

## **RUSSIAN VISA:**

### **Visa support letter (invitation)**

Virtually all travelers to Russia need an entry visa, which is a document, stuck into the applicant's passport. The earliest arrival and the latest departure dates are indicated on the visa and must be observed. Students have to apply for the visa at a visa department of a Russian Consulate or Embassy in their home country. The school will provide participants with a necessary letter of invitation.

**Tourist visa:** For students wishing to study **four weeks or less**, we will arrange a simple invitation, which entitles the student to apply for a **tourist visa**. The tourist visa is **valid for one entry and for maximum 30 days**. In order to proceed, we need to have the following information:

- Full name and last name
- Nationality
- Date of birth
- Passport number and expiry date

A tourist visa cannot be prolonged.

**Short-term student visa:** Students wishing to study **more than four weeks** need to apply for a **student visa**. The student visa is **valid for one entry and for maximum 90 days**. In this case the invitation will be issued by the Russian Ministry of Interior Affairs.

This procedure takes up to four weeks. We need the following documents and information about the student to file the student letter of invitation:

- Clear passport copy with all relevant personal data (full name and first name, date and place of birth, nationality), passport number, passport issue and expiry dates, issuing authority and place of issue, any prolongation remarks. We need the copy either by fax or scanned and sent by e-mail. **Please note that the passport must remain valid for three months beyond the Russian visa expiry date.**
- Exact length of stay (allow for some extra-days). It is extremely difficult to prolong a visa inside Russia!
- Place of application for the visa (city, country)
- Permanent home address, phone/fax number
- Place of work/study; job title, position, exact address of work or study, contact phone/fax

**Business visa:** For students wishing to study **more than 3 months (90 days)** we will obtain a business letter of invitation, which entitles to apply for a **business visa**. The business visa is **valid for 1 year and allows for multiple entries**.

The business invitation is issued by the Russian Ministry of Interior Affairs. This procedure takes up to four weeks. To file for a business letter of invitation we need **the same documents and information about the course participant as for the student letter of invitation** (see above).

A business letter of invitation looks the same as a student visa support letter. However, there are some different items: number of entries - multiple; period (days) – 365; purpose of visit – commercial (or business).

### **Visa application procedure**

The visa-fee depends on the price policy of each consulate and on the applicant's nationality. The following items are needed to file an application for a Russian visa:

- Completed visa application form (available at any Russian consulate)
- Visa support letter (invitation), either for a tourist, a student or a business visa 2)
- One recent passport-sized photo
- Valid passport
- Health insurance policy (required by some Russian consulates especially for stays longer than 4 weeks)
- HIV test certificate (only for stays longer than three months)

Some consulates will deliver the visa by mail. Students should allow minimum three weeks for the procedure. Last-minute visa is possible, but usually doubles the price. **When the visa is issued, it is important to check if all relevant data on the visa are correct!**

1) The application form for a business visa is completed in the same way as for a student visa BUT with **three differences**:

1. Object of journey – business;
2. Period of stay (Date of entry and Date of departure) should not extend one year;
3. Number of entries: multiple entry.

2) Please note that the visa support letter for student and business visas must be supplied as original (no fax, no scan) to Russian consulates in the following countries: France, Italy, Portugal, Spain, The Netherlands. In this case, we send the visa support letter by airmail directly to the student.

### **Russian Consulates**

Following websites will help locate the nearest Russian consulate:

- <http://www.russianembassy.net>
- <http://www.russianembassy.biz>
- <http://www.russian-embassy.info>
- <http://www.waytorussia.net/RussianVisa/RussianConsulates.html>
- [http://www.ln.mid.ru/zu\\_r.nsf/stracons](http://www.ln.mid.ru/zu_r.nsf/stracons) (in Russian only)

### **Some embassies and consulates maintain their own website:**

Australia	<a href="http://www.sydneyrussianconsulate.com">http://www.sydneyrussianconsulate.com</a>
Austria	<a href="http://www.austria.mid.ru">http://www.austria.mid.ru</a>
Bulgaria	<a href="http://www.bulgaria.mid.ru">http://www.bulgaria.mid.ru</a>
Canada	<a href="http://www.rusembcanada.mid.ru">http://www.rusembcanada.mid.ru</a>
Czech Republic	<a href="http://www.czech.mid.ru">http://www.czech.mid.ru</a>
Denmark	<a href="http://www.denmark.mid.ru">http://www.denmark.mid.ru</a>
Estonia	<a href="http://www.estonia.mid.ru">http://www.estonia.mid.ru</a>
Finland	<a href="http://www.finland.mid.ru">http://www.finland.mid.ru</a>
France	<a href="http://www.france.mid.ru">http://www.france.mid.ru</a>
Germany	<a href="http://www.russische-botschaft.de">http://www.russische-botschaft.de</a>
India	<a href="http://www.india.mid.ru">http://www.india.mid.ru</a>
Ireland	<a href="http://www.ireland.mid.ru">http://www.ireland.mid.ru</a>
Israel	<a href="http://www.israel.mid.ru">http://www.israel.mid.ru</a>
Italy	<a href="http://www.ambrusital.mid.ru">http://www.ambrusital.mid.ru</a>
Japan	<a href="http://www.embassy-avenue.jp/russia/index.htm">http://www.embassy-avenue.jp/russia/index.htm</a>
Lithuania	<a href="http://www.lithuania.mid.ru">http://www.lithuania.mid.ru</a>
Netherlands	<a href="http://www.netherlands.mid.ru">http://www.netherlands.mid.ru</a>
Norway	<a href="http://www.norway.mid.ru">http://www.norway.mid.ru</a>
Poland	<a href="http://www.poland.mid.ru">http://www.poland.mid.ru</a>
Slovakia	<a href="http://www.slovakia.mid.ru">http://www.slovakia.mid.ru</a>
Slovenia	<a href="http://www.rus-slo.mid.ru">http://www.rus-slo.mid.ru</a>
Spain	<a href="http://www.spain.mid.ru">http://www.spain.mid.ru</a>
Sweden	<a href="http://www.sweden.mid.ru">http://www.sweden.mid.ru</a>
Switzerland	<a href="http://www3.itu.int/missions/Russia">http://www3.itu.int/missions/Russia</a>
UK	<a href="http://www.switzerland.mid.ru">http://www.switzerland.mid.ru</a>
USA	<a href="http://www.russianembassy.org">http://www.russianembassy.org</a>

### **Visa registration**

The school must register all students within three days after arrival at the local office of the Ministry of the Interior. Registration of a visa normally takes two working days. We always hand out passport and visa copies during the registration process. Students can use these copies as valid documents while changing money, traveller's cheques (at some places), etc. Visa registration costs are payable together with the course and accommodation fees .

### **Visa period of validity and extension**

- **A tourist visa** is valid for maximum four weeks (30 days) and it is impossible to extend it. Tourist visas are only valid for one entry.
- **A short-term student visa** is valid for one entry and maximum 3 months (90 days). Extending the student visa in Russia is very difficult, time consuming and implies complicated bureaucratic procedures. That is why for students staying for more than three months we arrange a business visa.
- **A business visa** is valid for multiple entries and for maximum one year (365 days). Russian authorities require an **HIV test** for all visitors staying longer than 3 months.