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American Society
- of -
Questioned Document Examiners



Message to International Members and Guests from Jason Lee Miller, President, ASQDE

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Dear colleagues,

This message is intended to be a recommendation and reminder to those who would potentially travel from abroad to the US for the 2018 American Society of Questioned Document Examiners (ASQDE) meeting or any other organization's US-based meeting.

This past year the ASQDE saw unprecedented difficulties for our international guests to get visas for travel to the US for our conference. This appears to have coincided with the implementation of a more restrictive, unofficial policy from US State Department regarding the granting of visas. In the past, it had not been problematic for individuals from around the world to get approval to travel to attend professional development/continuing education meetings. In 2017, we saw visas denied to multiple individuals from several countries. Hand-signed letters of invitation to prospective attendees (who had intentions to contributing and participating in the program) were not sufficient in visa interviews and travel to the US was denied in several instances. This also included some cases where multiple letters of support and invitation were sent to individuals for their interview meetings.

I contacted the US Department of Justice's International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) to seek any recommendation or guidance that they may have regarding their experience with getting visas for those that they assist. I was told that the changes with the US State Department have impacted them too and that there have been instances where individuals who had US government funding through ICITAP had not been able to get a visa to travel to the US.

The recommendation is that if you are seeking to attend a meeting in the US, start the process as early as possible. This is to show concerted effort, advance planning, and (hopefully) any problems with getting an approved visa application can be addressed in a timely manner to prevent an application from being further denied.

As a reminder, attendance to the ASQDE annual general meeting is by invitation only. If you are not already a Member and are interested in attending a meeting, please reach out to a Member or contact our Secretary regarding an invitation.

I hope everyone had a good holiday season and that this message finds you well.

Best regards,

Jason Lee Miller
President, ASQDE

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