

N.U.in Portugal Visa Guide 2025

CIEE Portugal, Lisbon



This visa guide was developed in collaboration with CIEE Portugal and Northeastern University.

Reminder

Join our visa webinar on May 5 at 2 p.m. ET. Don't miss out on this opportunity to get all your questions answered!

Timeline

May

Step 2: Schedule visa appointment (if applying in person)

Schedule an appointment with VFS or the Consulate between **May 12–June 12**. **Begin searching for an available appointment as soon as you are accepted** to ensure you stay on track with the recommended timeline.

Step 4: Attend visa appointment/ Mail in visa application

Attend your visa appointment between **May 12–June 12**. Bring a complete application to your appointment. Double check you have everything before arrival! **Failure to apply by June 12 may result in delayed visa processing.**

Step 6: Prepare for departure

Collect approved visa from the consulate or VFS and upload a copy to your CIEE account portal prior to departure!

Step 1: Request FBI background check & Apostille

The FBI background check takes between 2-3 weeks and then it will take approximately 5+ weeks to get the FBI background check apostilled. It is important to **begin this process ASAP (before May 12)** as it is required as part of your visa application.

Step 3: Complete visa application

Using the visa guide and consulate/VFS website, prepare your visa application and supporting materials according to the instructions provided.

Step 5: Wait for approval

While your visa is processing, remember to complete all tasks in your CIEE account.

If you are experiencing challenges finding an available visa appointment and your consulate/VFS does not accept mail-in applications, please reach out to CIEE/ Northeastern for support.

September

All Students (except European Union/EEA citizens)

Students participating in the N.U.in Portugal program will be required to apply for a visa prior to departing for Portugal. Students based in the United States will either visit a Portuguese Consulate or a VFS Center to apply for their visa. Where you are eligible to apply is already pre-determined, as your home address dictates where you can submit your Portuguese visa application. You can determine where you will have to apply for your visa by [filling out this form.](#)

Students who are based outside of the United States will need to refer to their local Portuguese Consulate or VFS Center.

This guide has been prepared primarily with the information of the Portuguese Consulate in Boston. Please check with the Portuguese consular authority/ VFS Center in your region in the US or in your country for the most updated visa requirements and processes as policies can change at any time and without prior notice.

Portuguese Consulates do not all follow identical procedures. It is your responsibility to contact the Portuguese Consulate in the geographic area of your legal, permanent address and review the specific study visa requirements listed on the website of that Consulate. Each Consulate also has specific forms noted on their website which they require you to download and complete.

The information listed below is provided as informational guidance only and does not constitute legal advice.

General Visa Information

As the N.U.in Portugal program is longer than 90 days, all non-European Union/ EEA citizens must apply for and obtain a [Study Visa](#) (through their [E-visa Portal](#), if applying through a Consulate) or a [National Visa](#) (if applying through the VFS) before the N.U.in Portugal program start date.

| Area of Jurisdiction | Place of Visa Application Submission | Contact Details | Address | How to Book an Appointment |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, Massachusetts <i>(Except for areas covered by the Consulate of New Bedford, see below)</i> | <u>Consulate General of Boston</u> <i>*Applications must be submitted in person*</i> | Phone: +(1 617) 536 87 40 E-mail: consulado.boston@mne.pt | 31 St. James Avenue Suite 350 Boston, MA 02116 USA | <u>Booking Portal</u> <u>Visa Application Requirements</u> |
| Massachusetts <i>(only Bristol, Plymouth, Barnstable, Dukes and Nantucket counties)</i> | <u>Consulate General of Portugal New Bedford</u> <i>*Applications must be submitted in person*</i> | Phone: (+1) (508) 997.61.51 (+1) (508) 993.57.41 (+1) (508) 992.11.77 (+1) (508) 992.1068 E-mail: newbedford@mne.pt | 628 Pleasant Street Room 204 New Bedford, MA 02740 USA | <u>Booking Portal</u> <u>Visa Application Requirements</u> |
| New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware | <u>Consulate General of Newark</u> <i>*Applications must be submitted by mail*</i> | Phone: +(1 973) 643 42 00 +(1 973) 643 21 58 E-mail: consulado.newark@mne.pt | The Legal Center at One Riverfront Plaza Suite 40 Newark, New Jersey 07102 USA | <u>Booking Portal</u> <u>Visa Application Requirements</u> |
| Connecticut, Michigan, New York, Territories of American Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Puerto Rico | <u>VFS Global New York</u> <i>*Applications must be submitted in person*</i> <small><i>*Mail in application must be first approved by the NY VFS by email at portugalpostalusa@vfsglobal.com</i></small> | Phone: +1 305 704 2172 E-mail: info.portugalusa@vfshelpline.com | 128 East 32nd Street 4th Floor New York, NY 10016 USA | <u>Booking Portal</u> <u>Visa Application Requirements</u> |
| Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, American Samoa, Guam, Northern Marianas | <u>VFS Global San Francisco</u> <i>*Applications may be submitted by postal mail (see <u>eligibility criteria</u>) or in person by appointment*</i> | Phone: +1 305 704 2172 E-mail: info.portugalusa@vfshelpline.com | 642, Harrison Street Suite 200 San Francisco, CA 94107 USA | <u>Booking Portal</u> <u>Visa Application Requirements</u> |
| Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Washington D.C., Bahamas | <u>VFS Global Washington D.C. or VFS Global Miami or VFS Houston</u> <small><i>*The D.C VFS has recently opened locations in Miami and Houston. If you can submit your application to D.C, you can apply through Miami and Houston if you prefer.</i></small> <i>*Applications are encouraged to be submitted by postal mail (see <u>eligibility criteria</u>) or may be submitted in person by appointment*</i> | Phone: +1 305 704 2172 E-mail: info.portugalusa@vfshelpline.com | 1025 Vermont Ave NW St# 200 Washington, D.C. 20005 | <u>Booking Portal</u> <u>Visa Application Requirements</u> |

