



St. Louis Mosaic Project

## **What You Need To Know To Hire An F-1 Student With STEM OPT (Optional Practical Training)**

There are approximately 4000 students from China, India, Turkey and other countries, pursuing STEM degrees on F1 student Visas at Washington University, St. Louis University, Webster, UMSL and other universities in our region.

The American Dream is alive and well for these students who seek broad academic knowledge and are eager to gain on-the-job experience with St. Louis companies. To do that, they turn to Optional Practical Training programs (OPT).

### **STEM OPT PROVIDES 3-Year Work Opportunity with STL Company**

OPT is temporary employment at a position directly related to the F-1 student's major area of study.

F-1 students are generally allowed to apply for **up to 12 months** of OPT employment authorization that may occur before they complete their studies and/or after they complete their studies. F-1 students with a **major in a STEM field (science, technology, engineering, or mathematics)** may be eligible for an **additional 24-month period of temporary training**.

### **Benefits of Hiring International Students on STEM OPT**

**These students understand changing global business trends, expanding the diversity of thinking, and the diversity of your company**

**THERE IS NO COST OR VISA LEGAL WORK NEEDED FOR THE EMPLOYER IN THIS SITUATION.  
The Student's University International Office Handles the Paperwork.**

### **STEM OPT Employer Requirements and Responsibilities**

If you are an employer who wants to provide a practical training opportunity to a STEM OPT student during their extension, you must:

- Be enrolled in E-Verify.
- Have a valid Employer Identification Number (EIN)
- Report material changes of student's employment to Designated School Official (DSO) at earliest avail opportunity.
- Implement a training program to augment the student's academic learning through practical experience.
- Provide an OPT opportunity that is commensurate with those of similarly situated U.S. workers.

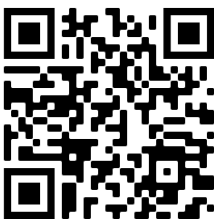
## 22 New STEM Fields Added to hundreds of existing degree fields

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| Bioenergy                                  | Mathematical Economics  |
| Forestry, General                          | Mathematics and Atmospheric/Oceanic Science                   |
| Forest Resources Production and Management | Data Science, General   |
| Human-Centered Technology Design           | Data Analytics, General                                       |
| Cloud Computing                            | Business Analytics  |
| Anthrozoology                              | Data Visualization  |
| Climate Science                            | Financial Analytics   |
| Earth Systems Science                      | Data Analytics, Other   |
| Economics and Computer Science             | Industrial and Organizational Psychology                      |
| Environmental Geosciences                  | Socials Sciences, Research Methodology & Quantitative Methods |
| Geobiology                                 | Mathematical Economics  |
| Geography and Environmental Studies        | Mathematics and Atmospheric/Oceanic Science                   |

Find the full list of STEM degrees at <https://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/stemList2022.pdf>:

### What happens if you want the student to continue after OPT?

Apply for H-1 Visa to sponsor the student. Mosaic will provide an hour of free legal consulting with an immigration attorney.



Scan QR Code to sign up for a 20-minute call about how to hire an international student for your open positions.

Sources: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services; Patavee Vanadilok, Immigration Attorney, St. Louis

Questions? Contact Betsy Cohen, St. Louis Mosaic Project [ecohen@worldtradecenter-stl.com](mailto:ecohen@worldtradecenter-stl.com)