MICA INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING

GOALS
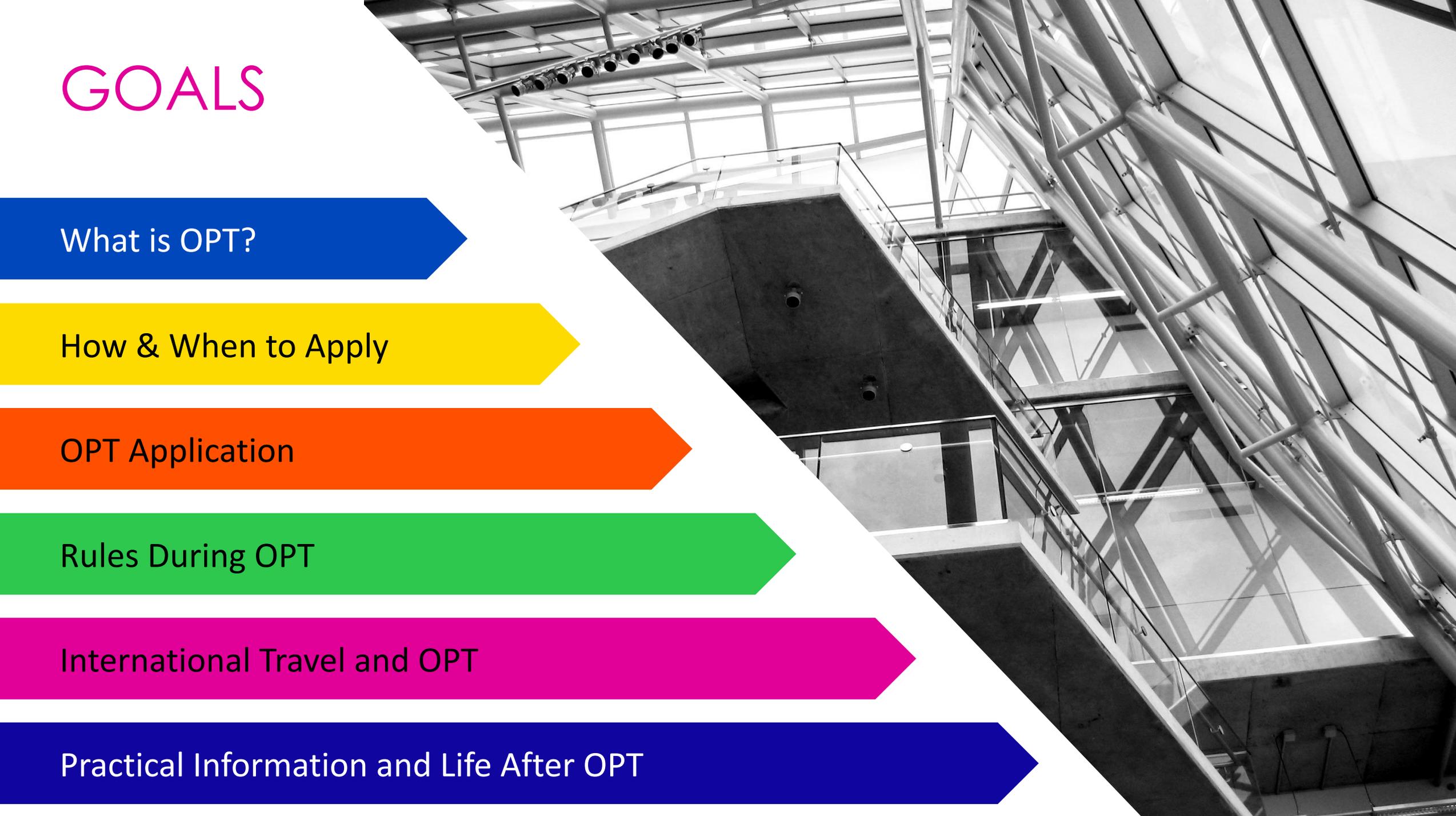
What is OPT?

How & When to Apply

OPT Application

Rules During OPT

International Travel and OPT

Practical Information and Life After OPT

WHAT IS **OPT**?

OPT MEANS…

OPTIONAL
Not a required part of your course of study in the USA

PRACTICAL
Out of the classroom work

TRAINING
A continuation of your learning experience in the USA

WHAT IS **OPT**?

FAST FACTS…

- An extension of your F-1 visa status

- Max of 12 months of employment authorization

- Must only find work related to your MICA major

- You are allowed to apply for OPT before you have a job

ARE YOU ELIGIBLE
TO APPLY FOR OPT?

IF ALL OF THESE ARE TRUE…

Been in F-1 status for two consecutive semesters?

Will have graduated by the time OPT starts?

Never had OPT before at this degree level?

THEN YOU ARE ELIGIBLE FOR OPT!

HOW & WHEN
TO APPLY

ASSEMBLE
OPT application
packet

RECEIVE new I-20
during appointment
with International
Education

SUBMIT
application
packet to USCIS
& wait to receive
authorization

WHEN
SHOULD YOU APPLY?

SPRING GRADUATES

You should submit your application no more than 90 days before your **PROGRAM END DATE**: **MAY 15, 2023**

Earliest you can send in your application: **FEBRUARY 15, 2023**

You may **not** submit your application more than 60 days after your **PROGRAM END DATE**.

Latest you can send in your application: **JULY 15, 2023**

REMEMBER: USCIS could take 3-5 months to process applications – mail it far in advance of your start date!

