

## Appendix A: interview Scripts for Individual Interviews

# A1. Interview Guide: Intending Visa Applicant

## Introduction

*Hello and thank you for spending time with us today.*

*My name is Kate Krontiris and I serve as a consulting user researcher for the United States Digital Service. Alongside colleagues at the State Department, I'm conducting research about the experience of applying for an immigrant visa to the United States.*

*This is a voluntary interview and you do not have to participate. It will take roughly 45 minutes to an hour of your time. Are you interested in being interviewed today?*

*At this point, I'd like to review a consent form with you, and I need to let you know a few things:*

- You do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to answer.*
- The information from this interview will be used to inform policymakers for internal management purposes and we will not use your real name if we want to share any idea or observation you have.*
- I will not be asking you to offer any personally identifying information, and please do your best not to share this information with me.*
- I am not a lawyer.*
- Taking part in this research study will not benefit you personally, but we may learn new things that will help others.*
- If you have an ongoing visa application with the United States government, participating in this interview or workshop in no way guarantees special consideration and will have no bearing whatsoever on the outcome of your case*

*Do you have any questions, either about the interview or about this consent form?*

<Ensure respondent signs consent form in order to proceed with interview.>

## Establishing rapport

1. If you wouldn't mind, tell me about yourself – anything you'd like to share by way of introduction.
2. How long have you lived in (Montreal / Santo Domingo / city x)?
3. How do you spend your time, in a typical day?
4. What kinds of technology do you use throughout the day, and for what purposes?

## Motivations for obtaining a visa

1. Let's talk a little bit about getting a visa. What motivated you to apply for a visa to the US?
2. What kind of visa have you applied for?
3. How did you decide which visa to apply for?

## Process of applying

1. What have you done so far to apply for a visa?
  1. What stage are you at now?
2. What are you expecting will happen next in the process?
3. Can you tell me a bit about your experiences applying, starting from the beginning and going until today? (Offer to draw / chart if that helps)
  1. Where there any times where you expected one thing and experienced something else?
4. What electronic systems did you have to use?
  1. What was your experience with those systems?
  2. What worked well and what might have worked better?
  3. What did you do when you needed help?
  4. Do you have any reflections on the systems for paying fees?
5. Can you tell us about your experience gathering documentation and evidence for your application?
  1. Did you understand what to submit?
  2. What did you do when you needed help?
6. Did anybody help you during the application process?
  1. Who? and what did they help with?
  2. Did you offer them anything in return?
7. How do you find out about the status of your case?
8. What was the experience of the visa interview like for you? (as relevant to respondent)
9. What was the experience of arriving at a US port of entry like for you? (as relevant to respondent)

## Improving the experience

1. If you had a magic wand, and could make any changes you wanted to the experience, what would you change? Why?
2. Do you have any final reflections you'd like to share?

*Thank you so much for spending time talking with us today.*

## **A2. Interview Guide: Visa Petitioner or Sponsor**

## Introduction

*Hello and thank you for spending time with us today.*

*My name is Kate Krontiris and I serve as a consulting user researcher for the United States Digital Service. Alongside colleagues at the State Department, I'm conducting research about the experience of applying for an immigrant visa to the United States.*

*This is a voluntary interview and you do not have to participate. It will take roughly 45 minutes to an hour of your time. Are you interested in being interviewed today?*

*At this point, I'd like to review a consent form with you, and I need to let you know a few things:*

- You do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to answer.*
- The information from this interview will be used to inform policymakers for internal management purposes and we will not use your real name if we want to share any idea or observation you have.*
- I will not be asking you to offer any personally identifying information, and please do your best not to share this information with me.*
- I am not a lawyer.*
- Taking part in this research study will not benefit you personally, but we may learn new things that will help others.*
- If you have an ongoing visa application with the United States government, participating in this interview or workshop in no way guarantees special consideration and will have no bearing whatsoever on the outcome of your case*

*Do you have any questions, either about the interview or about this consent form?*

<Ensure respondent signs consent form in order to proceed with interview.>

## Establishing rapport

1. If you wouldn't mind, tell me about yourself – anything you'd like to share by way of introduction.
2. How long have you lived in (Montreal / Santo Domingo / city x)?
3. How do you spend your time, in a typical day?
4. What kinds of technology do you use throughout the day, and for what purposes?

