-20 Request Packet via the Aspire: Five-Week I-20 Request Packet Submission Form at summer.berklee.edu/forms**. We will review your documents and contact you by email if any additional information is required.
6. **Receive your I-20 via email**. Your I-20 will be emailed to the address you provide on the I-20 Packet Request Submission Form.
7. **Pay the I-901 SEVIS fee online**. You need your I-20 to pay the SEVIS fee; do not attempt to pay the SEVIS fee until you receive your I-20.
8. **Schedule your F-1 visa interview** at the U.S. embassy or consulate in your home country.

Citizens of Canada or Bermuda are not required to apply for an F-1 visa. Upon arriving at the U.S. port of entry, you will need to present your passport, I-20, SEVIS fee payment receipt, and supporting financial documentation in order to be admitted to the U.S. in F-1 status.

I-20 REQUEST PACKET CHECKLIST

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Use this checklist to ensure that you have obtained all required documents for your I-20 request.
 2. Once you have completed all required forms in the fillable I-20 Request Packet, scan or take a clear photo of your additional documents and **submit the complete package via the Aspire: Five-Week I-20 Request Packet Submission Form** at summer.berklee.edu/forms.
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REQUIRED FOR ALL STUDENTS:

- ☐ 1) **Copy of the biographical page(s) of your passport**, showing photo, personal information, and expiration date
- ☐ 2) **Funding Worksheet for F-1 Students**, completed (page 5)
 - Your total available funds must be **equal to or greater than** your total expenses
- ☐ 3) **Corresponding bank letter/statement or award letter** for each funding source indicated on the funding worksheet
- ☐ 4) **Statement of Financial Support** (page 6) completed by each sponsor indicated on the Funding Worksheet

REQUIRED ONLY FOR STUDENTS WITH DEPENDENTS WHO WILL LIVE WITH THEM IN THE U.S.:

- ☐ 1) **Dependent Documentation**

For an accompanying **dependent spouse**, also submit:

- ☐ (a) Copy of your marriage certificate (with a word-for-word translation if it is not already in English)
- ☐ (b) Copy of the biographical page of your spouse's passport

For each accompanying **dependent child**, also submit:

- ☐ (a) Copy of your child's birth certificate (with a word-for-word translation if it is not already in English)
- ☐ (b) Copy of the biographical page of your child's passport

FINANCIAL INFORMATION FOR F-1 STUDENTS

*Aspire: Five-Week students are not eligible to work on campus during the program, and F-1 visa regulations do not permit students to work off campus (this includes playing gigs). As a result, U.S. federal immigration regulations require that all F-1 visa applicants prove that they have enough funds for the total estimated cost of attending Aspire: Five-Week and living in Boston for one month. The total estimated cost includes both direct expenses like tuition and fees, and indirect expenses such as standard estimates for housing and meals. This is an **estimate**—actual expenses may vary depending on the student's time of registration, choice of housing, and lifestyle.*

In order for Berklee to issue an I-20, students are required to submit documentation to the institution proving access to a minimum amount of funding for their program, listed in the chart below. The proof and amount that you document and submit to Berklee will be noted on your I-20, and you will need to present the same documentation at your F-1 visa interview.

Note: *Aspire: Five-Week students are expected to bring an additional \$50 to the program to purchase the necessary books and supplies.*

Use these guidelines and the Funding Worksheet (page 5) to calculate your expenses and your available funds, and organize your financial documentation for submission to Berklee.

1. **Find the amount you need to document** in the 2027 Estimate of Expenses for I-20 Issuance chart at the bottom of the page. Write this information on the Funding Worksheet. Use the Funding Worksheet to calculate your expenses and your available funds, and track your financial documentation before you submit this packet to Berklee.
2. **Determine the source of your funds.** Typically, students have the following funding sources: a Berklee scholarship, personal funds, family funds, or private/government scholarships.
3. **Collect proof of funding.** You will need to provide letters and statements that prove that you and/or your sponsors have the necessary funds to support the cost of attending the Aspire: Five-Week Music Performance Intensive.

Required documentation for each type of funding is as follows:

BERKLEE SCHOLARSHIP

- Submit a copy of your award letter.

PERSONAL FUNDS

- Submit a current letter from your bank (see page 5 for an example of an acceptable bank letter).

FUNDS FROM FAMILY OR OTHER PRIVATE SPONSOR

- Submit a current letter from each sponsor's bank.
- Submit a Statement of Financial Support (page 6) signed by each sponsor.

GOVERNMENT OR INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION

- Submit a letter from the government/organization on their official letterhead.
- The letter must be signed by an authorized representative, detail the terms of your award, and include the exact total amount of your award.

RECEIPT OF FULL PAYMENT

- Submit proof of your fully paid bill for the upcoming program.

4. **Submit all funding documents with your I-20 packet.** You must allow enough time for processing your I-20 request, shipping the documents to you, and obtaining your F-1 visa (if needed). You must arrive in Boston in time for the first day of check-in and orientation.

2027 ESTIMATE OF EXPENSES FOR I-20 ISSUANCE

BERKLEE SUMMER PROGRAMS

PROGRAM

AMOUNT TO DOCUMENT

Aspire: Five-Week Music Performance Intensive* \$ 9,630

DEPENDENT EXPENSES

Dependent Spouse \$ 900

Dependent Child (amount per child) \$ 900

***Note:** Even if you are living off campus, **you are required to show available funding for the full estimated program cost (\$9,630).**

ACCEPTABLE PROOF OF FUNDING

The financial documentation requirements defined here for I-20 issuance are the same as those established by the U.S. Department of State for granting an F-1 visa. Be sure to keep your original documentation to present during your F-1 visa interview.

