

Seoul Metropolitan-Recommended Visa

The Key to **Seoul** for Global Talent



SEOUL METROPOLITAN
GOVERNMENT

What is the Seoul Metropolitan-Recommended Visa?

A new special visa program designed by the Seoul Metropolitan-Recommended Visa and approved by the Ministry of Justice, targeting international students who represent the next generation of talent in STEM and related fields such as robotics, AI, biotechnology, and FinTech.

Eligible Universities & Visiting Students	International students (D-2, D-4 visa holders) enrolled in bachelor' s (associate), master's, or doctoral degrees in STEM fields * STEM(Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) · Participating universities (17) ※ Additional universities may be added in the future.
Validity Period	From admission date to graduation date

What the Seoul Metropolitan-Recommended Visa Offers You

You may be permitted to work additional hours in part-time jobs, and a leave of absence may be granted during your internship period. (once per year)

Type	Current Student Visa (D-2)	Seoul Metropolitan-Recommended Visa
Part-time Work Hours	Undergraduate/associate degree: Up to 25 hours/week ※ Weekends/Breaks : Unlimited	Up to 30 hours/week ※ +5 hours/week if certain conditions are met ※ Weekends/Breaks : Unlimited
Internship	Leave of absence not permitted	Leave of absence permitted (once per year) ※ Completion of Level 4 in the Social Integration Program required

Seoul Metropolitan-Recommended Visa Application Procedure

Type	Student Recommendation	Recommendation Letter Issuance	MOJ Application and Approval		
1 Confirmation of Visa Issuance	University Recommendation (Univ. → Seoul)	Local Gov. Recommendation Issuance	Local Immigration Office - Application for CVI - Submit the <u>original</u> recommendation letter	Overseas Mission - Visa application	Local Immigration Office - Foreign residence registration only, no recommendation letter needed
2 Visa Application		SMG Recommendation Issuance	Overseas Mission - Application for visa - Submit a <u>copy</u> recommendation letter	Local Immigration Office - Foreign residence registration - Submit the <u>original</u> recommendation letter	
3 Change of Status of Stay			Local Immigration Office - Application for the change of status of stay - Submit the <u>original</u> recommendation letter		

※ For the Seoul Metropolitan Government–recommended visa, applicants may apply only through the Visa Application (2nd method) or the Change of Status of Stay (3rd method).

What You Can do with the Seoul Metropolitan-Recommended Visa



How to apply for part- time work permission

① Academic Performance Requirement

Maintain a minimum GPA of C (2.0) or higher for the most recent semester at the time of application.

※ This requirement is waived if your transcript for the first semester after admission has not yet been issued.

② Korean language Proficiency

College Type	TOPIK	Social integration program	Sejong University Korean language training course
Bachelor's / Associate Degree (Freshman-Sophomore)	TOPIK Level 3 or above	Completion of Level 3 or above, or pre-evaluation score of 61 or above	Intermediate 1 Course or above
Bachelor's (3-4 years), Master's, Doctorate Degree	TOPIK Level 4 or above	Completion of Level 4 or above, or pre-evaluation score of 81 or above	Intermediate 2 Course or above

※ ① Applicants with English-language test scores equal to or higher than TOEFL 530 (CBT 197, iBT 71), IELTS 5.5, CEFR B2, TEPS 601, or NEW TEPS 327 are exempt from the Korean language proficiency requirement.

※ ② Students from countries where English is an official or native language are exempt from submitting language proficiency documents.

③ Permitted Part-Time Work Hours

1) Permitted Working Hours(current): Up to 30 hours per week during the semester (for all degree types)

2) Working Hour Extensions

- **Additional Weekday Hours** : An extra 5 hours per week if you:
 - ① Attend a certified university
 - ② Have an outstanding GPA of A (4.0) or higher in the most recent semester
 - ③ Hold TOPIK Level 5 or above, or completed Level 5 of the Social Integration Program or passed its comprehensive evaluation.
- **Unlimited Weekend/Holiday/Vacation Hours** : Students holding a D-2 visa who meet the Korean language proficiency requirement may work without any hourly limits on weekends, public holidays, or during academic breaks.

※ Regardless of priority hour eligibility, all students must obtain a part-time work permit in advance.

3) Exceptions

- Students who do not meet the Korean language proficiency requirement may still work up to 50% of the standard hourly limit regardless of their academic status
 - ※ Up to 10 hours per week for associate degree or undergraduate students
 - ※ Up to 15 hours per week for master's or doctoral students

