

Eastern Washington University – Office of Controller

Foreign National Honorarium Procedure

United States statutes restrict types of employment allowed for foreign nationals. An honorarium can only be paid for specific visa type holders. These visa types include B-1 Visitor for Business, B-2 Visitor for Tourism, VWB Visa Waiver for Business, and VWT Visa Waiver for Tourism. Travel expenses may only be reimbursed to individuals holding a B-1 or VWB visa. Individuals holding a B-2 visa may only be paid for an honorarium if they are currently in the United States. If traveling to the U.S. specifically for the speaking engagement, the individual must obtain a B-1 visa.

Evidence of required qualifications for B or VW visas must be provided to EWU via copies of the identity page of the passport, and copies of the visa or port of entry stamp in the passport, which is updated once the individual has entered the U.S. It is the responsibility of the organizing department to make sure all foreign national honorarium rules are followed.

Honorarium rules restrict the amount of time and number of payments a foreign national can be paid for services such as lecturing, teachings, and sharing of knowledge or performance. These types of services must be considered usual academic activity, must be for 9 days or less at EWU, and must include no more than 5 educational institutions in the previous 6 months. If these requirements are not met because the foreign national exceeds the rule, he/she may still come to EWU to speak, however he/she cannot receive payment for the event.

J-1 and F-1 scholars may be eligible for honorarium payments provided they receive written authorization in advance from their sponsoring institution. To qualify for compensation, the activity must be short-term, an exchange for expertise that furthers the goals of the exchange, benefit the professional career development of the scholar with incidental benefits to the employer, and not delay the completion of the scholar's program.

Evidence of required qualifications for J-1 or F-1 scholars must be provided via copies of the permission letter from the sponsoring institution, and copies of the DS-2019 or I-20 form.

An invitation letter is required from the organizing department to the foreign national communicating the details of the activity. The letter should specify the name of the activity, the date of the event, the amount that will be paid, whether travel expenses will be reimbursed, and contact information for the organizing department.

Payments to foreign nationals are subject to a 30% withholding tax rate unless a tax treaty exists between the U.S. and the foreign country. If a tax treaty does exist between countries, and the traveler wishes to take advantage of treaty benefits, the traveler must provide EWU with his/her U.S. SSN or ITIN number via the IRS form 8233. If the foreign national does not have a U.S. SSN or ITIN but would like to claim tax treaty benefits, he/she must apply for an ITIN via the IRS form W-7. It is the responsibility of the organizing department and the foreign national traveler to coordinate these requirements and provide them to EWU Accounts Payable to facilitate payment.

The attached checklist is provided to assist the organizing department and ensure all necessary steps are taken to properly document the honorarium process. The checklist details pre-arrival planning, requirements once the individual has arrived on campus, documents required by EWU Accounts Payable, and how payment will be delivered.

The following forms are available on our website:

<https://sites.ewu.edu/financialservices/office-of-controller/tax-compliance/>

IRS form W-7

IRS Form 8233

IRS Publication 515

IRS International Taxpayers

IRS Tax Treaties