ACCEPTABLE BANK LETTER

For I-20 purposes, a letter issued by a bank must meet the criteria listed below. The **red numbers** on the letter correspond with one of the **required elements** listed here:

 **1**

Bank Name
Address
Phone | Email

[issue date] **2**

To Whom It May Concern:

This is to certify that Sally Sponsor holds a savings account in account number 123456. The current available balance is 20,000 Euro.

3 **4** **5** **6** **7**

Funds may be withdrawn from this account at any time without penalty.

8

This letter has been issued at the request of Sally Sponsor for the purpose of supporting the educational and living expenses of her son, Joe Student, in the United States.

Sincerely,
 **9**

Bob Banker, Manager

10 

11

- 1) Printed on official bank stationery
- 2) Issue date: within nine months of the student's I-20 request
- 3) Name of account holder
- 4) Type of account
- 5) Account number (last 4 digits of number is sufficient)
- 6) Exact current available balance
- 7) Type of currency
- 8) Statement that funds are current and liquid
- 9) Signature of a bank official
- 10) Bank stamp
- 11) Letter written in English

If you do not wish to disclose the **exact balance in the account**:

- The letter can state, "The current available balance is greater than <minimum amount required><currency>."

If the bank letter/statement is **not in English**:

- Provide a word-for-word translation to accompany the original-language document.
- It does not have to be an official translation. You can complete the word-for-word translation yourself.

If the bank letter/statement is **for an account held by a business or corporation**:

- Provide proof that you and/or your sponsor are permitted to withdraw money from the account. Proof can be in the form of an additional statement on the letter or a separate document showing ownership of the business.

NOT ACCEPTABLE FOR I-20 PURPOSES:

- Any document that is dated more than nine months prior to your I-20 request
- Screenshots or a printout of an online account taken directly from the browser window (a PDF version of a monthly statement downloaded from an online account *may* be acceptable)
- Investment accounts: stocks, lines of credit, bonds, or any other type of investment funds
- Statements of value for property, land, houses, apartments, or other non-liquid assets
- Salary, wage, or income statements; tax forms or insurance policies

FUNDING WORKSHEET FOR F-1 STUDENTS

STUDENT NAME: _____

BERKLEE ID NUMBER: _____

EXPENSES FOR ASPIRE: FIVE-WEEK MUSIC PERFORMANCE INTENSIVE

Instructions: Refer to the pages titled Financial Information for F-1 Students (page 3) and Acceptable Proof of Funding (page 4) to complete this form.

EXPENSE TYPE

AMOUNT

MY PROGRAM: Aspire: Five-Week Music Performance Intensive

\$ \$9,630

*Costs correspond with the **Amount to Document** column from the table on page 4.*

DEPENDENT EXPENSES:

☐ SPOUSE: \$900

\$ _____

☐ CHILDREN: number of children _____ x \$900

\$ _____

\$ _____ **TOTAL EXPENSES**

This is the minimum amount you are required to document in order to be issued an I-20.

MY AVAILABLE FUNDS

Instructions: Check the box next to each **funding type** that you have, and write the **amount** on the line provided. When you receive the required documentation for each of your sources, check off the corresponding box in the **Documentation** column. Guidelines for required documentation can be found on pages 3 and 4.

FUNDING TYPE

AMOUNT

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

☐ BERKLEE SCHOLARSHIP

\$ _____

☐ award letter

☐ MY OWN PERSONAL FUNDS

\$ _____

☐ bank letter

☐ FUNDS FROM MY FAMILY

FAMILY MEMBER'S NAME: _____

\$ _____

☐ bank letter ☐ Statement of Financial Support

RELATIONSHIP TO ME: _____

FAMILY MEMBER'S NAME: _____

\$ _____

☐ bank letter ☐ Statement of Financial Support

RELATIONSHIP TO ME: _____

FAMILY MEMBER'S NAME: _____

\$ _____

☐ bank letter ☐ Statement of Financial Support

RELATIONSHIP TO ME: _____

☐ FUNDS FROM OTHER SPONSOR OR GOVERNMENT AGENCY

SPONSOR/AGENCY NAME: _____

\$ _____

☐ official letter

SPONSOR/AGENCY NAME: _____

\$ _____

☐ official letter

SPONSOR/AGENCY NAME: _____

\$ _____

☐ official letter

\$ _____ **MY TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDS**

*Your **total available funds** must be equal to or greater than your **total expenses** listed above.*

STUDENT STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

By signing below, I certify that all bank statements, sponsor letters, and all other financial documentation I have included with my I-20 application are accurate, and the funds described in these documents are available to me for my studies at Berklee.

STUDENT SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

SPONSOR'S LETTER: STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT

This form should be completed by any sponsor who is a family member or private sponsor (such as a friend or other unrelated individual). Make additional copies of this form if necessary.

If your mother and father are sponsoring you using a joint account, only one parent needs to complete a Statement of Financial Support.

STUDENT NAME: _____

BERKLEE ID NUMBER: _____

SPONSOR INFORMATION

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

(PROVINCE): _____

COUNTRY: _____

POSTAL CODE: _____

PHONE NUMBER (including country code): _____

EMAIL: _____

SPONSOR'S RELATIONSHIP TO STUDENT

- ☐ MOTHER / FATHER ☐ SPOUSE ☐ OTHER FAMILY
☐ PRIVATE SPONSOR

SPONSORSHIP AMOUNT (in USD)

Please check only one of the boxes below.

- ☐ Full amount (\$9,630) for student's academic program
as listed on the Estimate of Expenses

- ☐ At least \$ _____ USD

I hereby pledge to provide financial support to the above-named student to cover the educational and living expenses of their studies at Berklee College of Music in the United States. Attached is a letter from my bank/bank statement indicating that I have sufficient funds for this purpose.

SPONSOR SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____