

Visa Interview Information & Documents Needed

You will receive an automatic confirmation reply after you register. When we receive your online registration, we will email you an individual official invitation letter from Jeff Reed in secure pdf. format. You need this letter to take to your visa interview and for travel purposes at your Port of Entry. If you do not receive this invitation letter within three days of registering, please email kathy@bild.org to let U.S. know.

Visa requirements are different depending on your country of origin. Citizens of most countries need a visa to travel to the U.S.A, but you must determine whether or not you live in a visa waiver country. Contact the U.S. Embassy in your country of origin or visit its website to determine whether or not you need a visa to travel to the U.S.A. This website lists the location of all U.S. Embassies and Consulates; <http://www.usembassy.gov/>.

If you want to move up your visa interview date, in many cases, you must cancel your previous appointment date before you are allowed to book a new date. This varies from embassy to embassy so check on this in your country.

After you successfully book an interview appointment, the embassy will send you specific instructions concerning the items they want you to bring to your interview including fees and charges.

Here are some general suggestions that will help you in getting your visa:

1. You must be prepared to answer questions about BILD and the Summit. Here are some possible questions:
 - a. What does BILD stand for? Biblical Institute of Leadership Development.
 - b. What is BILD? BILD International is an organization that develops curriculum and strengthens networks of churches to train leaders within their churches. BILD has a curriculum of resources to train these leaders with a goal of assisting leaders in building strong churches.
 - c. What is this Summit you are going to? The Summit will give you training in the BILD theological education system. While at the Summit you will make plans for using this training within your church or church network when you return to your home.
2. More information about BILD:
 - a. You should read the publication found at this link http://www.bild.org/download/brochures/bildGlobalC_BTE.pdf This 20-page piece describes the nature of BILD's ministry and training.
 - b. You can also go to the BILD website www.bild.org. There is much information there that you will find helpful. These things will help you more effectively answer questions at your visa interview.
3. More information about the Summit:
 - a. When it arrives, please read the visa invitation letter from Jeff Reed very thoroughly. It will help you answer questions about the Summit.
 - b. The BILD website 2010 Summit section <http://www.bild.org/summit/Overview.htm> will give you a fuller understanding of the content of the Summit and help you answer visa interview questions about the Summit.
4. The Embassy views all people who apply for a nonimmigrant visa as actually intending to immigrate and not to return to their own country. Unfortunately this happens from some countries, so they are very cautious, and require compelling evidence provided by the applicant that they have reason to return to their country.
5. You must take sufficient documentation that demonstrates that you have ties in your country that would compel you to return to your home after a temporary stay in the U.S.A. A visa decision is not simply based on documents. A refU.S.al indicates that the applicant's situation was inadequate to show why they must depart from the U.S. and return home. Recommended personal and financial documentation:
 - a. Bank statements (to show you are leaving money in your country)
 - b. Personal Income Tax statements – for last 3 years
 - c. Organization Income Tax statements (if applicable to your situation) – for last 3 years
 - d. Proof of property owned
 - e. Proof of employment and job awaiting you when you return
 - f. Proof of family remaining in your home country
6. Any documentation you send to the embassy must also be carried with you to the appointment. The embassy will take no responsibility for documents or forms that have been sent to the embassy. They will not match an applicant to any documents they have received on their behalf. If you or someone on your behalf has sent documents or forms to the embassy, also take a copy of that document with you to your appointment.

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7. Here is a website that gives links to most forms: <http://www.state.gov/m/a/dir/forms>, select “Visa.”
8. All applicants must complete their application on an e-visa form (if unavailable, contact your U.S. Embassy). E-Visa application form DS-156 is available online <http://evisaforms.state.gov>. Click the “Continue” button before printing this application form DS-156, and print the completed form using a laser printer only and not an ink jet or dot matrix. Bring your printed form on the day of your visa interview appointment.
9. Section 24 of Form DS-156 asks you to fill in the **address where you will stay** when you are in the U.S. and for your **host’s name and telephone numbers**. After we receive your registration, we will email you this information as well as an official invitation letter from Jeff Reed.
10. Question 26 on Form DS-156 asks you how long you will stay in the U.S. You need to give the dates. For the Summit, please put down **October 23–November 7, 2009**. This allows you to arrive 2 days before and fly out the day after the Summit. If you have other things you wish to do in the U.S. before or after the Summit, take that into account when you enter your dates.
11. Question 27 on Form DS 156 asks for the purpose of your trip. Please say **to attend the 2010 BILD International Summit**.
12. Question 34 asks for the names and relationships of persons traveling with you. This means “Are you taking a spouse, children, etc. with you?” It does not mean is anyone else traveling with you to the Summit. You do not need to list the other men or women coming to the BILD Summit from your organization.
13. You must also complete the Form DS-157 available at the U.S. Department of State website: <http://www.state.gov/m/a/dir/forms> (select “Visa” then select “DS-157) or on the U.S. Embassy website in your country. For question 8 you should give the name and address for **BILD International, 2400 Oakwood Road, Ames, Iowa 50014 with the phone number 515-292-7012**. Your contact person can be **Keith Cook** at the same phone number.
14. Be sure to be prepared to pay all **fees** in the manner required.
15. Some requirements vary from country to country so be sure to check with the U.S. Embassy in your country for any specific requirements regarding forms, documents, fees, and other items or issues. The following documents/items are needed at your visa interview:
 - a. Visa appointment receipt
 - b. Photograph meeting embassy regulations for size etc. Be sure to take the required number of copies.
 - c. Passport
 - d. Form DS-156. If you submitted your form electronically be sure to print a copy to take with you.
 - e. Form DS-157
 - f. Your invitation letter from Jeff Reed of BILD.
 - g. Letter of support from anyone else who is assisting with your expenses.
 - h. Letter from your church or organization stating their support of your coming to the Summit and its criticalness to the job you do there, and also stating that you will have a job when you return home.
 - i. Receipt for any fees you have been required to pay. This varies from country to country. In every country there will be a required visa application fee but the proof of payment required and the timing of that payment will be different from country to country. Please check the U.S. embassy in your country to verify fees and the required proof of payment.
 - j. Be prepared to pay any fees that may be required at the embassy at the time of your interview or when you pick up your visa. Check the U.S. embassy in your country for the payment method they require. In some countries a visa issuance fee is required and in other countries it is not.
 - k. Travel itinerary is not required but recommended.
16. If your visa is denied you can reapply for a new visa appointment. You may get a different interviewer. However, they discourage you from doing this unless you can obtain additional or new documentation that you did not present at your previous. interview.
17. If you are granted a visa, this only gives you permission to arrive at a Port of Entry in the U.S.. Even with your visa, you are not cleared to travel in the U.S. until you pass through your Port of Entry. You will be issued an I-94 at your Port of Entry. A Port of Entry officer will write a departure date on your I-94. You are required to leave the U.S. on or before the date written on your I-94. For example you may receive a 6-month visa, but this does not mean that you can stay in the U.S. for 6 months. Only when you pass through your Port of Entry and get your I_94 will you know how long you will be allowed to remain in the U.S. Upon your departure from the U. S. you are required to turn in your I-94 at the airport. This is a critical step because it is the only documentation that you returned to your home country.

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18. When you leave on your trip to the Summit be sure to take your needed documents for presenting to the officer at your Port of Entry. For travel purposes you will need at a minimum your visa, passport, invitation letter from Jeff Reed, and any letters of support.