## Motivations for obtaining a visa

4. Let's talk a little bit about getting a visa. For whom did you petition for a visa to the US, and what motivated you to petition/sponsor?
5. What kind of visa have you applied for?
6. How did you decide which visa to apply for?

## Process of applying

10. What have you done so far to apply for a visa?
  1. What stage are you at now?
11. What are you expecting will happen next in the process?
12. Can you tell me a bit about your experiences applying, starting from the beginning and going until today? (Offer to draw / chart if that helps)
  1. Where there any times where you expected one thing and experienced something else?
13. What electronic systems did you have to use?
  1. What was your experience with those systems?
  2. What worked well and what might have worked better?
  3. What did you do when you needed help?
  4. Do you have any reflections on the systems for paying fees?
14. Can you tell us about your experience gathering documentation and evidence for your application?
  1. Did you understand what to submit?
  2. What did you do when you needed help?
15. Did anybody help you during the application process?
  1. Who? and what did they help with?
  2. Did you offer them anything in return?
16. How do you find out about the status of your case?
17. What was the experience of the visa interview like for you? (as relevant to respondent)
18. What was the experience of arriving at a US port of entry like for you? (as relevant to respondent)

## Improving the experience

3. If you had a magic wand, and could make any changes you wanted to the experience, what would you change? Why?
4. Do you have any final reflections you'd like to share?

*Thank you so much for spending time talking with us today.*

## **A3. Interview Guide: 3rd Party Support to Visa Applicant**

### Introduction

*Hello and thank you for spending time with us today.*

*My name is Kate Krontiris and I serve as a consulting user researcher for the United States Digital Service. Alongside colleagues at the State Department, I'm conducting research about the experience of applying for an immigrant visa to the United States.*

*This is a voluntary interview and you do not have to participate. It will take roughly 45 minutes to an hour of your time. Are you interested in being interviewed today?*

*At this point, I'd like to review a consent form with you, and I need to let you know a few things:*

- You do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to answer.*
- The information from this interview will be used to inform policymakers for internal management purposes and we will not use your real name if we want to share any idea or observation you have.*
- I will not be asking you to offer any personally identifying information, and please do your best not to share this information with me.*
- I am not a lawyer.*
- Taking part in this research study will not benefit you personally, but we may learn new things that will help others.*
- If you or anybody you know has an ongoing visa application with the United States government, participating in this interview or workshop in no way guarantees special consideration and will have no bearing whatsoever on the outcome of that case*

*Do you have any questions, either about the interview or about this consent form?*

<Ensure respondent signs consent form in order to proceed with interview.>

## Establishing rapport

1. If you wouldn't mind, tell me about yourself – anything you'd like to share by way of introduction.
2. How long have you lived in (Montreal / Santo Domingo / city x)?
3. How do you spend your time, in a typical day?
4. What kinds of technology do you use throughout the day, and for what purposes?

## Motivations for obtaining a visa

1. Let's talk a little bit about getting a visa. I gather that you helped \_\_\_\_\_ obtain a visa. What motivated you to help him/her apply for a visa to the US?
2. What kind of visa did you help him/her apply for?
3. How did you help him/her decide which visa to apply for?

## Process of applying

1. What have you done so far to help \_\_\_\_\_ apply for a visa?
  1. What stage are you at now?
2. What are you expecting will happen next in the process?
3. Can you tell me a bit about your experiences applying, starting from the beginning and going until today? (Offer to draw / chart if that helps)
  1. Where there any times where you expected one thing and experienced something else?
4. What electronic systems did you have to use?
  1. What was your experience with those systems?
  2. What worked well and what might have worked better?
  3. What did you do when you needed help?
  4. Do you have any reflections on the systems for paying fees?
5. Can you tell us about your experience gathering documentation and evidence for the applicant's application?
  1. Did you understand what to submit?
  2. What did you do when you needed help?
6. Did you receive anything in return for your help with the application?
7. How do you find out about the status of the case?
8. Where you at all involved in the applicant's visa interview? If so, what was it like for you? (as relevant to respondent)
9. Where you at all involved in the applicant's arrival at a US port of entry? If so, what was the experience like for you? (as relevant to respondent)

## Improving the experience

1. If you had a magic wand, and could make any changes you wanted to the experience, what would you change? Why?
2. Do you have any final reflections you'd like to share?

