

Applying for Your Student Visa: Italy

What is a visa?

A visa is official authorization allowing you to enter a country and travel, work, live, or study there for a specific period of time. Generally, a visa is an elaborate stamp that is sealed onto one of the pages of your passport. Visas are issued to American citizens by a foreign country's Embassy or Consulate located in the United States. Every country has its own regulations governing the issuance of visas.

Do I need a visa to go to Italy?

A visa is required for all students travelling to Italy for the purpose of study, research or internship. Regardless of your length of stay, a student visa is required. Students (short and long- term stay) are except from visa application fees. All foreigners (including students) must report to the QUESTURA of the city where they are staying to obtain a PERMESSO DI SOGGIORNO (Permit to Stay) within 8 days of entry into Italy.

What do I need to apply for a visa to Italy?

You need the following documents to apply for a visa:

- **A valid passport, good for three months after the date you will leave Italy;**
 - ❖ Please see page 1 in the Study Abroad Handbook for how to apply for a passport.
 - ❖ Apply early for your passport! It may take 6-8 weeks to process your application.
- **A completed visa application form with one recent passport photograph** (2x2 inches in size, full face, front view, color), glued to the application;
- **Driver's license or State I.D** proving residence in this consular jurisdiction;
 - ❖ **For non-US citizens**, proof of legal residence in the US. (Alien Registration Card)
- **Letters of Acceptance:**
 - a) Letter from the U.S Academic Institution stating that the applicant is currently enrolled and admitted to its foreign affiliate or branch or to an Italian school, and;
 - b) Letter in Italian from the Host University in Italy stating that the applicant has been admitted.Note: These letters must indicate: (1) the name of the student, (2) The complete name and address of the school in Italy, (3) The exact period of study including day/month/year and weekly hours, (4) That tuition, room and board and health insurance are covered or that the student has made arrangements with the Academic Institution for the same. (Both letters must be on original letterhead of the school, stamped with the official seal of the Institution and signed by an official representative) Include the original plus one copy of each letter.
- **Proof of Funds:** Please note that the financial information is confidential, required of all applicants, and must be present on file. Student must show that they have access to no less than €350.57 for each month of the academic year. This can be proven through:
 - guarantee of financial resources by accredited Italian institutions or agencies, local governments, or foreign institutions or agencies considered trustworthy by the Italian Diplomatic Representation
 - For self-sufficient students: include the following: original letter from the bank on bank letterhead and with a bank official's signature, indicating the exact balance. A minimum of US\$900 per month of stay is required. This letter must be recently dated. If the applicant is a recipient of financial aid, a letter from the Financial Aid Adviser/Office, stating the semester costs, the amount of aid awarded, etc., must also be submitted.
 - For students financially dependent on their parents: all of the following items are required: (a) Affidavit of Support from the parents addressed to the appropriate consulate, stating that the parents will assume full financial responsibility for any and all expenses incurred by the student during his/her stay in Italy. The signature must be notarized. (b) Original letter from

parent's bank on bank letterhead with a bank official's signature, indicating the exact balance. A minimum of 900 \$U.S per month in Italy is required. This letter must have a recent date.

- **Round trip flight reservations.**
 - **Proof of medical insurance coverage for the entire period of your program;** Within eight days of arrival in Italy, proof of health insurance must be shown to local Police Office (*Questura*), the authority in charge of issuing the “ *Permesso di Soggiorno per motive di studio*” (Residence Permit). According to Italian regulations, medical insurance must cover necessary medical expenses in Italy without any form of limitations, restrictions, or deductible, even if minimal. Depending on your insurance status, you will comply with the insurance requirement in one of the following ways:
 - you currently do not have a policy that satisfies the above requirement. In this case you need to complete the consular insurance affidavit form and choose option A. Form can be found at: http://www.consannfrancisco.esteri.it/Consolato_SanFrancisco/Menu/In_linea_con_utente/Moduli_stica/. In choosing Option A, you will be declaring that you will obtain an insurance policy with an Italian company immediately after your arrival in Italy and before applying for the “ *Permesso di Soggiorno*”
 - you currently have a policy that complies with the Italian requirements previously mentioned (insurance policy without any sort of deductible, restrictions or limitations). In this case you need to complete the consular insurance affidavit form, choosing option B, and attach a letter from the insurance company and/or a copy of your insurance policy.
 - **Proof of adequate lodgings available for the entire stay**
- ▶ Attention: This list may not be all-inclusive! Verify this information with the consulate with jurisdiction over your permanent residence, as the application process can change or may even vary by consulate.

