

UTHealth Houston has long recognized the benefits of collaboration in the academic, research, and clinical arenas. The purpose of the Visiting Scientist (VS) Program is to bring to UTHealth Houston established and accomplished scholars who can contribute to and enrich the university's research, intellectual and academic endeavors. This program provides a unique opportunity for visiting scientist appointed at and paid by other institutions to collaborate and actively participate in university research and educational programs of mutual interest under the supervision of a UTHealth Houston faculty member. The Visiting Scientist may observe clinical practices but cannot provide patient care or have any type of direct patient contact (i.e., taking patient history, etc.). All individuals appointed under the Visiting Scientist Program are subject to and required to observe all applicable federal, state, and local laws, including but not limited to export controls laws and regulations, and requirements of UTHealth rules and regulations, including Intellectual Property Rights and Obligations.

Visiting Scientists are not employees of UTHealth Houston, but are appointed for a defined time period in academic departments and/or school-based centers and institutes. A terminal degree is required: M.D. (or equivalent), DDS, DrPH, DNP, DVM, PharmD, DPT, EdD, DSci and/or PhD. All visiting scientist appointments require approval from the appropriate Chair or Director of a Center/Institute, appropriate Dean and the Senior Vice President of Academic and Faculty Affairs (SVPAFA).

VSP applications are handled in a two-step process.

Step 1 is a pre-review wherein faculty seeking to host a visiting scientist submit a justification letter to the VSP office using this [template](#) along with the applicant's CV. Following approval to proceed, the online application form must be completed with the documentation below provided. **Application and required documents should be submitted to the VSP Office at least three (3) months prior to the proposed start date;** incomplete applications will not be processed until all required documents are received.

Step 2: Information Required From Applicant:

- Copy of Photo Identification.
 - For US citizens: Copy of federal or state-issued photo identification.
 - For U.S. permanent residents: Copy of Permanent Resident Card (Green Card).
 - For non-U.S. citizens/permanent residents: Copy of passport identification page, U.S. visa stamp, Immigration forms (I-20, DS-2019, I-797, etc.) and Form I-94 (if applicable)
- Curriculum Vitae (in English)
- Letter of verification from applicant's home institution: detailing employment, confirming degree(s), and financial funding, guaranteed for the duration of the appointment (in English, on letterhead, dated, and signed)
- English proficiency through TOEFL for applicants who are not U.S. citizens and/or who did not obtain a degree from a U.S. institution (score of 95 or better, plus verbal validation)
- Health form with supporting documents
- Completed UTHealth Houston Financial Disclosure Form
- Successful background check; includes Visual Compliance for foreign* visiting scientists (applicant will receive an email with further instructions)
- Successful drug test (applicant will receive an email with further instructions)
- [J-1 biodata](#) if requesting visa sponsorship at UTHealth Houston (for foreign applicants)
- Health clearance email from UT Health Services (see Notes)

VS Fee: VS hosting fee from UTHealth Houston of \$5,000 USD is non-refundable and non-transferable, applicable to all VS (Gulf Coast Consortium institutions exempt). This fee may be paid by sponsoring faculty, hosting department and/or school; state funds cannot be used by sponsoring department, and is required for final approval and execution of the VS appointment.

Methods of payment:

- Money order drawn on a U.S. Bank and made payable to "UTHSC-H"
- Wire transfer (department must send an email to vsp@uth.tmc.edu for instructions)
- FMS/internal journal entry (department must send an email to vsp@uth.tmc.edu for instructions)

3. Pre-Appointment: The following steps are required prior to onboarding:

- Visiting Scientist Agreement (VSA) executed between UTHealth Houston, the applicant AND the applicant's home institution
- Generation and receipt of signed offer letter generated by the VSP sent to applicant outlining terms of the appointment

4. Onboarding:

- All non-U.S. Citizens and non-U.S. Permanent Residents) must receive clearance from the Office of International Affairs before beginning appointment
- UTHealth Houston ID badge
- Departmental orientation
- Complete institutional compliance training online within the first 30 days (link will be provided in a separate email after the application is approved)
- Complete required training, if applicable (AWC-animal research, CITI-human research, etc.). It is both the Faculty Sponsor's and VS's responsibility to ensure that any such training is completed promptly.
- It is the responsibility of the Sponsoring Faculty/Department to supervise and monitor the VS during their approved appointment. Activities must be limited to those approved in the application.

5. Off-boarding:

- Upon completion of the visit, the Faculty Sponsor/department is responsible for ensuring that the VS's official end date is observed.
- Sponsoring Department must collect VS's UTHealth ID badge and/or any other items.
- Sponsoring Department must deactivate the guest email account and any other system/program (if applicable).
- If VS is a foreign national, VS must complete a checkout with OIA.
- It is recommended that each Department have an evaluation system in place to collect input from VS about their experiences at UTHealth Houston.

Notes:

- "Foreign nationals" in this document refers to individuals who are not U.S. citizens or U.S. permanent residents.
- Application approval is at the discretion of the Senior Vice President of Academic and Faculty Affairs. A VS may not begin their visit at UTHealth Houston until the application is approved by the VSP and the Senior Vice President of Academic and Faculty Affairs and all intake processes are complete.
- The sponsoring department submits the Health Form (and supporting documentation as requested on the form) to UT Health Clinical Services (EHCS) by fax to 713-486-0983. EHCS will send a "Health Clearance email" once the applicant receives health clearance.
- VS financial support from home institution must meet the minimum living wage in Houston of \$30,000 per year
- All applicants shall read and acknowledge the "HIPAA Overview and Information Safeguards" at: www.uth.edu/evpara/otvs
- UTHealth Houston schools and departments may charge separate fees to participate in the visiting scientist program.
- Minimum appointment is 6 months; maximum initial appointment is 12 months with approvals required at the time of any reappointment up to a total of 24 months. Appointments can be terminated by UTHealth Houston at any time.
- Sponsoring faculty are limited to no more than two VS in any academic year.
- Appointment extensions may be considered by the SVPFAFA. Please email vsp@uth.tmc.edu at least 60 days prior to the end of the current appointment to make a request.