OPT APPLICATION PERIOD
(90 days before or 60 days after completion)

ESTIMATED PROGRAM COMPLETION DATE

60 DAY GRACE PERIOD ENDS
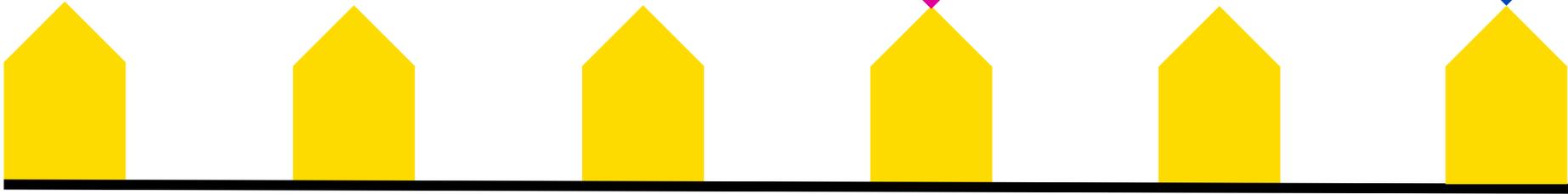
Sp '23   FEB   MAR   APR   MAY   JUNE   JULY

OPT START DATE
(Within 60 days of grad)

ESTIMATED
PROGRAM
COMPLETION
DATE
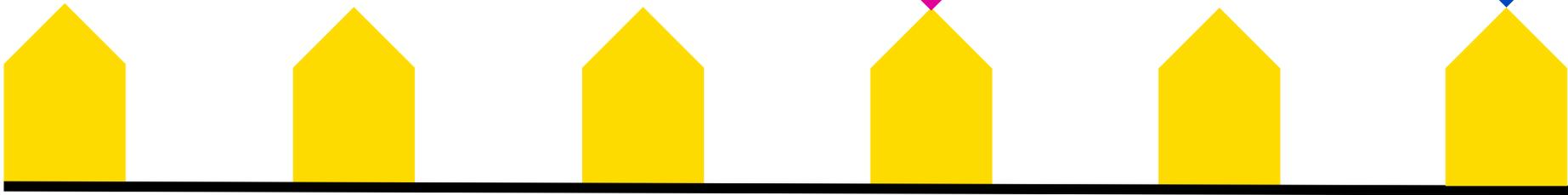
60 DAY
GRACE
PERIOD
ENDS

Sp '23   FEB   MAR   APR   MAY   JUNE   JULY

OPT APPLICATION

OPT APPLICATION PACKET CHECKLIST

- MICA OPT **Student Request Form**
- USCIS form **I-765**
- Copies of **immigration documents** (past and present)
- Passport biographical page
- I-20s
- Visa
- I-94 Number
- 2 Passport-sized **Photos**
- OPT Application **Fee**

APPLICATION PACKET

1. MICA OPT request form

ARE YOU SURE YOU WILL GRADUATE?

YOUR ACADEMIC ADVISOR SHOULD SIGN YOUR
OPT REQUEST FORM (Spring 2023, advisor can
email)
If you don't graduate during the semester you
specify, your application may be made invalid.

PICK YOUR OPT START DATE
The date you list cannot be changed after you
submit this form.

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION / MICA

Optional Practical Training (OPT)
F-1 Student Request

A. Student Responsibilities

I meet all of the below requirements for applying to OPT:

- I've been in F-1 Status for two consecutive semesters
- I've graduated or will graduate by the time of my chosen OPT start date
- I've never done OPT before at this degree level
- Have attended one of the Office of International Education's OPT Workshops

I will fulfill and follow all of the below requirements to maintain my status on OPT:

- I understand that OPT restricts me to employment or volunteer activity in my field of study.
- I understand I must update my address, employment information, and other relevant information in the SEVP Portal within 10 days of any changes. Failure to do so will threaten my F-1 status during OPT.
- I understand that if I do not fulfill the degree requirements by the date specified in this form, my OPT application may be invalidated or otherwise affected.
- I understand that my OPT application must be received by USCIS within the 30 days after the Office of International Education signs my OPT I-20.
- I understand that my OPT application may be denied by USCIS and my fee will not be reimbursed.
- I understand that if I am unemployed for at least 90 days, my F-1 status will be auto-terminated by USCIS and I will be required to leave the United States immediately.
- I understand that compliance with U.S. laws is the responsibility of the F-1 visa holder

B. Student Information

Last Name: _____

First Name: _____

MICA ID: _____

Email Address: _____

Major: _____

Program End
Date (on I-20): _____

Note: You may not change these dates after you receive
your OPT I-20

OPT Start Date: _____

OPT End Date: _____

By signing, I agree to follow and to fulfill all of
the Optional Practical Training (OPT) requirements listed
on this document. It is my sole responsibility
to follow all of the regulations in order to maintain my F-1
status during OPT.

Signature:

_____

Date: _____

OPT START DATE

Remember…

USCIS can take 3-5 months to approve your OPT application

You are not allowed to work until you receive USCIS approval and you've physically received your card

If your start date is reached and you have not received approval from USCIS, your end-date will not change

CONSIDER:

International travel plans?

Would you like some time off after graduation?

Do you want to start working immediately?

Have you spoken with any potential employers?

