Visa Options for Business Events such as Conferences, Meetings or Seminars

International Event Coordinator Network (IECN)

Visa information

While this fact sheet provides an outline of the most common business visas, please note there are many visa options available for visiting Australia. The appropriate visa will depend, amongst other things, on the person's purpose for visiting.

All visitors to Australia must have a valid visa to travel to and enter Australia (other than New Zealand passport holders who will normally be granted a Special Category visa on arrival, provided they meet health and character requirements; and permanent residents of Norfolk Island who may be granted a Permanent Resident of Norfolk Island visa on arrival).

Visa options

If you are planning to visit Australia for a business event such as a conference, meeting or seminar, you need to apply for a business visitor visa. The passport which you hold determines whether you can apply online, or if you need to lodge a paper-based application. The following information will help you identify the right visa and application process applicable to you.

Online applications

eVisitor

European Union (EU) passport holders, and some other European passport holders, are eligible to apply individually online for an eVisitor visa to travel to and enter Australia. For a business event, the most appropriate visa is the eVisitor (Business stream) visa.

eVisitor eligible countries

Andorra	France	Lithuania	Republic of San Marino
Austria	Germany	Luxembourg	Slovak Republic
Belgium	Greece	Malta	Slovenia
Bulgaria	Hungary	Monaco	Spain
Cyprus	Iceland	The Netherlands	Sweden
Czech Republic	Ireland	Norway	Switzerland
Denmark	Italy	Poland	United Kingdom – British Citizen
Estonia	Latvia	Portugal	Vatican City
Finland	Liechtenstein	Romania	

A separate online eVisitor (Tourist stream) application is required for each family member who holds a passport from an eligible country and wishes to travel with you to Australia, including children under the age of 18 who are included on your passport. Applications for eVisitor visas are free.

Further information on the eVisitor visa can be found on the website.
See: www.immi.gov.au/visitors/tourist/evisitor/

eVisitor applications can be made online.
See: www.immi.gov.au/e_visa/evisitor.htm

Electronic Travel Authority (ETA)

Passport holders from a number of countries are also eligible to apply for an Electronic Travel Authority (ETA) to travel to and enter Australia. For a business event, the most appropriate ETA is the ETA (Business Entrant) (Subclass 977).

ETA eligible countries

Passport holders from the following countries are eligible to apply for an ETA through a travel agent, airline, specialist service provider or Australian visa office outside Australia:

Andorra
Austria
Belgium
Brunei
Canada
Denmark
Finland
France
Germany
Greece
Hong Kong (SAR)*
Iceland
Ireland
Italy
Japan
Liechtenstein
Luxembourg
Malaysia
Malta
Monaco
The Netherlands
Norway
Portugal
Republic of San Marino
Singapore
South Korea
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland
Taiwan**
United Kingdom - British Citizen
United Kingdom - British National (Overseas)
United States of America
Vatican City

* A Hong Kong Document of Identity (HKDI) cannot be used to apply for an ETA. Residents of Hong Kong require a citizen passport to apply for this visa.

** Holders of Taiwan passports in Taiwan can apply through an approved ETA travel agent in Taiwan. Holders of Taiwan passports outside Taiwan should approach their closest Australian visa office.

Travel agencies, airlines or specialist service providers may choose to impose a fee to arrange an ETA on your behalf.

Passport holders from the following countries can also apply for an ETA online through the ETA website.
See: www.eta.immi.gov.au/

Brunei
Canada
Hong Kong (Special Administrative Region) *
Japan
Malaysia
Singapore
South Korea
United States of America

* A Hong Kong Document of Identity (HKDI) cannot be used to apply for an ETA. Residents of Hong Kong require a citizen passport to apply for this visa.

There is no visa application charge for ETA applications lodged online but a service fee of $AUD20 is charged for use of the ETA website.

