



# VISA APPLICATION GUIDELINES: ITALY

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## Table of Contents

|   |   |
|---|---|
| INTRODUCTION.....                             | 1 |
| INSURANCE.....                                | 2 |
| STUDENT VISA.....                             | 2 |
| PERMESSO DI SOGGIORNO .....                   | 5 |
| Travel in the Schengen Area.....              | 5 |
| Travel in Italy Outside of Program Dates..... | 5 |

## INTRODUCTION

ALL students studying in Italy for more than 90 must obtain a student visa prior to departing for Italy. You cannot obtain your student visa once in Italy and must apply in your country of residence. **Do not wait to start the visa application process!**

*European Union and European Economic Community passport-holders and students studying in Italy for less than 90 days (summer programs) do NOT need to obtain a student visa before arrival.*

The student visa application process can take four months or more to complete, and students must begin the process **IMMEDIATELY** after accepting their ISEP program. Students should check with the [Italian Consulate that serves their home region](#), carefully review all requirements and begin collecting the necessary paperwork. This includes completing any internal application or processes required by the host university in order to ensure you receive your official letter of acceptance as soon as possible. **All visa fees and any visa-related travel is the responsibility of the student.**

Consulates that require students to apply in-person at the Consulate General for their home region generally require students to schedule an appointment online, and these appointments can fill up three months or more in advance. **Students should review procedures at the Consulate for their jurisdiction and if applicable start checking the appointment portal for a date no more than 90 days but at least a month in advance of their program start date, taking into account when they expect to have assembled all required documentation** (in particular, when they realistically expect to receive the letter of acceptance from their host university). Please note you must enter Italy within 60 days of obtaining your visa. **Visa fees and visa-related travel costs are the responsibly of the student.**

# INSURANCE

Students are required to enroll in the ISEP student insurance as it will provide coverage during travel time, cover medical evacuation and repatriation, and satisfy the Italian National Insurance standards.

All ISEP students will be issued a Confirmation of Insurance Coverage letter in English and Italian that they should print in color and submit to the Italian consulate as a part of the visa application. This letter can be downloaded from the “Insurance” tab of students’ ISEP Dashboard once students have enrolled online in the ISEP student insurance.

Students will also need to bring a copy of this Confirmation of Insurance Coverage letter with them to Italy in order to obtain the “permit to stay” (permesso di soggiorno) once in-country. More information about the permesso di soggiorno can be found below.

# STUDENT VISA

You must apply for a visa through the [Italian Consulate](#) with jurisdiction over your permanent residence, not your school address. Please note that consulate may differ significantly in their application requirements for the visa. The consulate’s website should indicate their specific visa requirements, whether an in-person appointment is necessary, and hours of business. All questions regarding the visa should be directed to the consulate. ISEP Central cannot contact consulates on behalf of students.

It has been ISEP’s experience that **consulate requirements change frequently** and that **consulates will not accept incomplete applications or those that do not comply with each consulate’s criteria**. **Start researching the visa process as soon as you are accepted to your ISEP program**. Students holding visas are required to enter Italy within 60 days of the issuance of the visa. Remember to ask how long your relevant consulate takes to process the applications, so that you will not submit it too early or too late. Student visas are generally valid for the duration of your program.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *Not all Italian Consulates will accept visa applications by mail.* If your consulate allows you to submit the visa via mail at an honorary consulate, ISEP recommends that you mail your application and all documents by certified mail with return receipt, so that you will know the Consulate General received your documents. Mailed applications must also follow certain procedures. All signatures on the application and affidavit forms must be submitted in original and photocopy and must be notarized (photocopy only will result in the refusal of the application).

*Students should also bring copies of all documents below with them to Italy in case they need the documents when applying for the [permesso di soggiorno](#).*

## Sample Required Documents

*As a general guide, the following are the visa requirements from the Italian Embassy in Washington, D.C. Follow the requirements set forth by [your specific consulate explicitly](#). Note that some consulates may require certain documents to be notarized and authenticated with the Apostille Seal of The Hague. Normally they will provide links to who can authenticate your documents.*

1) **Application form** filled out completely, signed, with recent passport-size photographs (some consulates require students to sign the application in the presence of the consular officer)

-**Note:** students should request a "multiple-entry" visa

2) **Passport** valid at least three months beyond the applicant's planned stay in Italy with enough blank pages to affix the visa

3) Driver's license or State I.D. as **proof of residence in the consulate's jurisdiction**. Submit the requested document in original and photocopy