ONLINE APPLICATION
3. USCIS I-765 Form

FORM I-765:

Application for Employment Authorization

For I-765 is the USCIS application form for employment

The I-765 form can be completed and submit online on the USCIS website:

https://www.uscis.gov/i-765

COMPLETING THE I-765

PLEASE READ AND ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS CAREFULLY

ELIGIBILITY

ELIGIBILITY CATEGORY: Use the following codes depending on the type of OPT you are requesting:

I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

What is your eligibility category?

Getting Started ^

    Basis of eligibility

    Reason for applying

    Preparer and interpreter information

About You ⌄

Evidence ⌄

Additional Information ⌄

Review and Submit ⌄

⚠ You can file your request online only for certain eligibility categories

If your eligibility category does not appear on the drop-down list, you must file a paper Form I-765. If you submit online and are not eligible for one of the listed categories, your application may be denied.

(c)(3)(B) Student Post-Completion OPT ▾

REASON FOR APPLYING

REASON FOR APPLYING: At the top check the box "Initial permission to accept employment.

I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

What is your reason for applying?

Getting Started ^

    Basis of eligibility

    Reason for applying

    Preparer and interpreter information

About You ⌄

Evidence ⌄

Additional Information ⌄

Review and Submit ⌄

◉ Initial permission to accept employment

○ Replacement of lost, stolen, or damaged employment authorization document or correction of my employment authorization document NOT DUE to US Citizenship and Immigration Services error

○ Renewal of permission to accept employment

Have you previously filed Form I-765?

○ Yes

◉ No

OTHER INFORMATION: Check "yes" if you have completed an I-765 form before.

COMPLETING THE I-765

ABOUT YOU

YOUR NAME

YOUR FULL LEGAL NAME: Enter your family and given name. Enter N/A in spaces that do not apply to you, including Middle Name, and Other Names Used.

CURRENT MAILING ADDRESS THE SAME AS YOUR PHYSICAL ADDRESS?

Mailing Address: Where you want your EAD card sent

Physical Address: Where you currently live

CONTACT INFORMATION

COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP: If you have citizenship in more than one country, enter them here.

PLACE OF BIRTH: Enter the information about your place of birth and include your birthdate

IMMIGRATION

IMMIGRATION STATUS: This is the status you had upon entering the US most recently (most likely F-1) unless you have changed your status recently.

Your Current Immigration Status should be: *F-1 Student*

If not, talk to an Advisor in the International Education Office immediately.

I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

- Getting Started
- **About You**
  - Your name
  - Your contact information
  - Describe yourself
  - When and where you were born
  - Your immigration information
  - Other information
- Evidence
- Additional Information
- Review and Submit

What is your current legal name?

Your current legal name is the name on your birth certificate, unless it changed after birth by a legal action such as marriage or court order. Do not provide any nicknames here.

Given name (first name)

Middle name

Family name (last name)

Have you used any other names since birth?

Other names used may include nicknames, aliases and maiden names.

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

- Your immigration information
- Other information
- Evidence
- Additional Information
- Review and Submit

What is your Form I-94 Arrival-Departure Record Number (if any)?

Provide an 11 character I-94 Number.

When did you last arrive in the United States?

List your arrival date, place of arrival, and status at arrival.

Date of arrival (on or about)

MM/DD/YYYY

Place of arrival

Status at last arrival

COMPLETING THE I-765

ABOUT YOU

IMMIGRATION

INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR LAST ARRIVAL IN THE UNITED STATES: List your current I-94 number. Retrieve your I-94 number online at: **https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov.**

DATE AND PLACE OF LAST ARRIVAL INTO THE UNITED STATES: Use your I-94 to find this information. Enter the date of your most recent entry into the U.S.

PASSPORT INFORMATION
Use the information on your current passport or travel document.

OTHER INFORMATION

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER (SSN): If you do not have an SSN, you will want to request one in the application. If you have a SSN you will check no and enter your current SSN.

SEVIS NUMBER
Find your SEVIS Number on your I-20. It begins with an N.

When did you last arrive in the United States?
List your arrival date, place of arrival, and status at arrival.

Date of arrival (on or about)

MM/DD/YYYY

Place of arrival

Status at last arrival

What is the passport number of your most recently issued passport?

Has the Social Security Administration (SSA) ever officially issued a Social Security card to you?

○ Yes
◉ No

Do you want the SSA to issue you a Social Security card?

◉ Yes
○ No

⚠ You must agree to the Consent for Disclosure
If you answer "Yes", you must also answer "Yes" to the Consent for Disclosure.

COMPLETING THE I-765

EVIDENCE

2x2 PHOTO

Upload a recent color photograph of yourself that measures 2 inches by 2 inches.

I-94

Form I-94, Arrival and Departure record or passport.

EMPLOYMENT

Upload a copy of your last Employment Authorization documents (EAD, Passport, Visa).