Important

If you submit your visa application by mail, please carefully read the supplementary instructions on the VFS Global Office's website. These instructions include additional steps and fees for the application process. If you choose to submit your visa through a mail in option, please keep in mind that in the occasion that your passport is lost in the process, Northeastern University and CIEE cannot be considered responsible.

Application Procedure

1 Determine if your local Portuguese Consulate or VFS Center requires you to apply for your visa in person, or if you can apply by mail.

You can use the chart above to determine this information.

Appointments over the summer are limited due to the high demand for visas. Visa issuance can take anywhere from 60–90 days. As appointments can fill up quickly, we recommend you begin searching for an appointment now for an appointment to take place. All applicants should submit their visa application for processing to VFS or the consulate between May 12 and June 12.

If you are required to schedule an in-person appointment, please do so **NOW!** (Literally stop reading this document and go schedule your appointment). If you do not see available appointments, please continue to check the appointment schedule frequently for updates.

2 Obtain an FBI background check and fingerprints and get FBI background check apostilled.

Background Check

Read [these instructions](#) to submit an online electronic request. *Do not apply directly through the FBI via any other method. The traditional FBI background check by mail can take up to 6 months.*

Fingerprints

Visit a [participating US Post Office](#) to have your fingerprint scans taken, as this method is more reliable than using paper and ink. If you are unable to go to a participating Post Office, you can still obtain paper and fingerprints at a local police station. Ensure the paper and ink prints are clear and not smudged, as the FBI has previously rejected smudged fingerprint cards. If the prints are blurred, ask the fingerprint vendor to redo them.

It is crucial to obtain your fingerprints promptly and request the FBI background check at least 4 months (no earlier than 6 months) prior to the start of your program.

FBI Apostille

As of May 2025, the Portuguese study visa now requires that the FBI background check is **apostilled**. Instructions on the apostille process can be found **here**.

The apostille process can be lengthy and it may take 5+ weeks. Students are encouraged to begin the process immediately after receiving the FBI background check in the mail.

If applying for an apostille by mail, students must include a prepaid, self-addressed return envelope. This envelope will be used by the U.S. Department of State to return your apostilled FBI background check to you.

To expedite the mailing process, we recommend using a shipping service that offers expedited delivery.

Please note: The U.S. Department of State does *not* accept FedEx envelopes. You may use other carriers except FedEx. Be sure to keep a copy of your shipping receipt to track both the outgoing and return shipments.

Important

For your visa application, please request an electronic copy of your FBI Background check. Note that all documents must be dated within the last six months from the date of submission. **Once you have received your FBI Background Check, you must submit it to the Office of Authentications to obtain an apostille.** As of May 2025, FBI Background Checks will not be accepted without the apostille. Please visit the **U.S. Department of State website** for guidance on getting your FBI background check certified with an apostille.

3 | Print and complete the Portuguese criminal record by the Foreigners and Borders Service (SEF)

Click here to download the document. (English instructions within the parenthesis).

