Applying for 24-month STEM OPT Extension
How to Apply for STEM OPT extension online

Do not submit an online application if you have already filed by mail.

These instructions are specific to applications for 24-Month OPT STEM Extension, which is I-765 eligibility code (c)(3)(C). Please use these instructions as a guide.

This resource is not offered as legal advice. Your OPT application remains your own, and any errors in your application are your responsibility.

You can apply for a STEM OPT Extension no earlier than the 90th day prior to the end of your EAD card.

We recommend using this planning tool provided by the Department of Homeland Security.
Steps with the International Student Office

1. Complete the OPT STEM Extension I-20 Request Form.
   • If you are applying for a STEM extension based on a degree prior to your most recent RIT degree, you must also complete the STEM Extension Based on Prior STEM Degree Form.

2. Complete pages 1-4 of the Form I-983 Training Plan for STEM OPT Students with your employer.
   • Digital signatures are accepted.
   • Form I-983 instructions and Form I-983 sample.

3. Pay ISS 2-Year Support Administrative Fee.
   1. Please pay the fee with a credit card (MasterCard or Visa). This fee will be used for ongoing ISS support to you as a graduate of RIT. Please save a copy of the emailed receipt.
Steps with the International Student Office

4. Email the ISS fee receipt*, OPT STEM Extension I-20 Request Form, and Form I-983 to OPTSTEM@rit.edu no more than 90 days prior to your EAD expiration date.
   • We will ask you to re-submit your request if received more than 90 days before your EAD expiration.
   • If your EAD card expires within 2 weeks of submission of your documents, please indicate that in the subject of your email.

5. Within 4-5 business days of receiving these documents, our office will issue your STEM I-20. After receiving the copy of the I-20 with the STEM OPT recommendation from us, you will sign it on the first page. This I-20 should be included with your application to USCIS for the STEM EAD card.
Steps with the USCIS

Gather and scan the required documents and **complete the online application** following the instructions in the next pages.

Your application must be received by USCIS no later than the end date on your EAD card and within 60 days of the creation of the STEM I-20. Otherwise, they will deny your request.

We strongly recommend that you keep a copy of your application for your records.
Gather and Scan Required Documentation

- **Passport style photograph.** Photos must be taken within the last 30 days and cannot have previously been used for a passport, visa, or other US government-related application. See [Department of State’s guidelines](https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/legal/consular/).  
- **Form I-94.** Provide a copy of your most recent I-94 arrival/admission record from [CBP’s website](https://www.cbp.gov/). Do not include the travel history page, only the I-94 with your name and most recent admission details.  
- **Previously-issued Employment Authorization Document (EAD) (scans of both front and back).** The copy you submit must clearly show your facial features and contain your biographical information.  
- **I-20 Recommending OPT STEM Extension.** Be sure you have signed and dated page 1.  
- **Copy of diploma or unofficial transcripts with degree conferral date**  
- **Employer’s E-Verify ID and Listed Name.** There is no need to scan this but keep the information ready.
After signing in to your account, select “File a form online” on the landing page:

Create a USCIS account and then file for OPT online

You may use your existing account if you have previously created one.
Then select “I-765, Application for Employment Authorization”
Basis of Eligibility

For 24-month STEM OPT extension of work, select (c)(3)(C) STEM Extension.
Verification of Employer

Provide your employer’s name and identification number listed in E-Verify.
Reason for Applying

What is your reason for applying?
- Select “Renewal of permission to accept employment”.

Have you previously filed Form I-765?
- Select “Yes”.
Preparer and Interpreter Information

Is someone assisting you with completing this application?

- Select “No”.

I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

Getting Started
- Basis of eligibility
- Reason for applying
- Preparer and Interpreter information

Is someone assisting you with completing this application?

- Yes
- No
About You

What is your current legal name?
- This name should match what is indicated on your passport. If you do not have a middle name you should leave the box blank; do NOT put N/A.

Have you used any other names since birth?
- If No, select “No” and continue to the next section.
- If Yes, select “Yes” and provide all other names you have ever used, including aliases, maiden name, and nicknames.
Your Contact Information

How May We Contact You?
- Enter your phone number and your mobile phone number (if different). If the numbers are the same, you can click “this is the same as my daytime telephone number”. Enter your email address (we recommend using a personal email address).

What is your current mailing address?
- Enter the mailing address where you wish to receive your EAD Card. The address must be within the US and should be valid for next 3-6 months until your OPT application is approved. If you believe you will change addresses within the next three months we recommend you instead list the address of a trusted friend or family member. If you choose to enter your friend’s or family member’s address, you must also include an “in care of” name. You may list a US Post Office address (PO Box) if you have one. Please do not use the ISS address.
Is your current mailing address the same as your physical address?

