

AADOCR Statement on International Student Visa Interviews Pause

June 11, 2025 – The American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research (AADOCR) strongly opposes the Trump Administration’s recent decision to pause new international student visa interviews to allow for additional vetting. The directive, instructing U.S. embassies to stop scheduling appointments for students and exchange visitors applying for F, M and J visas, will hinder our ability to attract the brightest scientific minds to pursue research and training in the United States.

Delaying the visa application process will be especially burdensome to students who are already enrolled in U.S. programs or have accepted offers of admission. Without visas, these students may not be able to start their programs on time or might be forced to abandon their studies altogether.

The National Institutes of Health’s (NIH) Visiting Fellows Program, which provides opportunities for foreign scientists to train and conduct collaborative research at the NIH, could be severely impacted. This program annually brings more than 2,000 pre-doctoral and postdoctoral fellows, among the brightest minds from across the globe, to contribute to basic and clinical science laboratories at NIH campuses nationwide. Pausing visa interviews for the foreign researchers who apply to this program will disrupt the onboarding process, and if their visas are revoked, as the State Department is threatening for Chinese students, current fellows could be sent home interrupting hundreds of active research projects.

This action, combined with ongoing threats to the U.S. scientific enterprise, such as terminated research grants, reduced funding, NIH workforce reductions, and a climate of uncertainty, is discouraging top international scientists and students from investing in long-term careers in the United States, as they seek opportunities in countries with more reliable research environments.

Further, international students are already thoroughly vetted, undergoing extensive background checks and ongoing monitoring, far more than other visa categories, such as tourists and business travelers. Subjecting them to even more scrutiny is an inefficient use of taxpayer dollars, with little added security benefit.

Selectively targeting students, who contribute significantly to U.S. research and innovation, sends a message of instability to prospective scholars and young scientists worldwide. International students bring fresh perspectives that help fuel innovation in research, advance healthcare breakthroughs, and strengthen our economy.

AADOCR urges the Administration to reverse this harmful policy and restore the free exchange of students and researchers across borders so that the United States remains a global leader in science and biomedical discovery.

The American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research (AADOCR) is a nonprofit organization with a mission to drive dental, oral, and craniofacial research to advance health and well-being. AADOCR represents the individual scientists, clinician-scientists, dental professionals, and students based in academic, government, non-profit, and private-sector institutions who share our mission. AADOCR is the largest division of the International Association for Dental Research. Learn more at www.aadocr.org.