4 | Gather and complete **visa application requirements**.

Disclaimer

Please be advised that the application requirements and fees for visa submissions are subject to change without prior notice. It is crucial for all applicants to regularly consult the official consulate or VFS office channels to stay up-to-date on the latest documentation requirements.

Required Documents

- 1 **Visa form (will vary depending on if you apply through a consulate or through the VFS)***
 - o [E-visa instructions](#)
 - o [National Visa Application Form](#) (Instructions on how to complete this document can be found [here](#))

- 2 **Passport and biographical copy***

Your passport must be valid for 6 months after the estimated date of return. You must provide a photocopy of your passport (biographical data).

Non-US citizen will need to provide an additional copy of their visa/permanent residency card to prove eligibility to apply for a Portuguese visa through a US based consulate.



- 3 **Passport-style photos**

2 passport-style photos, recent, in good condition and with a white background. The photo size should be 3.5 cm x 4.5 cm.

- 4 **Personal statement***

Statement signed by applicant specifying reason for studying in Portugal. You should describe yourself and purpose for going to Portugal. Include the address of the CIEE Center and name and contact information of the CIEE Director. *Do not include dorm address details.*

[Find personal statement template here.](#)

N.U.in Portugal Arrival Date: September 14, 2025

N.U.in Portugal Departure Date: December 13, 2025

CIEE Lisbon Study Center Contact Information:

Joana Almeida

CIEE Lisbon Center Director

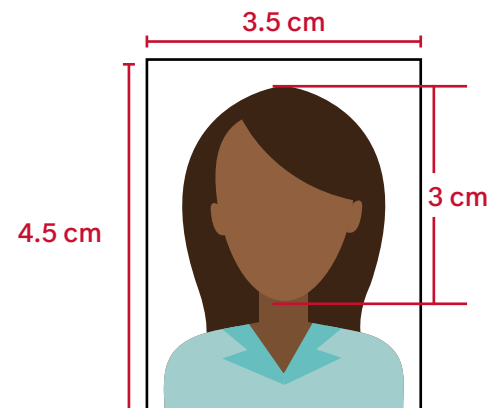
jalmeida@ciecee.org, +351 21 790 8387

CIEE Lisbon Study Center Details:

Faculty of Social and Human Sciences (FCSH-UNL)

Avenida de Berna 26C, Gab. B608, 1069-061 Lisboa, Portugal

+351 21 790 8387



5 CIEE guarantee letter and host institution acceptance letter (covers proof of acceptance, accommodation, and financial means)

Two CIEE-provided documents will be e-mailed to your Northeastern University email address by May 9. You will receive an email from CIEE with the following documents:

- **Acceptance Letter from UNL University (written in Portuguese)**

This document certifies proof of admission and full-time student enrollment at a Portuguese university

- **CIEE Guarantee Letter**

This document confirms your Housing and Travel Insurance through CIEE. Most consulates accept this letter as proof of financial guarantee as the program is prepaid, though you should still include your personal bank statements to ensure sufficient funds.

You must include these letters when submitting your visa application to ensure that you provide a complete visa application.

6 Medical insurance

Medical Insurance – In addition to your CIEE Guarantee Letter, you may need to provide a copy of your primary health insurance card. We recommend you submit a copy of your primary insurance card and print off the [**iNext Insurance Benefits Page**](#) to provide with your application.

7 Additional proof of means of subsistence (bank statement)*

In addition to your CIEE Guarantee Letter, you will be asked to provide copies of your last 3 most recent bank statements showing sufficient funds (the consulate may request a specific amount, but about **\$1,000–1,500** should be sufficient). The bank statements should be in your name. Most of the time, students are not required to show bank statements, but it is best to plan that these documents may be requested.

8 Criminal record (Sealed FBI background check)

Refer to [**Step 2.**](#)

9 Round trip flight confirmation

You must provide confirmation of valid booked ticket to Portugal and return ticket. Students participating in the group flight will receive this document to their Northeastern email address.

10 Visa fee

Visa fees vary by consulate and VFS locations. Consult the VFS/ Consulate websites Visa fees are updated on the first of the month, so always check with the consulate/ VFS prior to your appointment.

Note: Documents with a * (1, 2, 4 and 7) must be notarized.

