

UTSA INTERNATIONAL DELEGATION TOOLKIT

This toolkit provides essential steps to help UTSA faculty and staff host successful international visits.

Around the world, international delegations are often characterized by a strong sense of formality and warm hospitality. At UTSA, we strive to uphold that same standard of expectation. Hosting an international delegation is a valuable opportunity to foster global partnerships and showcase the university's commitment to academic and cultural excellence. This toolkit is designed to assist faculty and staff in organizing and hosting impactful visits. Inside, you'll find helpful resources, checklists, and best practices to ensure a seamless, professional, and memorable experience for our international guests.

Before diving into the planning steps, let's review some key guidelines for hosting foreign nationals to ensure compliance, cultural sensitivity, and a warm welcome.

COMPLIANCE GUIDELINES

- **Security approval Process:** All international delegation visit requests must be reviewed and approved by the Office of Research Integrity. This includes any exceptions or last-minute additions. The approval process, known as Visual Screening Compliance, involves submitting an email to export@utsa.edu with the following details for each delegation member: Full name, Title/role, Email address, and Nationality. This step ensures compliance with federal regulations and must be completed before inviting guests to UTSA labs or facilities.
- **Visit Oversight:** The UTSA faculty or staff member requesting the visit is responsible for overseeing the delegation. If the primary host is unavailable, a designated representative must be present to supervise the visit and ensure all protocols are followed.
- **Security and IT Policies:** Hosts are responsible for informing international guests about specific photography and IT restrictions, including:
 - Only photographing in approved areas.
 - No use of UTSA computing equipment or information systems.
 - Prohibiting attachments of any device to UTSA computing systems.
 - Authorization to use only "Air Rowdy Guest" Wi-Fi and no other UTSA internet services.
- **Visitor Conduct:** All delegation members must remain with the group throughout the visit unless separate activities have been pre-approved and coordinated. UTSA hosts or their representatives must escort guests at all times to ensure safety, security, and compliance.

UTSA INTERNATIONAL DELEGATION TOOLKIT

This toolkit provides essential steps to help UTSA faculty and staff host successful international visits.

CULTURAL SENSITIVITY GUIDELINES

- **Respect Cultural Norms:** Be aware of and sensitive to cultural differences in communication, gestures, and etiquette.
- **Language Support:** Speak clearly and avoid idioms or slang. If your guests comes with a translator, provide enough pauses in your presentation to accommodate
- **Dietary & Religious Considerations:** Inquire about dietary restrictions or religious accommodations in advance.
- **Inclusive Hospitality:** Offer a warm welcome with culturally appropriate greetings. Include small touches like welcome signs in their language or culturally relevant refreshments.

CREATING A PROPER ROWDY WELCOME

- **Personalize welcome:** Greet guests with name tags, welcome packets, and a brief orientation. Begin the visit with a brief overview of the university—setting the tone for a meaningful and well-organized experience. Consider assigning student or staff ambassadors to guide and engage with the delegation.
- **Meaningful Engagement:** Foster a two-way exchange by creating opportunities for open dialogue, interactive Q&A sessions, and cultural sharing. Encourage delegation members to share their perspectives, ask questions, and engage in discussions about their institutions, research interests, or cultural experiences. **Avoid making the visit a one-sided presentation**—aim for a collaborative and enriching experience that benefits both UTSA and the visiting delegation.
- **Follow up:** After the visit, send a personalized thank-you message expressing appreciation for their time and participation. Include any promised materials, such as presentations, contact information, or **next steps** for collaboration. A timely and thoughtful follow-up reinforces UTSA's commitment to partnership and leaves a lasting positive impression.

RESOURCES

To access all the UTSA Delegations Templates, please visit
<https://global.utsa.edu/relations/planning-considerations.html>

UTSA HOST CHECKLIST

PHASE	TASK	DATE COMPLETED		COMMENTS
INITIAL PLANNING	Approval Process: Inform your department chair, dean, or office head and get their approval.		<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Set Dates & Purpose: Confirm visit dates, purpose - areas of interest, and expected outcomes (e.g., MOU discussions, research collaboration).		<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Calendar Holds: Place calendar holds for UTSA participants, leadership, tour guides, and other stakeholders.		<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Screening: List all international guests, their titles, affiliations, and countries. Share information with the Office of Research Integrity for VSC Screening (sample available exhibit A)		<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Visit Oversight: Assign a UTSA faculty/staff member as host, a UTSA representative must be present or designate a representative.		<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Detailed Visitor Information: Request biographies, dietary restrictions, arrival details, presentation slides, etc.		<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Create Itinerary: Draft a detailed agenda including parking, meetings, tours, and events. Agenda should be approved by leadership and proposed hosts		<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Biographies: Prepare and share UTSA representatives bios with visitors.		<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Planning Meeting: Conduct a pre-visit planning meeting with all UTSA stakeholders.		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Logistics	Financial Planning: Clarify cost coverage—UTSA department(s) or by guest.		<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Reserve Facilities: Book internal or external meeting rooms, catering, parking, tours, labs, and any necessary AV tech support. Include a private room for guest use.		<input type="checkbox"/>	

