

FOLK ALLIANCE INTERNATIONAL

December 20, 2017

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter serves as recognition that the bearer is attending the 30th annual Folk Alliance International conference **February 14-17, 2018** as an unpaid industry delegate.

The conference takes place at:

The Westin Crown Center Hotel, 1 E Pershing Rd, Kansas City, MO 64108, USA.

The conference is a networking, professional development, and showcase event that for artists, agents, managers, labels, presenters and music industry representatives. It is not a public event.

The full schedule is available online at www.folk.org/schedule.

All music industry delegates are required to be registered to attend the conference and are responsible for their own flights, meals, and accommodation expenses.

The Folk Alliance International Conference is the world's largest gathering of the Folk music industry and community (crossing a diverse array of genres including Appalachian, Americana, Blues, Bluegrass, Celtic, Cajun, Indigenous, Latin, Global Roots, Traditional, and Singer-Songwriter).

Folk Alliance International (FAI) is a registered not-for-profit 501(c)3 membership organization with over 3,000 members worldwide. FAI's mission is... ***To nurture, engage and empower the international folk music community - traditional and contemporary, amateur and professional – through education, advocacy and performance.***



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Overview of US Visa and Access Requirements to attend Folk Alliance International

If any paid employment is part of your intended time in the US to attend the Folk Alliance International Conference, you must obtain a work visa in advance separate from the process described here.

Canadians who are not working (paid or public performance) in the US can continue to clear immigration with the above letter. As part of standard admission to the US on business (not work) a B1 admission stamp will be added to your passport by the officer reviewing your request for entry (for the purpose of attending a business & industry networking conference).

ESTA - The Visa Waiver Program (VWP) allows [citizens of 38 participating countries](#) to travel to the United States without a visa for stays of 90 days or less when they meet all requirements explained below. Travelers must be eligible to use the VWP and have a valid [Electronic System for Travel Authorization \(ESTA\)](#) approval prior to travel.

Due to increased scrutiny regarding showcase performances, it is advised that ESTA travelers consider securing a B class visa in advance from a US Embassy to guarantee access. The one current exception to this recommendation is the London England Embassy, where it is advised to simply proceed with ESTA status.

Citizens or nationals of the following countries* are currently eligible to travel to the United States under the VWP, unless citizens of one of these countries are also a national of Iraq, Iran, Syria, or Sudan.

Andorra	Hungary	Norway
Australia	Iceland	Portugal
Austria	Ireland	San Marino
Belgium	Italy	Singapore
Brunei	Japan	Slovakia
Chile	Latvia	Slovenia
Czech Republic	Liechtenstein	South Korea
Denmark	Lithuania	Spain
Estonia	Luxembourg	Sweden
Finland	Malta	Switzerland
France	Monaco	Taiwan*
Germany	Netherlands	United Kingdom**
Greece	New Zealand	

**To be eligible to travel under the VWP, British citizens must have the unrestricted right of permanent abode in England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands, and the Isle of Man.

A “non-work” visiting Visa is required for guests coming from non-Visa Waiver Program countries for visitors wishing to travel to the United States to attend an industry conference.

Requirements for using the Visa Waiver Program (VWP)

You must meet all of the following requirements to travel to the US on the VWP:

1) Travel purpose must be permitted on a Visitor (B) Visa.

The Visa Waiver Program (VWP) allows citizens of participating countries to travel to the United States without obtaining a visa for stays of 90 days or less for tourism or business. Transiting or traveling through the United States to Canada or Mexico is generally permitted for VWP travelers. The following are examples of activities permitted while in the United States on the VWP:

Business:

- consult with business associates
- attend a scientific, educational, professional, or business convention or conference
- attend short-term training (you may not be paid by any source in the United States with the exception of expenses incidental to your stay)
- negotiate a contract

Travel Purposes Not Permitted on Visa Waiver Program –

These are some examples of activities not permitted on the VWP and require visas for travel to the United States:

- study, for credit
- employment
- work as foreign press, radio, film, journalists, or other information media
- permanent residence in the United States

2) Each Traveler Must have authorization under ESTA.

In order to travel without a visa on the VWP, you must have authorization through the Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) prior to boarding a U.S. bound air or sea carrier. ESTA is the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Customs and Border Protection's (CBP) automated web-based system to determine eligibility to travel without a visa to the United States for tourism or business. Visit the [ESTA webpage](#) on the CBP website for more detailed information, to apply for an ESTA, and to pay the fee.

3) Travel Must be on an Approved Carrier.

If arriving by air or sea, you must be arriving on an [approved air or sea carrier](#). You must also have a round trip ticket indicating return passage to a country outside the United States.

4) Previous Compliance and No Prior Visa Ineligibilities.

If you have had a U.S. visa before or previously traveled to the United States under the VWP or another status, you must have complied with the conditions of previous admissions to the United States, and you must not have previously been found ineligible for a U.S. visa.

5) Have the Correct Type of Passport.

You must have a passport that is valid for at least six months after your planned departure from the United States (unless exempted by [country-specific agreements](#)). For families, each member of your family, including infants and children, must have his/her own passport.

Additional information:

Emergency and Temporary Passports

If you use an emergency or temporary passport to enter the United States on the VWP, the passport must be an electronic passport, or e-Passport.

May I apply for a visa instead of using the VWP?

Travelers who are eligible for the VWP may apply for a visitor (B) visa if they prefer to do so. If you do not meet **all of the criteria** explained on this document, then you must apply for a visa. If you intend to extend your stay beyond 90 days or change your status once in the United States (for example, you

intend to request change of status to student or temporary worker, etc.), then you need to apply for a visa.

I was denied a visa under section 214(b). May I use the VWP?

A recent visa refusal for any reason could result in denial of ESTA authorization, additional review at the port of entry, or denial of admission to the United States. If you are uncertain if you qualify for VWP travel, you may choose to apply for a visa.

Entering the United States

An approved ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorization) allows a citizen of a Visa Waiver Program participating country to travel to a U.S. port-of-entry (generally an airport) and request permission to enter the United States.

An approved ESTA does not guarantee entry into the United States. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS), U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officials at the port-of-entry have authority to permit or deny admission to the United States. If you are allowed to enter the United States, the CBP official will place an admission stamp in your passport.

Learn about admissions and entry requirements as well as restrictions about bringing [food](#), [agricultural products](#), and other [restricted/prohibited goods](#) by reviewing the CBP website under [International Visitors](#) and [Clearing CBP](#).

Change of Status

Persons admitted under the Visa Waiver Program are not permitted to change status in the United States. See [Change My Nonimmigrant Status](#) on the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) website.

More information can be found at the US Department of State website:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/tourism-visit/visitor.html> or at <https://www.uscis.gov/>.

!! Immediate Visa Help !!

[TamizdatAVAIL](#) is a non-profit project that provides both urgent and long term solutions to pervasive U.S. visa problems faced by the international performing arts community. The TamizdatAVAIL Hotline is a free hotline that provides performing arts professionals with urgent legal assistance regarding U.S. visa issues. It is staffed by legal professionals and funded by the National Endowment for the Arts. Their team of volunteer lawyers provide free advice to performing arts professionals who have already filed an I-129 and are experiencing a problem in a subsequent stage of the visa process.

DO YOU NEED HELP WITH AN ARTIST VISA PROBLEM? Call TamizdatAVAIL at 718-541-3641 or email avail@tamizdat.org.