Checklist

If applying at a consulate:

Ensure that you have secured an appointment if you are applying in person

- ☐ **FBI background check and fingerprints, and Apostille**
- ☐ **Complete the Portuguese criminal record by the Foreigners and Borders Service (SEF)**
- ☐ **E-Visa form**
- ☐ **Passport valid for at least 6 months after the end of the program and photocopy of the biographical data page**
Non-U.S. citizens/U.S. passport holders applying within the U.S. will need to provide, in addition, a copy of their visa, green card, or documentation that demonstrates their legal residency status in the U.S.
- ☐ **2 passport style photos (3.5cm x 4.5cm)**
- ☐ **Personal statement**
- ☐ **Acceptance letter from UNL University in Portuguese**
E-mailed to your Northeastern email address from CIEE by May 9
- ☐ **Acceptance letter to the N.U.in Program from Northeastern**
Located on your application status check
- ☐ **CIEE guarantee letter**
E-mailed to your Northeastern email address from CIEE by May 9
- ☐ **iNext Medical insurance**
Will be uploaded to your CIEE portal
- ☐ **Proof of means (bank statement)**
- ☐ **Round trip flight**
 - Group flight information will be sent in May to your Northeastern email address
 - Individual flight information needs to be provided by the time of your appointment
- ☐ **Visa fee**

If applying through the VFS:

- ☐ **FBI background check and fingerprints, and Apostille**
- ☐ **Complete the Portuguese criminal record by the Foreigners and Borders Service (SEF)**
- ☐ **National visa application**
- ☐ **Passport or other travel document valid for at least 6 months after the end of the program and photocopy of the biographical data page**
Non-U.S. citizens/U.S. passport holders applying within the U.S. will need to provide, in addition, a copy of their visa, green card, or documentation that demonstrates their legal residency status in the U.S.
- ☐ **2 passport style photos (3.5cm x 4.5cm)**
Photos must be identical, recent and in good condition. One must be attached to the form.
- ☐ **Acceptance letter from UNL University in Portuguese**
E-mailed to your Northeastern email address from CIEE by May 9
- ☐ **Acceptance letter to the N.U.in Program from Northeastern**
Located on your application status check
- ☐ **CIEE guarantee letter**
E-mailed to your Northeastern email address from CIEE by May 9
- ☐ **iNext Medical insurance**
Will be uploaded to your CIEE portal
- ☐ **Proof of means (bank statement)**
- ☐ **Round trip flight**
 - Group flight information will be sent in May to your Northeastern email address
 - Individual flight information needs to be provided by the time of your appointment
- ☐ **Fees**
 - Application fee
 - VFS service fee
 - Courier fee (if mailing)

Reminders

Scheduling an in-person consulate appointment if required and **obtaining FBI background check and fingerprints** should be prioritized due to the often lengthy process.

Anyone applying from outside the United States, will need to refer to their local Portuguese consulate for information on the required documents.

Visa processing time takes between 60-90 days. It's important to submit the visa application within the timeframe recommended by Northeastern and CIEE.

Northeastern and CIEE do not have the ability to follow up on a visa application on behalf of a student/ask consulates or VFS center for an appointment or request expedited processing times

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I expedite the process?

No. There is no option to expedite your visa application.

What if I was planning to travel before the start of the program?

Most Consulates/VFS ask that students submit certified copies of their physical passport at the time of visa application. If you are permitted to hold onto your passport while your application is being processed, you may be able to travel while you are waiting for your visa. You will be required to submit your physical passport to the Consulate to issue your visa – please allow enough time before the start of the program to do this (you will need to be in the U.S. to obtain the visa).

What if the Consulate/VFS says that my visa will not be returned in time for departure?

Contact Northeastern University at nuin@northeastern.edu and Ryan Gauvreau at customenrollment@cieee.org immediately to discuss your visa application and requirements for participation in the program

Are visa fees covered by CIEE/Northeastern University

No. Students are responsible for all visa fees and associated costs.

Important Reminders

Northeastern University and CIEE have no influence on the outcome of immigration applications, including the decisions and policies of Portuguese immigration authorities, no ability to inquire about an individual immigration application, or to expedite the process for an individual student. In addition, N.U.in employees are unable to provide legal advice to students or families concerning country specific immigration requirements and/or application processes. Students are responsible for completing all required applications for immigration permissions or registrations correctly and in a timely manner, and for obtaining any required permissions prior to the start date. If the student cannot obtain valid permission in time for the program start date, please refer to the N.U.in Withdrawal Policy and contact the N.U.in office to discuss the next steps