How do I obtain a visa?

A. In person (Please note: You must apply for the visa in person, and you must apply at the consulate with jurisdiction over the state of which you are a resident.

- Take the above documents to the Italian consulate that has jurisdiction over your state of residence.
- Call the consulate before you visit to verify hours of operation, location and paperwork requirements.
- Avoid waiting until the last minute to apply for your visa, as omitting one document or failing to complete a form completely may delay the processing of your visa for weeks.

B. Via mail (Please note: In most cases you will be required to appear in person at the consulate to apply for the visa. If your visa application is submitted by International Programs, you will be able to apply by mail. Normal processing time is three to six weeks).

If you receive permission to apply for your visa via mail rather than in person, you should:

- Send all documents, including your passport, in a FedEx, US Overnight Mail, or other express mail service that provides a tracking number for your parcel, to the consulate. Keep a photocopy of all documents, including your passport, for yourself.
- Enclose a *postage paid* FedEx/US Overnight Mail envelope *addressed to yourself*. (Or include at extra US\$17.00 for the Spanish Consulate to return your visa via overnight mail.)
- Apply early: normal processing time is three to six weeks and cannot be started until all paperwork is submitted.
- Be sure all documents are in order. Missing documents may cause delays in the processing of your application.
- Do not leave the country until you have received your passport and visa.

General tips for applying for a visa:

Foreign embassies and consulates in the US receive hundreds of inquires every day so contacting them may be a trying experience. Have patience. Some consulates only receive visitors or calls during certain hours of the day or on certain days of the week; visit their website to learn their hours or call back at different times of the day.

You may find that you are placed on hold or that your call is never forwarded to the appropriate person. Don't be discouraged: be persistent, but polite. Remember that US consulates in foreign countries operate in a similar fashion!

Embassy of Italy and Primary U.S consulates

Embassy of Italy

3000 Whitehaven Street, N.W.

Washington, D.C., 20008

Tel (202) 612-4400

Fax (202) 518-2154

Email: stampa.washington@esteri.it

E-mail (Visa Office): visti.washington@esteri.it

Website: www.ambwashingtondc.esteri.it

Italian Consulate General SAN FRANCISCO

2590 Webster St.

San Francisco, CA 94115

Tel.: (415) 292-9210

Tel.: (415) 931-4924

Fax: (415) 931-7205

Homepage: <http://www.conssanfrancisco.esteri.it>

E-mail: visti.sanfrancisco@esteri.it

Jurisdiction: Alaska, California (except the following counties: Imperial Valley, Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Diego, Santa Barbara, San Bernardino, San Luis Obispo and Ventura, which fall within the jurisdiction of the Consulate General in Los Angeles), Idaho, **Montana**, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Hawai'i. Also, the following American territories of: Guam, Caroline Islands, Yap, Northern Mariana Islands.

Italian Consulate General CHICAGO

500 North Michigan Ave., Suite 1850

Chicago, IL 60611

Tel.: (312) 467-1550/1/2

Fax: (312) 467-1335

Homepage: <http://www.conschicago.esteri.it>

E-mail: centralino.chicago@esteri.it

Jurisdiction: Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin, Wyoming

Italian Consulate General LOS ANGELES

12400 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 300

Los Angeles, CA 90025

Tel.: (310) 820-0622

Tel.: (310) 826-6207

Fax: (310) 820-0727

Homepage: <http://www.conslosangeles.esteri.it>

E-mail: progettispeciali.losangele@esteri.it

Jurisdiction: Arizona, California (The following counties: Imperial Valley, Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, Santa Barbara, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Ventura), New Mexico, Nevada.