CPT/OPT

Upload evidence or any previously authorized CPT or OPT (I-20 with the CPT authorization)

I-20

Upload your I-20 with OPT authorization. (You will receive this I-20 during your Final OPT Meeting)

APPLICATION PACKET

4. Photocopies of Immigration Documents

Passport Biographical Page

Current F-1 Visa

I-20s with CPT/OPT authorization

Current I-94 Number

I-94 NUMBER

Every person is assigned an I-94 number when they enter the USA

You will receive a new I-94 number every time you travel into the USA

You can only retrieve your I-94 number online

Go to https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov

Enter Your Traveler Info

Note: The info returned may not reflect applications submitted to or benefits received by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services or Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

👤

* First (Given) Name :

* Last (Family) Name/Surname :

❓

* Birth Date :

___ Day

Month ▼

____ Year

❓

📷

* Passport Number :

❓

* Passport Country of Issuance :

-- Select -- ▼

❓

Cancel

NEXT ➤

Proceed to your most recent I-94

APPLICATION PACKET

5. Passport-Style Photos

- 2 identical color photographs
- Taken within last 30 days
- White to off-white background
- Printed on traditional photo paper
- Not mounted & not retouched
- 2 inches x 2 inches
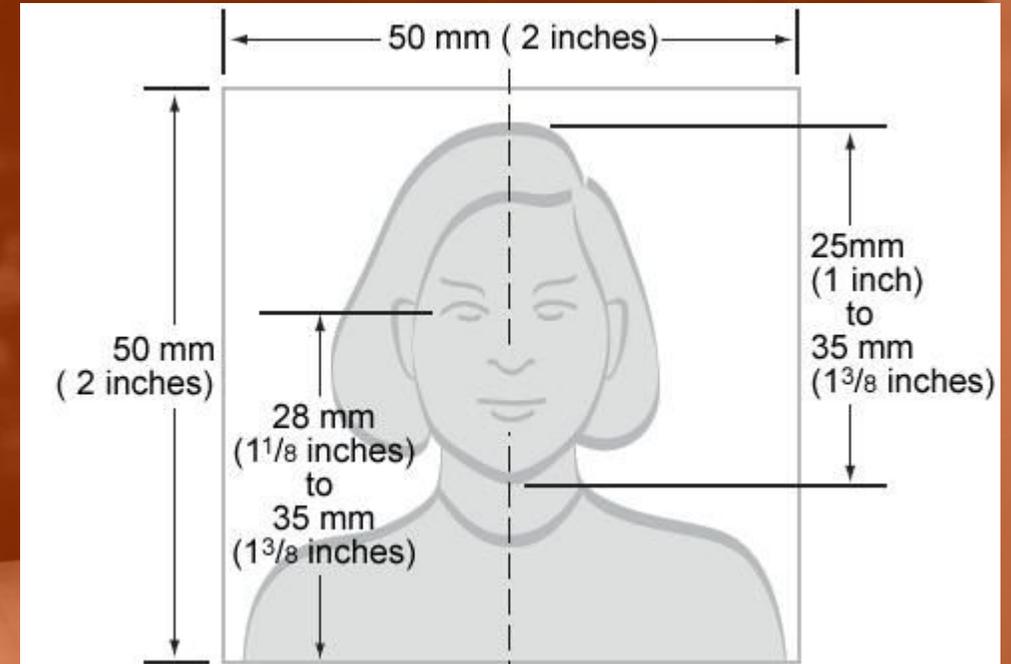
- Full face, frontal view
- Head must be bare unless you are wearing headwear as required by your practicing religion

RECOMMENDED:

Visit a professional to get your photos

50 mm (2 inches)

50 mm (2 inches)

25mm (1 inch) to 35 mm (1³/₈ inches)

28 mm (1¹/₈ inches) to 35 mm (1³/₈ inches)

APPLICATION PACKET

6. OPT Application Fee

$410

Money Order, Personal Check,
Cashier's Check or Pay by Credit Card

MAKE SURE YOU HAVE ENOUGH MONEY IN YOUR ACCOUNT

USCIS WILL REJECT YOUR APPLICATION IF THEY CANNOT RECEIVE YOUR FUNDS

APPLICATION PACKET

6. OPT Application Fee

$410

CREDIT CARD: USE FORM G-1450

Authorization for Credit Card Transactions

Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

USCIS
Form G-1450
OMB No. 1615-0131
Expires 01/31/2021

How To Fill Out Form G-1450

1. Type or print legibly in black ink.

2. Complete the "**Applicant's/Petitioner's/Requester's Information**," "**Credit Card Billing Information**," and "**Credit Card Information**" sections and sign the authorization.

3. Place your Form G-1450 ON TOP of your application, petition, or request package.

NOTE: Failure to provide the requested information may result in USCIS and your financial institution not accepting the payment. USCIS cannot process credit card payments without an authorized signature.

NOTE: Form G-1450 may only be used with a form being submitted to a USCIS Lockbox. **Do not submit this form to a USCIS Field Office. They will not accept it.**

We recommend that you print or save a copy of your completed Form G-1450 to review in the future and for your records.

Applicant's/Petitioner's/Requester's Information (Full Legal Name)

Given Name (First Name)	Middle Name (if any)	Family Name (Last Name)

Credit Card Billing Information (Credit Card Holder's Name as it Appears on the Card)

Given Name (First Name)	Middle Name (if any)	Family Name (Last Name)

Credit Card Holder's Billing Address:

Street Number and Name	Apt. Ste. Flr.	Number
	☐ ☐ ☐	

City or Town	State	ZIP Code

Credit Card Holder's Signature and Contact Information:

Credit Card Holder's Signature

Credit Card Holder's Daytime Telephone Number	Credit Card Holder's Email Address

Credit Card Information

Credit Card Number	Credit Card Type:	☐ Visa	Authorized Payment Amount
		☐ MasterCard	$. 00
Credit Card Expiration Date (mm/yyyy)		☐ American Express	
		☐ Discover	

Form G-1450 01/04/18

Page 1 of 1

ASSEMBLE OPT application packet

RECEIVE new I-20 during appointment with International Education

SEND application packet to USCIS & receive authorization

- Make an appointment to review your application and all required documents.
- We'll look everything over and determine that you can apply for OPT.

