

1. About Columbia University

Columbia University is a prestigious private research university located in *New York City, USA*. It's widely respected for its strong academic programs across arts & sciences, engineering, business, journalism, social sciences, and professional schools. Columbia's international student community is highly diverse, coming from over 110 countries.

[Columbia Undergraduate Admissions](#)

2. Undergraduate Admission – International Students

Application Process

- **Apply through the Common Application** (or Coalition Application) with the required Columbia supplements.
- The **application process is the same** for all applicants, domestic and international. Columbia reviews applications holistically based on academics, extracurriculars, essays, recommendations, and personal context. [Columbia Undergraduate Admissions](#)

Typical Deadlines (2026 Cycle)

- **Early Decision:** usually *mid-November*
- **Regular Decision:** usually *mid-January*
Exact dates are published annually on the admissions site. [Columbia Undergraduate Admissions](#)

English Language Proficiency

- International applicants must demonstrate strong English skills. Columbia may ask for **TOEFL/IELTS** scores or offer the option to submit **InitialView/Vericant video interviews** to demonstrate language fluency. [Columbia Undergraduate Admissions](#)

Standardized Testing

- Columbia **maintains a test-optional policy** for SAT/ACT for undergraduate admissions — meaning submitting SAT/ACT scores is *optional* and your application will be considered with or without them. [The Times of India](#)

International Evaluation

- Your secondary education transcripts should reflect your academic performance in your country's system. Columbia has experience evaluating international curricula and may request **school profiles or additional context** from your school. [Columbia Undergraduate Admissions](#)

Transfer Students

- If you're an international transfer applicant, your existing coursework must meet Columbia's standards, and you'll need English proficiency and transcript evaluations as with first-year applicants. [Columbia Undergraduate Admissions](#)
-

☐ 3. Graduate Admission – International Students

☐ Application Requirements

- International graduate applicants apply directly through the **specific graduate school or department** (e.g., GSAS). [gsas.columbia.edu](#)
- A **bachelor's degree or equivalent** from an accredited institution is required. [gsas.columbia.edu](#)

☐ English Proficiency

- If English was not the primary language of instruction for your prior degree, you generally must submit TOEFL/IELTS scores (minimums often similar to other Ivy Grad Schools such as 100 iBT or 7.5 IELTS). [gsas.columbia.edu](#)

☐ Deadlines

- Deadlines vary by program — graduate admissions pages list exact dates for fall, spring, or summer entry. [gsas.columbia.edu](#)
-

☐ 4. Tuition, Financial Aid & Scholarships

☐ Financial Aid

- Columbia meets the **full demonstrated financial need** of all admitted students (including internationals) *if you apply for financial aid on your admissions application*. However, note that international admissions is **need-aware**, meaning your financial need *can* be considered in admissions decisions if you apply for aid. [cc-seas.financialaid.columbia.edu](#)

☐ Merit & Awards

- There are **merit-based awards**, such as the **Columbia Excellence Award** for undergraduate international students — automatic consideration (no separate application). [colum.edu](#)
- Additional internal scholarships may be available once enrolled. [colum.edu](#)

☐ Cost of Attendance

- U.S. tuition and living costs at Columbia are high compared with many countries — factor in tuition plus housing, food, books, health insurance, and personal expenses.
-

☐ 5. Visa & Immigration (F-1 / J-1)

☐ Student Visa

- Once admitted and enrolled full-time, Columbia will issue your **Form I-20** for an **F-1 student visa** (or DS-2019 for J-1 exchange students). [Columbia Undergraduate Admissions](#)
- You must register with **SEVIS** and schedule a visa interview at the U.S. embassy/consulate with your I-20 and financial documentation. [Columbia Undergraduate Admissions](#)

☐ Post-Admission Steps

- After arrival in the U.S., you will complete orientation and immigration check-in with Columbia's **International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO)**. [Columbia Undergraduate Admissions](#)
-

☐ ☐ ☐ 6. Campus Life & Support

☐ Diverse Community

- Columbia has a highly international campus, with students from over 110 countries. There are cultural clubs, international student groups, and global support services. [Columbia Undergraduate Admissions](#)

☐ Support Services

- The **International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO)** provides guidance on immigration, cultural adjustment, and employment options (e.g., CPT/OPT). [Columbia Undergraduate Admissions](#)
-

☐ 7. Important Tips for 2026 Applicants

- ☐ **Start early:** Prepare academic materials, essays, and any English proficiency documentation well before deadlines. [Columbia Undergraduate Admissions](#)
- ☐ **Apply for aid on time:** If you need financial support, indicate this on your application — you *can't* add it afterward. cc-seas.financialaid.columbia.edu
- ☐ **English fluency matters:** Columbia emphasizes rapid, idiomatic English in academics and may offer optional video interviews to showcase language skills. [Columbia Undergraduate](#)

Admissions

☐ **Visa planning:** Visa processing times vary — plan for time to complete SEVIS, pay fees, and attend interviews.