Permitted Part-Time Work Hour Criteria

College Type	School Year	Proficiency in Korean ① TOPIK ② Kore Immigration & Integration Program (KIIP) ③ King Sejong Institute		When to start	Allowed Hours		Certified Univ., High-GPA, Korean Proficiency
					Weekdays	Weekend/Vacation	
Associate Degree	-	1. TOPIK Level 3 2. Social Integration Program (Level 3+) or pre-evaluation score above 61 3. Completion of King Sejong Institute's Intermediate 1 course	X	Immediately	10hrs		10hrs
Bachelor's Degree	1st-2nd year		O		30hrs	Unlimited	35hrs
			X		10hrs		10hrs
			O		30hrs	Unlimited	35hrs
		Master's / Doctorate	3rd-4th year		1. TOPIK Level 4 2. Level 4+ Social Integration Program or pre-evaluation score above 81 3. Completion of King Sejong Institute's Intermediate 2 course	X	10hrs
O	30hrs					Unlimited	35hrs
X	15hrs					15hrs	
O	30hrs					Unlimited	35hrs





How to Take a Leave of Absence for an Internship

① Enrollment Requirement

You must have completed: At least 3 semesters in an associate degree program, or at least 3 years in a bachelor's degree program. No prior enrollment duration is required for master's or doctoral students.

※ Exceptions: Students granted an extension for thesis preparation or holding a D-2-5 (research abroad) visa are not eligible.

② Academic Performance Requirement :

Maintain a minimum GPA of B (3.0) or higher in the most recent semester as of the application date

※ This requirement is waived for master's/doctoral students if their first-semester transcript is not yet available.

③ Korean Language Proficiency Requirement :

Completion of Level 4 or higher in the Social Integration Program (or TOPIK Level 4 or above)

※ ① Applicants with English-language test scores equal to or higher than TOEFL 530 (CBT 197, iBT 71), IELTS 5.5, CEFR B2, TEPS 601, or NEW TEPS 327 are exempt from the Korean language proficiency requirement.

※ ② Students from English-speaking countries are exempt from submitting language proficiency scores.

④ Leave Duration :

Up to 1 year per degree program

Associate degree students: up to 6 months (once only)

• Internship Activities

Internships* are allowed in professional fields (E-1 to E-7) at external institutions or companies.

*This applies to cases where a contract has been signed for an internship in a permitted field (E-1 to E-7), with a fixed training allowance provided. Part-time employment is allowed even if the internship is not related to course credit.

• Permitted Work Hours

No hourly limits apply to part-time work once all eligibility criteria are met.

※ Approval for part-time employment must still be obtained.

• Exemption from Filing Student Status Changes

If you meet the above criteria and register your leave of absence for internships with your university, you are not required to visit the immigration office for status changes.

※ Standard D-2 visa review procedures apply upon both re-entry and departure.

※ All other documentation and procedures must comply with the Guidelines for the Issuance and Status Management of Visas for International Students.



Q&A

1. What is the difference between the Seoul Metropolitan-Recommended Visa and a D-2 student visa?

The entry procedures for the Seoul Metropolitan-Recommended Visa are the same as those for D-2 student visa. The difference is that Seoul Metropolitan-Recommended Visa holders must submit a recommendation letter from the Mayor of Seoul when applying for a visa or a change of status. We will continue to provide updated information on Seoul to all Seoul Metropolitan-Recommended Visa holders.

2. What happens if I receive the Seoul Metropolitan-Recommended Visa but fail to meet academic or other requirements?

There is no penalty. Only the benefits granted to Seoul Metropolitan-Recommended Visa holders such as extended part-time work hours or a leave of absence for internships will be restricted. You may continue all activities allowed under a D-2 student visa.

3. What is the biggest benefit of the Seoul Metropolitan-Recommended Visa?

It will offer a wide range of programs to support adaptation to life in Seoul and campus life during the early stages. Moreover, access to internship opportunities will be provided to promote employment and long-term settlement in Korea.

4. Can currently enrolled university students apply for the Seoul Metropolitan-Recommended Visa?

Since this program is intended to attract new international students, currently enrolled students are not eligible. The Seoul Metropolitan-Recommended Visa will be available to newly admitted university students starting from their first year.



Benefits of the Seoul Metropolitan-Recommended Visa

01

Chance to Join the "30 Days in Seoul"* program

* A social integration program for international students that offers career and entrepreneurship workshops, along with cultural and tourism experiences throughout Seoul.

① Eligible Participants

International students currently enrolled at universities located in Seoul.

- **Newcomer Program (50 students)** : International students who have lived in Korea for less than one year

※ Priority will be given to participants of the Seoul Metropolitan-Recommended Visa.

- **Settlement Support Track (250 participants)** : International students, including undergraduate and graduate students, who wish to settle in Seoul.

※ Additional selection points will be awarded to participants of the Seoul Metropolitan-Recommended Visa.