Further information on the business ETA can be found on the website.
See: www.immi.gov.au/skilled/business/956-977/

Each family member who holds a passport from an ETA eligible country and wants to travel with you to Australia must complete apply for their own ETA. This includes children under the age of 18 who are included on your passport. The most appropriate ETA for accompanying family members is the ETA (Visitor) (Subclass 976).

Further information on the visitor ETA can be found on the website.
See: www.immi.gov.au/visitors/tourist/976/

Business (Short Stay) visa (Subclass 456) — paper-based applications

All other passport holders need to submit a paper-based application for a Business (Short Stay) visa (Subclass 456).

- For Form 456 Application for a Business (Short Stay) visa
  See: www.immi.gov.au/allforms/pdf/456.pdf
- To obtain the application document checklist for a Business (Short Stay) visa (subclass 456)

  See: www.immi.gov.au/skilled/business/_pdf/456-checklist.pdf
- To find the nearest Australian visa office to your current place of residence.
  See: www.immi.gov.au/contacts/overseas/index.htm

More information on this visa is available on the website.
See: www.immi.gov.au/skilled/business/456/

This visa application can also include family members wanting to travel with you to Australia such as spouse and dependent children.

Things to consider before lodging an application

Health and character requirements

All visa applicants must be assessed against Australia's health and character requirements. These requirements are designed to protect the safety and security of the Australian community.

Health requirements

As part of the visa application process you may be required to undertake a medical examination, chest x-ray and/or other health checks.

The department will advise you of the applicable health checks (if any), based on your individual circumstances.

Information on which health checks may apply to you is available on the website.
See: www.immi.gov.au/allforms/pdf/1163i.pdf

Character requirements

As part of the visa application process, you must show that you are of good character to pass Australia's character test. Information on the character test is available on the website.
See: www.immi.gov.au/media/fact-sheets/79character.htm

If you are unsure whether you can pass Australia's character test because of prior criminal convictions you should lodge a paper-based application at the Australian visa office nearest to your current place of residence, at least four months prior to the event start date.

Contact information for Australian visa offices is available on the website.
See: www.immi.gov.au/contacts/overseas/index.htm

Travel sanctions

For information on countries subject to travel sanctions, please refer to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's. Nationals of these countries may not be permitted to travel to and enter Australia.
See: www.dfat.gov.au/un/unsc_sanctions/index.html

Biometrics Program

From December 2010, Biometrics will need to be collected at an Australian Visa Application Centre for visitors lodging a paper-based visa application from the countries listed at the department's website at http://www.immi.gov.au/allforms/biometrics/offshore/countries.htm

Invitation and registration to attend the event

Although this is a separate process to lodging your visa application, when assessing whether you meet the criteria for the grant of a visa the department may take into account whether you are registered, or were invited, to attend the event.

Confirmation of registration, or a copy of your letter of invitation, should accompany paper-based visa applications.

Cut-off date for lodging paper based applications

All visitors should apply for a visa at least two months prior to the intended date of departure, and four months prior for people with character or health concerns.

Obligations of visa holders

On arrival at Australia's border you must identify yourself, present your travel documents, and complete an Incoming Passenger Card (IPC). The IPC requires visitors to declare their health status and any prior criminal convictions.

If you do not meet immigration clearance requirements, you may be refused entry to Australia.

More information on immigration clearance processes at Australia's borders is available on the website.
See: www.immi.gov.au/managing-australias-borders/border-security/air/airport.htm

You must comply with your visa validity and visa conditions while in Australia. When you receive your Australian visa you are issued with a visa grant notice that explains the conditions of the visa including period of validity and entry requirements. You are advised to carry this visa grant notice for your own reference.

If you breach these conditions, your visa may be cancelled.

If your visa expires while you are still in Australia, you become an unlawful non-citizen. Unlawful non-citizens are liable to be detained and removed from Australia.

Need help?

More information is available on the IECN website.
See: www.immi.gov.au/visitors/event-organisers-participants/
See also: www.immi.gov.au/allforms/pdf/1025i.pdf