UTSA HOST CHECKLIST

	Select & Approve Gifts: Choose culturally appropriate UTSA or Texas-themed gifts. Coordinate with Global Initiatives for approval and executive-level presentations if needed.		<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Invitations: Create and send out calendar invitations to all guests and UTSA participants attach finalized agenda, bios, or other relevant items.		<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Transportation: Arrange transportation for guests (e.g., airport pickup, campus shuttles).		<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Materials: Create name tags, signage, and printed materials as needed. Prepare welcome packets, share prior to arrival (campus maps, Wi-Fi info, contact list, etc.).		<input type="checkbox"/>	
DAY OF THE EVENT	Preparation: Prepare facilities with folders containing relevant documents/flyers, set up presentations, name tags/tents, relevant equipment, supplies, refreshments, event signage, and gifts (if applicable).		<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Welcome Your Guests: Greet and welcome guests upon arrival (assign a greeter or point of contact). Provide welcome packets and name tags.		<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Documentation: Secure support in your team members (meeting participants, escorts, note takers, serve refreshments, etc.)		<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Host Responsibilities: Monitor timing and transitions to keep the agenda on schedule.		<input type="checkbox"/>	
POST-EVENT	Follow up: Reach out with materials or actions requested by visitors, conduct financial reconciliations (e.g., BEF), inform about gifts and collaborations.		<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Thank You Notes: Send out thank you notes to all participants - internal and external		<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Social Media: Create engaging post regarding the visit and tag Global Initiatives		<input type="checkbox"/>	

PRO TIPS TO ENSURE A SUCCESSFUL DELEGATION

Before Arrival:

- Name Tags & Name Tents:
 - Double check for spelling.
 - Create “blank” name tents for last minute visitors.
- Add Breaks to agenda:
 - Build in buffer time for networking, restroom breaks, and personal calls. Allow for flexible transitions between sessions.
- Contingency Planning:
 - Identify potential risks (e.g., speaker no-show, tech failure).
 - Prepare backup plans (alternate speakers, printed slides, etc.).

Room Setup (1-2 hour prior):

- Very often visitors will arrive early, so give yourself plenty of time.
- Brew coffee and prepare beverages.
- Ensure signage is visible and directional if needed.
- Conduct an AV check and load any presentations or welcome slides
- Verify room access; if locked, contact the room POC or campus security.
- Set up name tents, refreshments, printed materials, and food (if applicable)

During the Visit:

- Photos & Videos:
 - Always ask for permission before taking photos or videos of guests, facilities, or projects.
 - Be aware of any restrictions related to sensitive areas or individuals.
- Hospitality Touches:
 - Offer water, snacks, and a quiet space for guests to take calls.
 - Provide printed agendas and Wi-Fi access info.
- Networking:
 - Offer and ask for business cards, social media handles).

VISUAL SCREENING CLEARANCE SAMPLE

Instructions for Submitting a Visitor Security Clearance (VSC) Request

Please send an email to export@utsa.edu (and optionally to robert.michell@utsa.edu, UTSA Research Security Manager) with the subject line: **VSC: [Name of the Delegation][Date][Country]**

In your email, include the following:

General Information:

- **Purpose of the visit**
- **Buildings and labs the delegation will visit**

For Each Delegation Member, Provide:

- **Full Name**
- **Title**
- **Email Address**
- **Nationality**

Finally, wait for clearance before issuing a formal invitation.

VISUAL REPRESENTATIONS

Cultural Awareness



In Asian business etiquette—especially in Japan, China, and South Korea—offer and receive business cards with **both** hands, presenting the card with the text **facing** the recipient. A slight bow is customary when handing it over. Upon receiving, take a moment to **read** and **acknowledge** the card respectfully. Avoid pocketing it immediately; instead, place it in a cardholder or on the table. **Never** write on the card in front of the giver.

Greeting customs vary widely across cultures, and a handshake that feels natural in one part of the world may be unfamiliar—or even inappropriate—in another. Not all cultures express greetings through the same type of handshake or physical contact. These differences often depend on factors such as country of origin, religious beliefs, cultural norms, and social context.

In many Muslim cultures, greetings are characterized by respect and modesty. A gentle **handshake** is most common between individuals of the **same gender** and is often accompanied by a slight nod. While handshakes between men and women do occur, they are **less common** and typically depend on the level of familiarity and comfort between individuals. In more **formal settings** or when greeting someone of the **opposite gender**, it is customary to place the **right hand over the heart** as a sign of sincerity and respect.



VISUAL REPRESENTATIONS

Room Set Up & Gifts

A well-prepared meeting setup typically includes a clear agenda, personalized name tents, branded banners, bottled water, thoughtful welcome gifts such as journals and pens, fresh flower arrangements, and culturally respectful touches like flags representing the visiting country.



When presenting gifts to guests and capturing photos, ensure the gift is clearly visible and facing the camera in the correct orientation. Include all participants in the frame, and, when possible, incorporate a visual representation of UTSA—such as a banner, logo, or backdrop—to highlight the university's presence. Keep gifts nearby for quick and seamless access during the presentation.