ASSEMBLE OPT application packet

RECEIVE new I-20 during appointment with International Education

SEND application packet to USCIS & receive authorization

- **https://calendly.com/mica-int-edu**

🔵 **OPT Pre-Check (Not required)** ▶

🟢 **Final OPT Application Appointment (Required)** ▶

During this appointment, we will review your OPT application documents. You will not receive your new I-20 during this appointment, but you will learn if you need a

If your application documents are complete, you will receive your new I-20 during this appointment. Final steps of the OPT application process will be discussed

ASSEMBLE OPT application packet

RECEIVE new I-20 during appointment with International Education

SEND application packet to USCIS & receive authorization

- We'll create a new I-20 for you that lists your chosen OPT start and end date
- This I-20 will complete your OPT Application packet

SUBMIT YOUR COMPLETE APPLICATION PACKET. USCIS MUST RECEIVE YOUR APPLICATION WITHIN 30 DAYS!

SUBMIT APPLICATION PACKET TO USCIS

Sign the front of your new I-20

Submit or Mail your application so it is received **within 30 days!**

You will receive a **NOTICE OF ACTION** in about 3 weeks. This paper will have your "receipt number." Use that number in case you need to call USCIS with any OPT questions.

You CANNOT work until you have received your EAD card! *Talk to potential employers and let them know your situation.*

Be prepared to wait about 3-5 months for your OPT application to be approved

IF YOU GET A REQUEST FOR EVIDENCE (RFE)

If there is a problem with your application, USCIS will send you a notice by mail called a "Request for Evidence (RFE)"

An RFE means that you need to send additional documents before your EAD can be issued. Requested documents must be sent **ASAP**!

An RFE will delay the processing of your application.

Contact International Education if you receive a Request for Evidence

OPT APPROVAL

CONGRATULATIONS!

➤ You will receive your EAD card in the mail when USCIS has approved your application

➤ EAD = Employment Authorization Document

➤ You may work once your start date has been reached **AND** you physically have your EAD card

RULES DURING OPT

TYPES OF WORK ON OPT

Make sure none of the work you are doing violates U.S. labor laws.

All work must be done in the U.S. for it to count towards OPT

Remember: All work MUST be related to your major field of study at MICA.

Paid Work

Internships

Unpaid Work

Volunteering

Commission/Freelance Work

Art Residencies (In the U.S. Only)

Self-Employment (With proper business license)
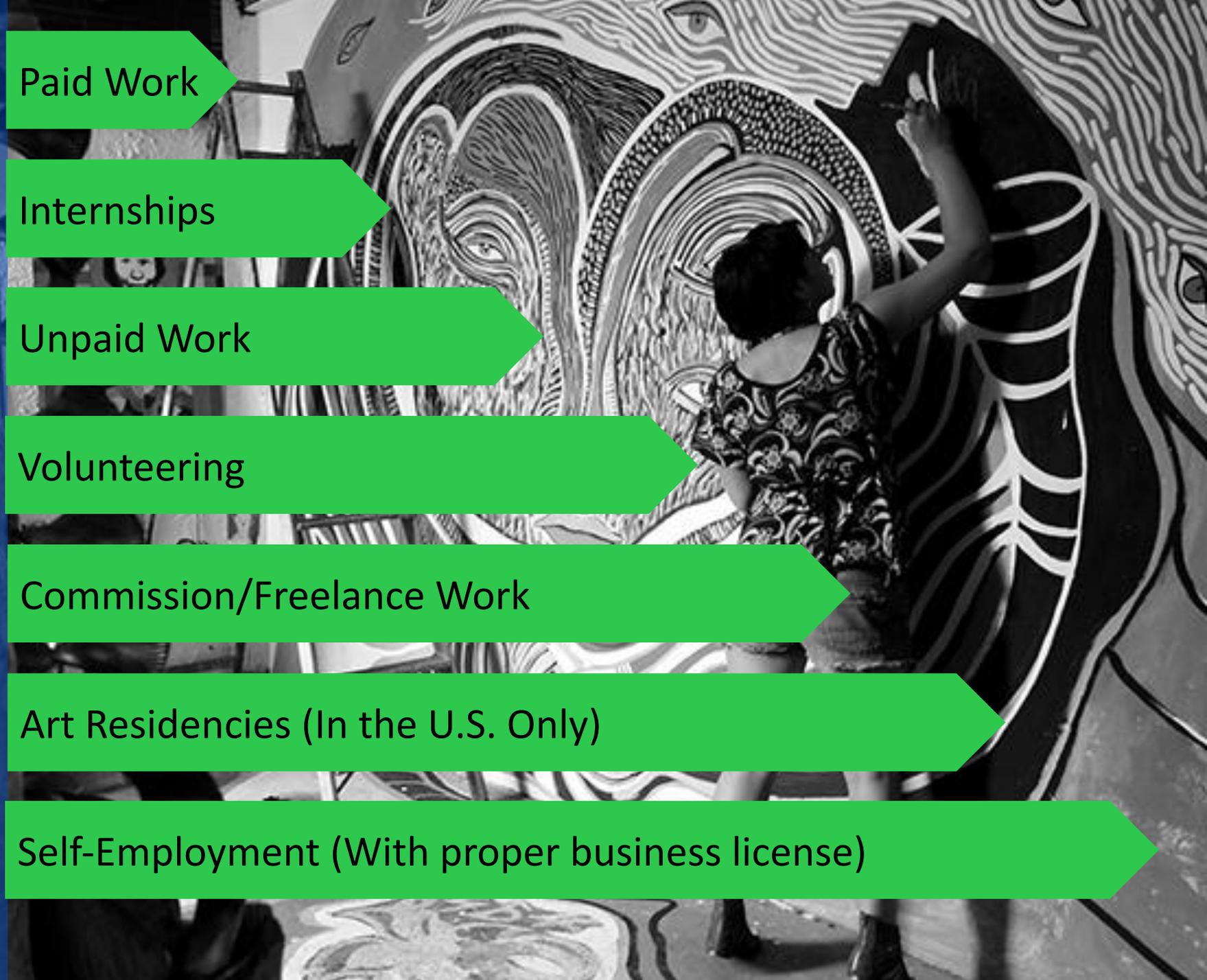
TYPES OF WORK ON OPT

