

HOSTING A V.I.E. IN THE UNITED STATES



What is the VIE Program?

The V.I.E Program (International Internship Graduate Program) enables French companies to send easily a young professional between 18 and 28 years of age on an assignment abroad for a flexible period ranging from 6 to 18 months, which can be renewed once within the 18 month limit.

It is open to French candidates, as well as to people from the European Economic Area, of all educational backgrounds.

It appeals to strongly motivated young people: recent graduates, generally from Engineering or Business Schools, with professional experience and usually with an international profile, most of them having already worked abroad and being fluent in several languages.

Since the inception of the program in 2000 by the French Government, more than 57 000 VIEs (volunteers) have been hired in more than 6 000 French companies worldwide.

What is VIE hosting?

VIE hosting often occurs when a company that wishes to use the VIE program is not yet established in the United States. In these scenarios, we recommend that French companies have their VIE candidates hosted by their American business partners (distributors, suppliers, clients, etc.)

A VIE enters the United States on a J-1 Exchange Visitor Visa and must leave the country at the end of his or her training program.

In a VIE hosting situation, a VIE candidate is placed in a company based in the United States.

The objective is to welcome the young professional in an American professional environment and to provide him or her with structured training and exposure to American culture, as well as supervision.

However, these rules are good to know:

- The VIE responsible in the hosting structure is not his or her operational manager, who is based in France.
- The VIE is not a hosting structure's employee.
- There are no monetary links between the hosting structure and the VIE (no taxes, no allowances). All is handled by Business France and the French firm.

A STRATEGIC AND FINANCIAL OPPORTUNITY

- ▶ *A monthly rent contractually agreed with the French firm hiring the volunteer*
- ▶ *Business France handles all the administrative aspects*
- ▶ *No contractual agreement and no monetary connection between you and the V.I.E*
- ▶ *A flexible assignment period of 6 to 18 months, which can be renewed once, to match your specific needs*
- ▶ *An easy means to develop links with French firms, to become a North-American distributor*
- ▶ *A talent pool to challenge your team*

WHICH TYPE OF ASSIGNMENT?

The assignments offered to the VIE candidates are diverse and depend on the companies' needs: market research, technical support to local teams, quality control, financial control, and sales or communications management, human resources etc.

WHAT ARE THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA?

What are the benefits for hosting a VIE?

Becoming a VIE host company presents great opportunities for your company :

- You can benefit from financial inputs such as rental income (Business France does not take part in these negotiations.).
- Should you choose to host a VIE of one of your French partners, you will be able to improve and facilitate your relationship with the company in France and/or utilize the VIE to work on a shared project. If you are the distributor for a French company, the VIE can increase the volume of your sales in the United States.
- VIE hosting may also be a way to become a North American distributor for a company that has decided to establish itself in the American market. This is a potentially long-term beneficial agreement for both parties, as demonstrated by the testimonies of former hosting organizations and their partners.
- The arrival of a European VIE also gives you the opportunity to diversify your personnel with an international trainee, and allows your current employees to meet a young graduate or an experienced young professional who will be able to offer a new and different outlook on work practices than that of your employees.

What are your responsibilities?

As the hosting company, you will be the primary local representative of the VIE, and you will provide him or her with structured training while supervising his or her program. It is equally important to ensure that the VIE is fully integrated into the cultural and professional environment of your American company.

You will be the company associated with the J-1 visa of the VIE candidate, which allows the VIE to carry out his or her training in the United States. The cost associated with the application for J-1 visa sponsorship for a VIE varies between \$2,000 and \$2,500 depending on the chosen sponsor; it is possible to charge this cost back to the contracting company in France.

A desk must be made available to the VIE with all the equipment necessary to perform his or her training (depending on the training, a phone, computer, mailbox, etc.) Information concerning your company will remain confidential and the VIE will not have access to it in any case unless you have agreed otherwise.

► *The company must have an EIN (Employer Identification Number) registered with the IRS and must therefore have a physical address*

► *The host company must meet certain eligibility criteria including a minimum number of full-time employees and Americans on-site:*

- with the FACC (French-American Chamber of Commerce):

You must have 3 full-time employees per VIE, two of whom must be American citizens, green card holders, or permanent U.S. residents, working at the same site as the VIE.

- with CIEE-PARENTHÈSE:

For the first VIE, you must have a minimum of one full-time American employee working at the same site as the VIE. To host a second VIE, you must have at least 10 employees.

TO FIND OUT MORE
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