*Thank you so much for spending time talking with us today.*

## **A4. Interview Guide: Federal Government employees**

### Introduction

*Hello and thank you for spending time with us today.*

*My name is Kate Krontiris and I serve as a consulting user researcher for the United States Digital Service. Alongside colleagues at the State Department, I'm conducting research about the experience of applying for an immigrant visa to the United States.*

*This is a voluntary interview and you do not have to participate. It will take roughly 45 minutes*

*to an hour of your time. Are you interested in being interviewed today?*

*At this point, I'd like to review a consent form with you, and I need to let you know a few things:*

- You do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to answer.*
- The information from this interview will be used to inform policymakers for internal management purposes and we will not use your real name if we want to share any idea or observation you have.*
- I will not be asking you to offer any personally identifying information, and please do your best not to share this information with me.*
- Taking part in this research study will not benefit you personally, but we may learn new things that will help us improve the processes that you're involved in.*

*Do you have any questions, either about the interview or about this consent form?*

<Ensure respondent signs consent form in order to proceed with interview.>

## Establishing rapport

1. If you wouldn't mind, tell me about yourself – anything you'd like to share by way of introduction.
2. How long have you lived in (Montreal / Santo Domingo / city x)?
3. What is your role here at the Consulate?
4. What kinds of technology do you use throughout the day, and for what purposes?

## Motivations for obtaining a visa

1. Let's talk a little bit about getting a visa. What are you seeing here in terms of the visas most in demand?
2. How do you think applicants are making their selection of visas? What is motivating them?

## Process of applying

1. What are your perceptions about applicants' experiences applying for a visa?
  1. About their expectations?
  2. About the electronic systems they use?
  3. About the fee payments?
  4. About gathering documentation and evidence?
  5. About 3rd party supports?
  6. About status updates?
  7. About the visa interview process?
2. What would you say is the most challenging part of accepting and adjudicating visa requests here at post?
  1. What are you already doing to address those challenges?
  2. What are you particularly proud of with respect to how the process goes?
  3. What would you like to improve?
3. Can you talk a little bit about working with remote colleagues within your agency (such as

NVC) or with other agencies (such as USCIS) on these applications?

## Improving the experience

1. If you had a magic wand, and could make any changes you wanted to the overall experience, what would you change? Why?
2. Do you have any final reflections you'd like to share?

*Thank you so much for spending time talking with us today.*

## **Appendix B. Research Participant Consent Form**

### **UNITED STATES DIGITAL SERVICE: RESEARCH PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM**

Thank you for taking the time to speak with us. Please read the statement below and sign where indicated.

This consent form relates to interviews conducted by the United States Digital Service as part of a project aiming to **understand the experience of applying for an immigrant visa to the United States.**

Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to take part in our project activities.



**Taking part is voluntary** Participation in this interview or workshop is completely voluntary. You may be uncomfortable with some of the questions and topics we will ask about. If you are uncomfortable at any point about anything we ask you, you may inform the project representative that you wish to end your participation in the interview or workshop at any time.

**Confidentiality** We will take necessary and appropriate precautions to protect your confidentiality. You will not be asked to disclose any personally identifying information. Any transcriptions that are made of your conversation will not be tied to your name. Research records will be kept in a secure location, and raw notes will not be shared outside of our project team.

**Impact** Things we learn during our research may be used in reports and presentations for internal management purposes. We will not use your real name in any of our published or presented research materials. Taking part in this research study will not benefit you personally, but we may learn new things that will help others. If you have an ongoing visa application with the United States government, participating in this interview or workshop in no way guarantees special consideration and will have no bearing whatsoever on the outcome of your case.

**Photography** The project team may take pictures of interviews, observations, or interactive activities. If you approve of your image being used in future publications or presentations of our work, please initial in the section below. In the event we use your image, your name will not be used.

**Statement of Consent:** I have read the above information and received answers to any questions I have asked. I consent to take part in this interview and to have any information I provide be used in the manner described above. I understand that my name will not be used in connection to my words or any photos taken during the duration of this interview. I expressly release the United States Digital Service from and against any and all claims which I have or may have for invasion of privacy, defamation, or any other

cause of action arising out of the production, distribution, display or publication of the results of the project, so long as the conditions of use described above are met.

Your Name (Please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Consent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Photography.** Please also initial here \_\_\_\_\_ if you APPROVE of and consent to having your photographed image used in publications or presentations. If you do not initial, we will not use your photographed image.