Make sure none of the work you are doing violates U.S. labor laws.

All work must be done in the U.S. for it to count towards OPT

Remember: All work MUST be related to your major field of study at MICA.

Freelance Work - does not require a license
Employed by someone to create something or provide a service.
Get an offer of work in writing. Include:
- employer name
- start and end dates of projects, etc.

Save this information for your records. All necessary information should be entered into the SEVP Portal.

Self Employment - requires a business license (takes time)
If you are create something, and then decide to sell it later to someone who wants to buy the work or service.
We have not seen many students do self-employment for OPT.

Commission/Freelance Work

Self-Employment (With proper business license)

BASIC RULES

REPORT CHANGES TO THE SEVP OPT PORTAL
You will receive an emailed link from USCIS to access the portal once your OPT has been approved
https://sevp.ice.gov/opt/#/login

FULL-TIME OPT
Make sure you are working at least 20 hours per week to count towards Full-Time OPT

DO YOU PLAN TO TAKE ANY CLASSES?
Studies during OPT should be purely recreational and not towards another degree

UNEMPLOYMENT
DURING OPT

USCIS specifies that students on OPT should only be unemployed for a **TOTAL OF 90** days during their entire OPT session.

This means that the days you are unemployed throughout your OPT term all add up.

The Department of Homeland Security tracks your employment and unemployment. They will terminate your F-1 status if you are unemployed for more than 90 days during the 12 months of OPT.

THIS MEANS YOU WILL NEED TO LEAVE THE UNITED STATES AT 90 DAYS OF UNEMPLOYMENT.

Working under 20 hours each week? Those days count as <u>unemployment</u>.

PERSONAL RESPONSIBLITY
DURING OPT

Around your OPT Start Date, you will receive an email to access the SEVP Portal

You are responsible for keeping track of your unemployment days.

If you exceed 90 days of unemployment, you are responsible for leaving the United States or changing your status accordingly.

You are responsible for reporting any employment or personal changes to the SEVP Portal.

International Education is **<u>not</u>** responsible with keeping track of your unemployment days or making sure that you are reporting your employment and personal information.

REPORT YOUR INFORMATION

To avoid termination of your F-1 status, you are required to report your employment information. Employer information must be updated on the SEVP OPT Portal within 10 days of any changes

Use the SEVP OPT Portal to update any employment information
https://sevp.ice.gov/opt/#/login

EMPLOYER NAME

EMPLOYER ADDRESS

EMPLOYMENT START DATE

EMPLOYMENT END DATE (WHEN KNOWN)

NUMBER OF HOURS WORKED PER WEEK

DESCRIPTION OF HOW JOB RELATES TO YOUR MICA STUDIES

REPORT YOUR INFORMATION

To avoid termination of your F-1 status, you are required to report your personal information. Personal information must be updated on the SEVP OPT Portal within 10 days of any changes

Use the SEVP OPT Portal to update any personal information
https://sevp.ice.gov/opt/#/login