- Select "Yes" if your mailing address (where you would like your notices/EAD card from USCIS to be sent to) is the same as your physical address (where you live).
- Select "No" if it is not the same. If you check "No," you must then write your current address you live at in the “Where in the United States do you live?” question that will appear on your screen.
Describe Yourself

What is your gender?
- Mark the box that best describes you.

What is your marital status?
- Mark the box that best describes you.
When and Where Were You Born?

What is your city, town or village of birth? What is your state or province of birth? What is your country of birth?

- Fill in your place of birth information.

What is your date of birth?

- Ensure you've written the date of your birth in MONTH/DAY/YEAR format. For example, if you were born May 07, 1990, you would enter 05/07/1990.
Your Immigration Information

What is your country of citizenship or nationality?
- Type the name of the country or countries where you are currently a citizen or national. If you are a citizen or national of more than one country, select + Add Country to add all of the countries where you hold citizenship.

What is your Form I-94 Arrival-Departure Record Number (if any)?
- This information can be found on your most recent I-94 record under Admission Number. You can access your most recent I-94 [here](#). When you provide your record number, answer the question that will appear “When did you last arrive in the United States?”
  - List your arrival date, place of arrival, and status at arrival per your most recent I-94 record. If your ‘status’ listed says anything other than F-1, please call VIS for information about getting this information corrected.
What is the passport number of your most recently issued passport?

- Enter the passport number, found on the biography page of your currently-valid passport.

What is your travel document number (if any)?

- Leave this blank.

What is the expiration date of your passport or travel document?

- This information can be found on the biography page of your passport. Your passport should have at least 6 months' validity remaining from the date of your application to USCIS. Please speak with an ISS advisor before applying if your passport has expired or will expire within the next 6 months.

What country issued your passport or travel document?

- This information can be found on the biography page of your passport.
What is your current immigration status or category?

- Select “F-1 - Student, Academic or Language Program”

What is your Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) Number (if any)?

- Use the SEVIS number listed in the top left corner of your most recently issued I-20. Use the "Additional Information" section to include all previously used SEVIS numbers.
Other Information

What is your A-number?
- List the USCIS number on your EAD card.

What is your USCIS Online Account Number?
- Either list your account number (if you have one) or select “I do not have or know my USCIS online account number”.

Has the Social Security Administration (SSA) ever officially issued a Social Security card to you?
- If Yes, list your social security number in the box provided
- If No, select that you would like an SSN card, select “yes” to consent of disclosure” then list your parents’ birth names.
Evidence

In this section you will be able to upload the supporting documents you previously gathered in preparation for completing the I-765 form.

- **2 x 2 photo:**
  
  You can use the [Department of State's photo composition tools](#) to upload a photo that meets all the requirements.
Evidence

- Form I-94:

You can find your most recent I-94 on CBP’s website by selecting “Get Most Recent I-94”. Do not upload your travel history.
Evidence

- Employment Authorization Document:
  - Upload a copy of your EAD card for your initial OPT period
Evidence

- I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Non-Immigrant Student Status:
  Upload your I-20 recommending STEM OPT extension that was recently issued by an ISS advisor. Make sure you sign & date the first page. You cannot apply for OPT extension without the I-20 recommending OPT extension.
Evidence

- Copy of diploma or RIT unofficial transcripts that have your degree completion date
Evidence

- If you are filing for STEM based on your degree earned at RIT you can skip this section.
Additional Information

Include any other additional information you have received that should be included in your OPT application.

Example #1: If you have a previous SEVIS number:

- Section: Select "About You"
- Page: Select "Your immigration information"
- Question: Select "What is your Student and Exchange Visitor Information (SEVIS) Number (if any)?"
- Additional information: Enter your previous SEVIS ID number, degree level, and program dates. A previous SEVIS ID is a SEVIS ID other than what is on your most recently issued I-20. For example:
  - Previous SEVIS ID number: N0012345678
  - Program Dates: 09/05/2015 - 05/15/2017
  - Degree Level: High School
Review application, submit application, and pay fee

Once you review your application and no errors or incomplete fields pop up, you can submit, confirm you can read and understand English, and then digitally sign your application. You will then be taken to pay.gov to pay the application fee. You can pay with credit card, debit card, or US checking or savings account. No biometrics fee is required, only the I-765 application fee.
Thank You

Questions? www.rit.edu/iss/contact