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IMMIGRATION CONSULTING SERVICES

EB-1A Extraordinary Ability: First-Preference Employment-Based Green Card

EB-1A

A first-preference U.S. green card for people at the very top of their field, self-petitioned with no employer, job offer or labor certification.

None	3 of 10	15	Current
Employer sponsor or job offer required	USCIS criteria, or one major award	Business days for premium I-140 decision	EB-1 queue, Rest of World, November 2026

Why the EB-1A

EB-1A is the first-preference green card for individuals who have risen to the very top of their field in science, the arts, education, business or athletics. You petition for yourself on Form I-140. Eligibility begins with a one-time major international award or evidence meeting at least three of ten USCIS criteria, followed by a final merits review confirming sustained national or international acclaim.

Key benefits

Self-petition
No employer, job offer or PERM labor certification required.

Fast decisions
Premium processing delivers an I-140 decision within 15 business days.

Current queue
EB-1 is currently 'Current' for Rest of World, including Pakistan, allowing fast progress to the green card.

Family included
Spouse and unmarried children under 21 are included.

At a glance

Visa type
Immigrant (green card), EB-1

Employer sponsor
No: self-petition on Form I-140

Premium processing
I-140 decision in 15 business days

Evidence standard
Award or 3 of 10, plus final merits

Program overview

- First-preference employment-based green card, self-petitioned on Form I-140
- Freedom to change employers, as long as you continue working in your area of expertise
- Can be filed alongside an EB-2 NIW petition as a backup strategy

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Qualifying criteria

Qualify through a major award or three of ten criteria, then pass a final merits review of the full record.

One-time major award

Major award

Eligibility can begin with a one-time major, internationally recognized award.

Ten USCIS criteria

3 of 10

Awards, selective memberships, media coverage, judging, original contributions, scholarly articles, exhibitions, leading roles, high salary.

Commercial success

Criterion

Commercial success also counts among the ten criteria, alongside high salary and leading roles.

Final merits review

Acclaim

An officer weighs the full record for sustained national or international acclaim among the small percentage at the very top of the field.

Eligibility requirements

- Intent to continue working in your area of expertise in the United States
- Evidence that your work will substantially benefit the United States
- Letters from independent experts supporting your record

The quality of your evidence matters more than the number of criteria claimed.

Good to know

- Many petitions meet three criteria but fail final merits as the evidence shows competence, not top-of-field acclaim.
- November 2026 EB-1 final action dates: 'Current' for Rest of World, 1 August 2023 for China, 1 February 2023 for India.
- USCIS fees: **$715** for Form I-140 plus a **$300** Asylum Program Fee for individual self-petitioners.
- Premium processing is an optional **$2,965**; Form I-485 is **$1,440** per applicant aged 14 or over.

Your application journey

Strategy

01 Free profile assessment and consultation with Phoenix

02 Choose the strategy: EB-1A, EB-2 NIW, or both

03 Map your strongest evidence to specific criteria and close gaps

Petition

04 Obtain letters from independent experts

05 Prepare a petition letter on each criterion and the final merits case

06 File Form I-140, optionally with Form I-907 premium processing

Green card

07 Respond to any Request for Evidence

08 **File Form I-485 in the U.S. or complete consular processing abroad**

Talk to a Phoenix advisor

We assess your eligibility, compare the routes open to you and manage your application from first consultation to approval.

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Book a free consultation

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Program rules, government fees, processing times and visa-free access can change at any time. Figures are indicative as of November 2026; please confirm current terms with Phoenix Immigration Consulting Services before applying. This fact sheet is for general information and is not legal advice.