SEVP USER GUIDE
https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/assets/sevp_portal_student_user_guide.pdf
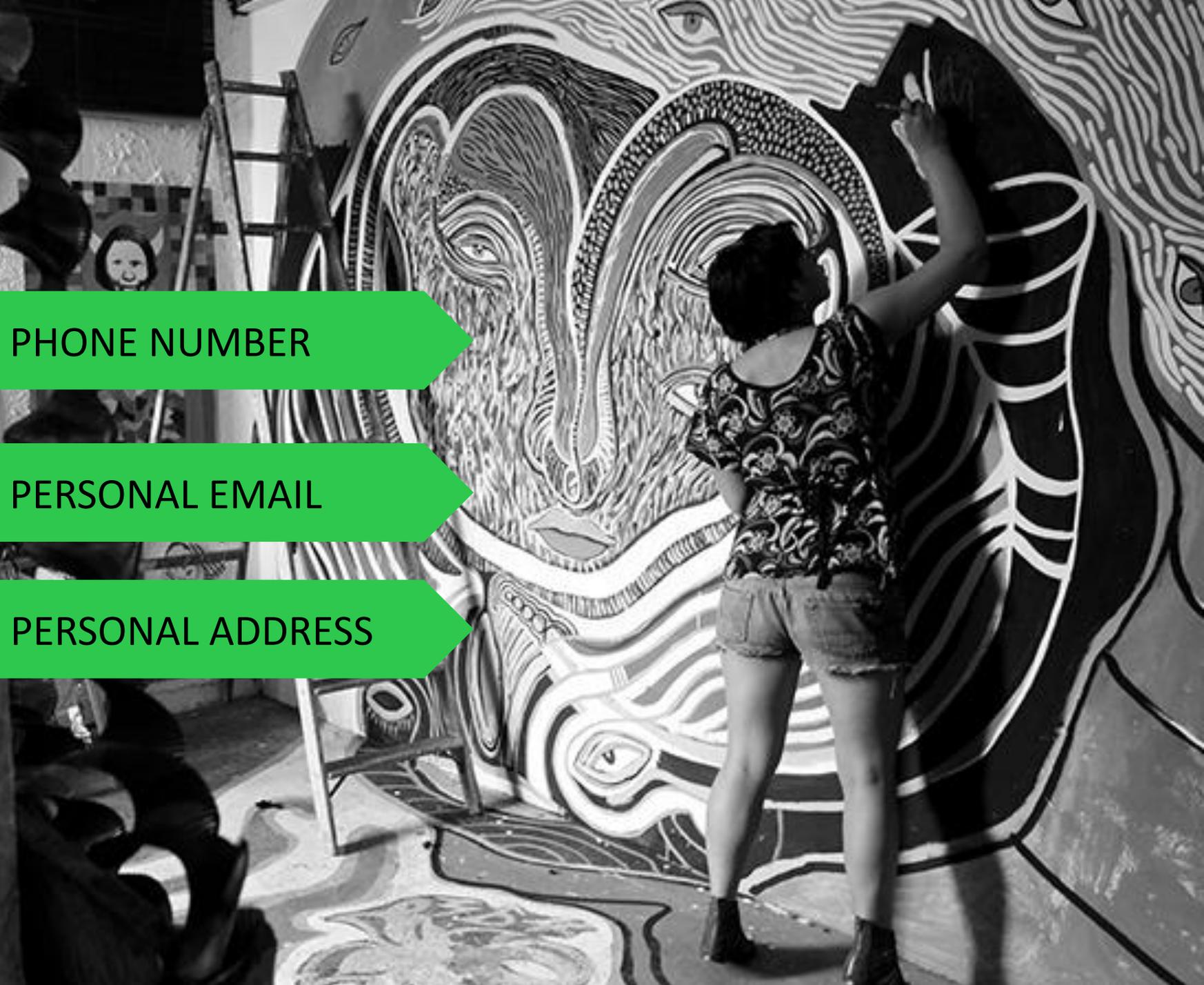
PHONE NUMBER

PERSONAL EMAIL

PERSONAL ADDRESS

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL DURING OPT

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

F-1 visa

If you plan to travel: F-1 visa must be valid when you re-enter USA

It is difficult to renew your F-1 visa during OPT / after graduation- It is not recommended

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

Before OPT is approved

Before MICA classes end

After Graduation

YOU SHOULD BE OKAY!

Standard: bring I-20 with travel signature, **valid** visa, passport, etc.

(Permission to re-enter is never guaranteed)

Your OPT application will be considered invalid and you will be denied.

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

After OPT is approved

Have a job/ job offer

International travel should be fine!

Bring with you…
- Passport valid 6 months into the future
- A **valid** F-1 visa
- Your OPT I-20 with a valid travel signature
- EAD
- **Job offer letter (REQUIRED)**

No job/ job offer

International travel is very risky

Re-entry may be denied at the US border if you are not able to present proof of OPT employment
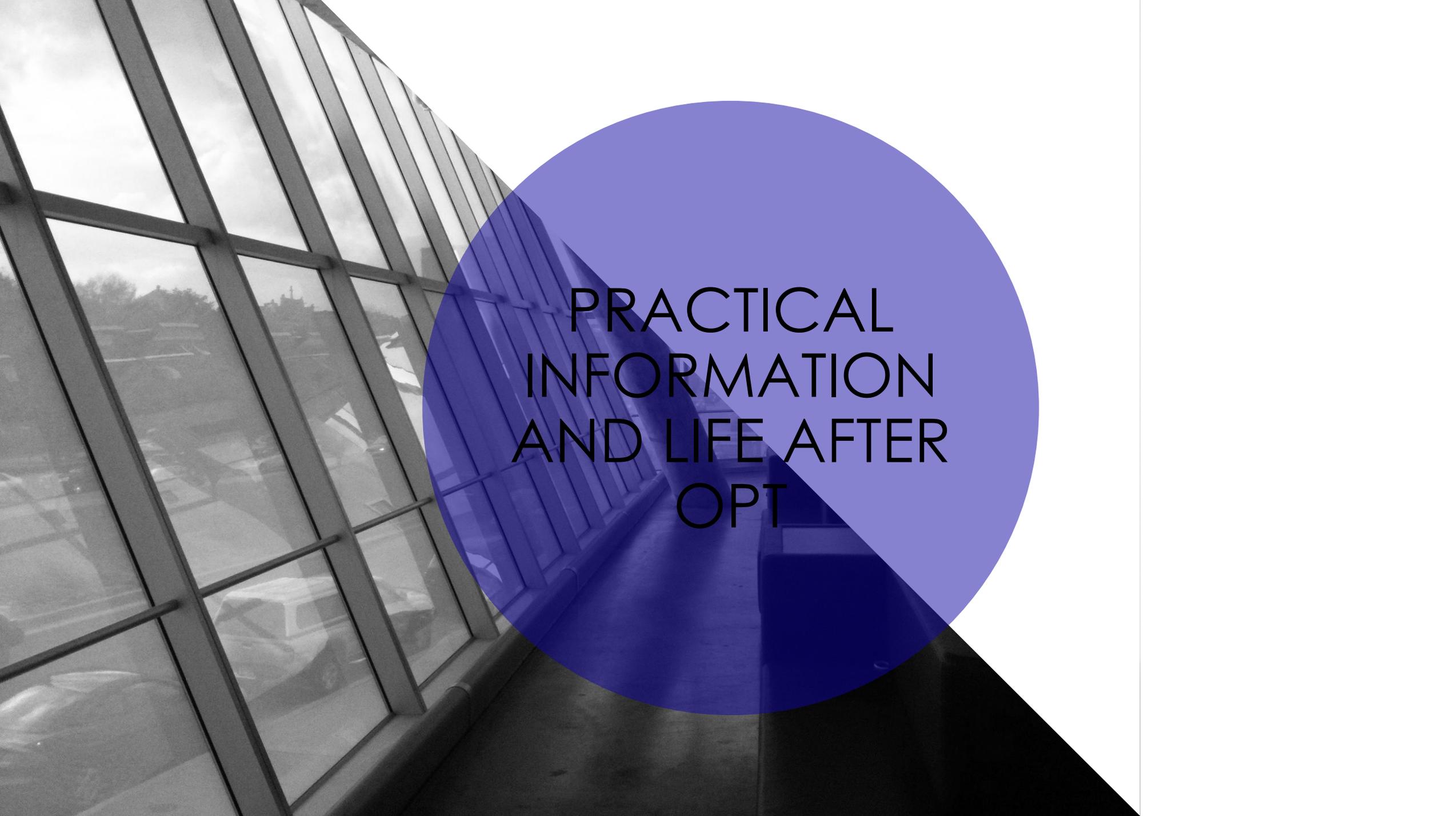
PRACTICAL INFORMATION AND LIFE AFTER OPT