3a) Alien Registration/Residency Card, if not a citizen

4) **Official Letters of Acceptance:**

A. **Official Letter of Acceptance from your host institution** indicating that you have been admitted. The letter must be original, on the official letterhead of the institution, stamped with the official seal of the institution, and signed. The letter must contain the following information:

- Name of the student, and complete name and address of the host institution
- Exact period of study (day/month/year) and weekly hours
- The indication that tuition, room and board, and health insurance are covered or that you have made arrangements with the host institution for the same.
- The address of your housing in Italy

B. Some consulates may also require a **letter from your home institution**. The letter should be on university letterhead, bearing an authoritative signature and the seal of the institution. It should verify that you are enrolled at the university as a full-time bona fide student pursuing a degree program, and that you will return to that university to complete the degree program after your exchange in Italy. This may also include information about any financial aid that you might receive if you are anticipating receiving funds. Bring all of this information with you to the appointment.

C. **ISEP Acceptance Package:** Letter of Certification, Program Information and Contract of Participation; original and a photocopy

5) **Confirmation of Health Insurance Coverage:** After you have accepted your placement and enrolled in the ISEP student insurance, ISEP will provide you with a Confirmation of Insurance Coverage letter in English and Italian explaining your health coverage. **You will need to bring a color copy of this letter AND a color copy of your ISEP Health Insurance ID Cards to the consulate.** Both documents can be downloaded from the "Insurance" tab of your ISEP Dashboard.

Proof of health insurance must also be shown on your arrival to the local Police Office (Questura), the office in charge of issuing your [residence permit](#) (Permesso di Soggiorno per motivi di studio).

6) **Proof of Financial Means:** Personal bank letter or bank statement on official letterhead, indicating the total amount of funds in student's personal account (no joint bank accounts). *NOTE: Required minimum amount varies by Consulate. Please verify the specific amount required with your [local consulate](#).*

- In most cases students who have been granted a scholarship/financial aid from their home university for their time abroad can provide a letter on official university letterhead stating the exact amount and the date of disbursement.

- Some (but not all) consulates allow students to submit an affidavit of support if the applicant doesn't have own funds because supported by the parents. Student should verify requirements and procedures with their [local consulate](#).

7) **Proof of suitable lodging:** This should be addressed in your acceptance letter.

8) Copy of **flight itinerary** (including return flight)

9) **Visa Fee:** Verify cost and permitted payment methods with your specific consulate before submitting an application, as these change with some frequency

# PERMESSO DI SOGGIORNO

When you arrive in Italy you will be required to register within eight days with the police to obtain a permesso di soggiorno (residence permit). You will need two copies of your passport photograph, the consulate-stamped confirmation of enrollment (Letter of Acceptance) and proof of insurance (Confirmation of Insurance Coverage letter). The current cost of the permesso di soggiorno is approximately 160 euros.

## Travel in the Schengen Area

Italy is a member of the Schengen area. Students should review the [important regulations](#) that dictate travel and visas within the Schengen area.

Current Schengen signature countries: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland.

Bulgaria, Cyprus, Ireland, Romania and, most notably, the United Kingdom are NOT part of the Schengen zone.

## Travel in Italy Outside of Program Dates

Citizens of nations that are party to the Schengen Accord or similar treaties (see list below), can stay in Italy or other Schengen Zone countries for a period of up to 90 days every six months without a visa. These days are “suspended” during the validity of a visa. So, for example, a U.S. student can enter 45 days before and leave 45 days after the validity of their visa or enter 88 days before and leave 2 days after, or any other combination that suits their needs. Students from countries that have not signed similar accords must enter and leave only within the exact dates on their visas.

**Citizens of the following nations may follow the guidance above:**

Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, **Argentina**, **Australia**, Bahamas, Barbados, **Brazil**, Brunei, Bulgaria, **Canada**, **Chile**, **Colombia**, **Costa Rica**, Croatia, Cyprus, El Salvador, Georgia, Grenada, Guatemala, Honduras, **Hong Kong SAR**, Israel, **Japan**, Liechtenstein, Macao SAR, **Malaysia**, Mauritius, **Mexico**, Monaco, **New Zealand**, **Nicaragua**, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Seychelles, Singapore, **South Korea**, St. Kitts-Nevis, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, **United States of America**, **Uruguay**, Vatican City, Venezuela.

\***Taiwanese** citizens receive the same privileges **ONLY** if their passports include their Identity Card reference number.