

TOP FIVE THINGS YOU SHOULD BE DOING RIGHT NOW TO APPLY FOR YOUR NIW OR EB-1A **GREEN CARD**

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The United States Immigration Service (USCIS) has given foreign national researchers, entrepreneurs, and individuals with extraordinary abilities or an advanced degree a wonderful gift: the opportunity to self-sponsor for permanent residence in the United States. Self-sponsorship means that you do not need a job offer or an employer to sponsor you for a green card. This Top 5 list highlights the most important factors that you will need to consider before applying for a National Interest Waiver (NIW) or Extraordinary Ability (EB-1A) petition.

For both the NIW and EB-1A petitions, the United States Immigration Service (USCIS) wants to know that you have contributed to your field. The EB-1A category requires a heightened standard that the foreign national be among the top people in the field along with a myriad of other requirements. At the end of the day, the officer reviewing your case wants to feel comfortable knowing that they are approving your case because you are exceptional and have made an impact.



GET ORGANIZED

Update your CV and save electronic copies of your journal publications.



HAVE A PLAN

The average green card case takes about 6 months to process.



BE CONFIDENT

The EB-1A Category

Proving that you meet the EB-1A factors does not mean that you need to be the Albert Einstein of your field. Working with a lawyer will help you identify your field and how to narrowly define your field in a way that proves that you are among the top.



NIW Category

The NIW is a great category to highlight the widespread importance of your work. It is important to show that your past work has already benefitted the US and will continue to benefit the country as a whole.

Create a Google Scholar or Web of Science Citation Page

Making the decision to apply for a green card on your own is a major decision. The process does require focus and organization. With these five steps you will be on your way to getting started.

- 1. GET ORGANIZED.** Make sure to update your CV or resume regularly in order to account for all of your achievements. I recommend that you review your CV or resume every month to add or update new information to your CV including peer review journal publications, oral and poster presentations at conferences, and any other information that is helpful in establishing that you have made a contribution to your field.
- 2. STAY IN STATUS.** The last thing you want to worry about while you are applying for a green card is your status. Applying for a green card while you are 2 months away from your OPT expiring will not only cause you stress, but it may also result in your inability to continue your work. Plan on applying for a green card while you have at least one year of status left.
- 3. DO PEER REVIEW.** If you haven't already done work as a peer reviewer for a journal, today is a good day to start. Contact journal editors to seek out opportunities to do peer review. Peer review is great evidence for both the NIW and EB-1A self-sponsored green card categories.
- 4. CONTACT TOP PEOPLE IN YOUR FIELD WHO WILL SIGN LETTERS ON YOUR BEHALF.** Start drafting a list of 10 people in your field who will sign a letter of recommendation for you. The earlier you contact them letting them know that it would be an honor to have them sign a letter on your behalf, the closer you will be to having a green card. People with at least 20 years of experience in the field who have impressive credentials should serve as your recommenders. People who have cited your work who can speak to your past contributions to the field make for great recommenders.
- 5. CONTACT A LAWYER.** I would never recommend for someone to ski without a helmet. It can be done, but it's not the safest way to ski. The same can be said about submitting an NIW or EB-1A petition to USCIS. The instructions on the I-140 do not make it clear as to what exactly USCIS wants you to prove to get your green card. Contact a reputable attorney with experience in these types of cases. Also, make sure that the firm you speak with gives free consultations. Casseus Law has a 100% approval rate on all green cards and provides free credential reviews for prospective clients. Send your resume and Google Scholar or Web of Science citation page to greenecard@casseuslaw.com.

CASSEUS LAW

Rachel Casseus, Esq. runs her own boutique business immigration practice specializing in obtaining permanent resident green cards, and visas for foreign national researchers and entrepreneurs. Attorney Casseus is dedicated to providing her clients with results. To date, the firm has maintained 100% approval on all green card petitions including NIW, EB-1A and EB-1B. The majority of our clients are postdoctoral researchers from U.S. research institutions and universities. Rachel and her team of attorneys have advised and worked with hundreds of foreign national researchers, entrepreneurs and business people.



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