PRACTICAL INFORMATION
WHILE ON OPT

DRIVER'S LICENSE
Your driver's license may only be valid until your I-20 end date. You may need to visit the MVA with your EAD card.

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER
If you don't have a SSN and did not apply for one with your OPT application, you may apply for one *before* you get a job, *after* you receive your EAD card.

TAXES
Don't forget that you must file taxes even if you have not earned money. Tax forms are due April 15th each year.

HEALTH INSURANCE
After you graduate, you will no longer be eligible for MICA Health Insurance. You should sign up for an insurance plan on your own. The Affordable Care Act requires "Resident Alien" F-1 visa-holders to have ACA insurance or pay a fee. Check with the IRS to determine if you are a "Residential Alien."

AFTER OPT

IF YOU WORK THROUGHOUT OPT AND DO NOT REACH 90 DAYS OF UNEMPLOYMENT…

Plan to leave the USA After OPT?
Must leave within 60 days of OPT end date
Not allowed to work or study during these 60 days
May travel around the US during those 60 days
Once you leave, you may not reenter on your F-1 visa

Plan to study in the USA after OPT?
Arrange to transfer your SEVIS record before the end of your 60 days after the end of OPT
After those 60 days, you will need to get a new SEVIS ID

Animation or Graphic Design Major?
Apply for STEM OPT for the additional 24 months of OPT.

Been sponsored for a H1-B work visa?
Work with your employer and immigration lawyers to change your immigration status

Applying for another visa type? (K-, O-, TN-)
Make sure you start the process early and work with an immigration lawyer

BE CAREFUL!
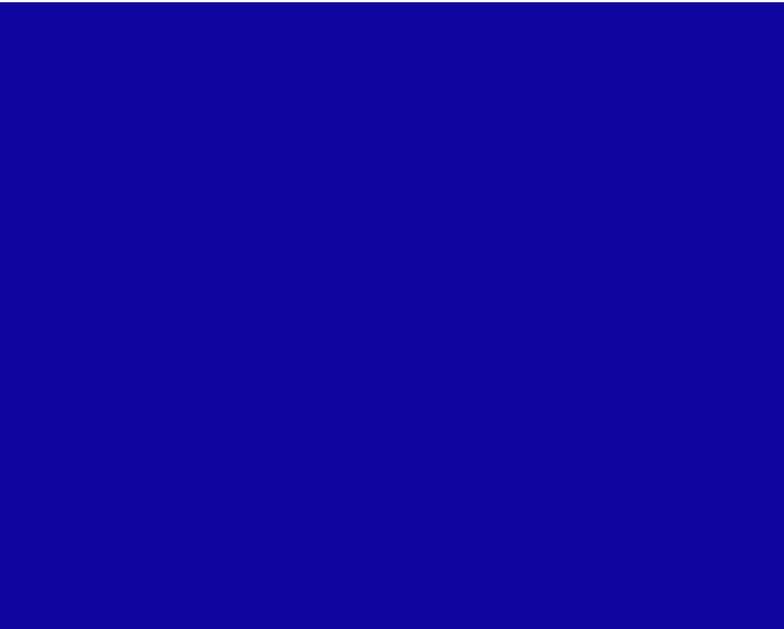
IF YOU WORK THROUGHOUT OPT AND REACH 90 DAYS OF UNEMPLOYMENT…

Must prepare to leave the U.S.!
Once you leave, you may not reenter on your F-1 visa

If you apply to a new program in the U.S.…
Arrange to receive a new I-20 from the new program. You will get a new SEVIS ID and will need to pay a new SEVIS fee.

GOOD LUCK!

Questions?