② Program Period

3rd (Apr-Jun)	4th (Jul-Aug)	5th (Oct-Nov)
Career-Prep Program (75)	Career-Prep Program (100)	Career-Prep Program (75)
Newcomer Program (Apr-Nov)		
An annual experiential program for international students staying less than a year (75)		

③ Program Structure

A 30-day program divided into 3 themed journeys

(Education Journey / Seoul Journey / Employment Journey)

Education Journey	Essential training modules covering entrepreneurship, career development, job-specific skills, and industry exploration
Career	Korean workplace culture, real-life experiences of professionals working in Korea, resume and personal statement writing
Entrepreneurship	Startup ecosystem analysis & business idea development, business model creation and business valuation
Job Skills	Digital literacy & emerging technology trends, business planning & marketing fundamentals, generative AI tool applications, and more
Industry Exploration	more Career tours (office visits)
Seoul Journey	Group-based cultural experiences across all 25 districts of Seoul:
Artisan studio tours, one-day Taekwondo & fencing workshops, K-pop dance classes, pottery workshops	
Employment Journey	Comprehensive Support including visa issuance counseling provided by an administrative attorney, TOPIK exam fee support Korean language and culture training
Life in Korea	Practical tips for daily life in Korea, administrative and legal guidance, support for adapting to local communities and cultural norms, writing in Korean, business-level Korean communication skills
Entrepreneurship	Practical Korean for business settings, business

02

Providing a stepping stone to future careers through partnerships with internship programs

Offering connections to diverse internship programs

(Internship Program with Seoul AI Hub Resident Companies)

promoted by Seoul

Education

- Basic vocational competencies
- Advanced job training and more

+

Internship

- Public institutions
- Private associations/Enterprises

03

Providing dedicated living support programs

Facilitating information sharing on counseling, education, and cultural experience opportunities offered by foreigner support centers in Seoul

Name	Details	
Seoul Global Center		Living guidance, professional consultations (legal, tax, etc.), psychological counseling
Seoul Global International Student Support Center		Educational programs to support settlement in Seoul (including residency, legal rights, housing, personal safety, computer skills, Korean language, and cultural experiences)
Foreigner Resident Center		Career counseling, entrepreneurship training programs
Global Village Center		Support programs for volunteering and cultural experience activities





Foreigner Support Facility



Information on
Foreigner
Support Facilities



- Seoul Global Center
- Seoul Global International Student Support Center
- Global Village Center
- Seoul Global Youth Education Center
- Foreign Resident Center

Seoul Global Center

Jongno-gu

Attracting global talent & supporting foreign residents



Seoul Global International Student Support Center

11-3(1dong), 11-9(2dong), Yonsei-ro 2-da-gil, Seodaemun-gu, Seoul, Korea

Seodaemun-gu

Providing international students and other global talents with dedicated spaces including classrooms, meeting rooms, and community lounges to assist stable settlement

Global Village Center

Seongbuk-gu

Mapo-gu

Yongsan-gu

Geumcheon-gu

Seocho-gu

Gangnam-gu

Offering Korean language classes, cultural experience programs, global festivals, and community events in neighborhoods with high concentration of foreign residents and immigrants



Foreign Resident Center

Yeongdeungpo-gu

Eunpyeong-gu

Seongbuk-gu

Seongdong-gu

Gangdong-gu

Yangcheon-gu

Geumcheon-gu

Supporting for stable life in Korea and integration into local communities by providing counseling, education, and vocational training for foreign workers



Seoul Global Youth Education Center

Yeongdeungpo-gu

Supporting the cultivation of Seoul's global citizens by providing essential foundational education and a tailored support system to help recently arrived immigrant youth integrate into Korean community



2026 Seoul Metropolitan-Recommended Visa Participating Universities

No	University	Phone	Email	Note
1	Konkuk University	82-2-2049-6224	iadmissions@konkuk.ac.kr	
2	Kyung Hee University	82-31-201-3961	youjins@khu.ac.kr	
3	Korea University	82-2-3290-1358	my2mell@korea.ac.kr	
4	Kookmin University	82-2-910-5804	sook81@kookmin.ac.kr	
5	Sahmyook University	82-2-3399-3606	you2i2@syu.ac.kr	
6	Sogang University	82-2-705-7973	gradsch@sogang.ac.kr	
7	SEOUL TECH	82-2-970-9223	ksj1231@seoultech.ac.kr	
8	aSSIST University	82-2-360-0717	ynim@assist.ac.kr	
9	Seoul National University	82-2-880-4447	aivason2@snu.ac.kr	
10	University of Seoul	82-2-6490-6657~9	hmha32@uos.ac.kr	
11	Seoul Women's University	82-2-970-5142	jhj@swu.ac.kr	In-person consultation: Room 303, 50th Anniversary Hall at Seoul Women's Univ.
12	Sungkyunkwan University	82-2-760-0023	anita1001@skku.edu	
13	Sungshin Women's University	82-2-920-7753	global@sungshin.ac.kr hnmnmjo@sungshin.ac.kr	Instagram : sswu_intl
14	Sejong University	82-2-3408-3811	jelee0602@sejong.ac.kr	
15	Soongsil University	82-2-820-0253	chem_dw@ssu.ac.kr	
16	Chung-Ang University	82-2-820-6117	jjyy99@cau.ac.kr	
17	Hanyang Women's University	82-2-2290-2232	studyinhyw@hywoman.ac.kr	

※ Universities are listed in Korean alphabetical order

※ More universities may be added in the future.

※ Majors eligible for the Seoul Metropolitan-Recommended Visa are primarily in STEM and related fields.
Each student may contact their university to confirm their eligibility.