

**INTERNATIONAL  
STUDENTS ENTERING  
THE JOB MARKET**

**The Build  
Fellowship**

# Understanding Your Visa Options: H-1B vs. OPT/F-1/CPT

## OPT (OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING):

- Allows F-1 visa holders to work in their field of study.
- Standard OPT: Lasts up to 12 months.
- STEM OPT Extension: Additional 24 months for STEM graduates, totaling 36 months.
- CPT (Curricular Practical Training): Allows F-1 students to gain practical experience while completing their academic program.

## H-1B VISA:

- A temporary visa for specialty occupations requiring specialized knowledge.
- Annual cap of 85,000 visas, leading to high competition.
- There were 470,342 applicants this year, equaling an 82% rejection rate.
- The Build Fellowship is a nationwide fellowship offering a cap-exempt H-1B visa as an alternative to the lottery for foreign national entrepreneurs and experts, ensuring a more reliable visa pathway.

# Benefits of The Build Fellowship

## CAP-EXEMPT H-1B VISA:

- Secure a visa with a 99% acceptance rate, eliminating uncertainty.
- Avoid the annual H-1B lottery system, providing a dependable visa solution.
- Lasts up to three years, with the possibility of an additional three year extension.

## CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS:

- A Bachelor's degree or equivalent work experience in a specialized field.
- Ability to dedicate 5+ hours per week to educational programming initiatives and workforce development.
- A benefactor (a company, organization, or individual) willing to support the Fellowship costs – Fellows cannot fund their own Fellowship.

## CAREER ADVANCEMENT:

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## FELLOWSHIP COMMITMENT:

- Applications are accepted on a rolling basis throughout the year, Fellowships can begin at any time.
- Fellows are sponsored for cap-exempt H-1Bs for up to 3 years, with a minimum 12 month commitment.
- A 3 year extension is possible.

# Evaluating Your OPT Timeline

## STEM GRADUATES:

- Maximize your 3-year STEM OPT to build experience and strengthen your H-1B application.
- Plan your transition from OPT to H-1B through The Build Fellowship to ensure continuous employment.

## NON-STEM GRADUATES:

- Utilize your 1-year OPT effectively by seeking relevant work experience.
- Explore The Build Fellowship to secure your visa and continue your career uninterrupted.



# Employer Considerations

## JOB SECURITY:

- Employers may be hesitant to invest in candidates with uncertain visa statuses.
- Companies are searching for a backup option if their employees were not selected in the annual lottery.
- The Build Fellowship's cap-exempt H-1B program provides job security, making you a more attractive hire.

## LONG-TERM EMPLOYMENT:

- Assured visa sponsorship through The Build Fellowship enables you to commit to long-term employment, benefiting both you and your employer.



# Enhancing Your Marketability

## VISA ASSURANCE:

- Present yourself as a candidate who does not require immediate visa sponsorship by securing an H-1B visa through The Build Fellowship.
- Applications for The Build Fellowship are accepted year-round
- Increase your appeal to potential employers who prefer hiring candidates with secured visa status.

## SKILL DEVELOPMENT:

- Participate in The Build Fellowship to develop leadership and project management skills.
- Gain practical experience and mentorship opportunities, enhancing your professional development.
- Build your portfolio through Build projects.

## NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES:

- Engage with a cohort of skilled peers through The Build Fellowship.
- Expand your professional network, opening doors to new career opportunities.



# More information on how The Build Fellowship can support your career in the U.S.

VISIT [THE BUILD FELLOWSHIP.](#)



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