

NALCAP

**NORTH AMERICAN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE
ASSISTANTS PROGRAMS IN SPAIN**



APPLICATION GUIDELINES FOR US CITIZENS

2026-2027



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1. THE APPLICATION PROCESS

1.1 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements must be met by applicants to qualify for the program:

- Be a U.S. citizen and have a valid U.S. passport through November 1st, 2027).
- Have a conferred college degree or be currently enrolled as a 2nd year or higher college student. NALCAP applicants must have a college degree from an accredited university in the US or Canada. Only college studies undertaken completely in English will be accepted.
- Be a native-like speaker of English.
- Be in good physical and mental health (required when applying for a visa).
- Have a clean background check (required when applying for a visa).
- You must be 18 years old as of January 1, 2026, and not be 45 or older on January 1, 2027, to participate in the program.

Participants in the program should have a basic level of Spanish to use in everyday life in Spain (ex. renting an apartment, buying groceries and other daily life tasks). However, please keep in mind that in the classroom you should only be speaking in English, even if you have excellent language skills in Spanish. This is essential to the program and the main reason that you are granted a position.

Grant recipients are requested to be responsible, open-minded and have a flexible attitude, as well as being open to new ideas and cultures. These qualifications are necessary as recipients will have a direct impact on the education of students in Spain.

1.2 THE PROFEX 2 PORTAL

Applications are processed and reviewed on the online portal called PROFEX 2 run by The Ministry of Education of Spain. You may complete the curriculum vitae/resume part before the application period begins, but **applications may only be submitted when the application period is open**. If you applied last year, you may reuse your PROFEX account (username and password). You will, however, need to resubmit all the required documents for a new application.

Step by step information on navigating the PROFEX portal is available in the **PROFEX 2 Handbook** found on our website.

1.3 THE APPLICATION PERIOD

The online application period will begin on June 2nd2026. Applicants must submit their applications electronically on the PROFEX portal. Make sure you check the dates and time zones carefully.

Given the high volume of applications that we receive, we will not be able to provide updates on your PROFEX status. However, you can check your PROFEX status by following the steps in the **PROFEX 2 Handbook**. If you are offered a placement, you will be contacted via email. If you are not offered a placement, you will not be contacted. Please refer to our timeline for an estimated timing of the process. Please be aware that the process is lengthy.

1.4 APPLICATION GUIDELINES, INSTRUCTIONS AND VIDEOS

It is important to review each of the following informational materials to guide you through the application process. You can find them on our website.

- a. Application Guidelines (this document)
- b. NEW PROFEX 2 Handbook
- c. FAQs
- d. Recommendation letter guidelines for the writer

1.5 APPLICATION STEPS

Before you start preparing your application:

- Make sure you meet all the program requirements listed in 1.1.
- Start gathering all the necessary documents before applications open. Note that it will take time to apply for or renew your passport, request a recommendation letter and a transcript/diploma.
- Please note that applications will be different if you are a first-time or renewal applicant.

First-time applicants. Please follow all the information in these guidelines.

Renewals: If you are currently a language assistant in Spain under the Ministry of Education program and would like to continue in the program, please follow the Profex 2 Handbook for Renewals found on this website.

Note that for any renewal:

- The application must be accompanied by a positive reference letter from your current school.
- The renewal applicant must have completed the entire period of their assignment during the current school year.

Applicants coming in from *CIEE*, *Fulbright* or *ConversaSpain*, or other private and unofficial programs who would like to stay in Spain for a second year and participate in NALCAP are considered new, first-time applicants to our program. **Please be aware that you are not considered a renewal.**

Follow the steps below to complete your application successfully. Make use of these guidelines, as well as the NEW PROFEX 2 Handbook.

1.5.1. BEFORE THE APPLICATION PROCESS OPENS

Step 1: Apply for or renew your passport, if needed. Passports must be valid through November 1st 2027. If you need to renew your passport, make a copy of it before sending it in to renew. You will need to present a copy of your old passport along with the receipt for its renewal with your NALCAP application. Once you receive your newly renewed passport, please consult our FAQs for the next step. This is of the utmost importance as it could affect your visa. Note that processing times for U.S. passports can be lengthy.

Step 2: Request your college transcripts if you have not yet graduated or make a copy of your diploma for your application.

Step 3: Ask a college professor, mentor or employer for a recommendation letter dated no earlier than **September 1, 2025**.

Step 4: Create a PROFEX 2 account. Use your passport number as your username. Select a password to log into the portal.

If you have previously applied, use the same username and password to log in.

Step 5: Once applications are open, complete the **MY PROFILE** section on PROFEX 2.

*Please note that only the **Datos Generales**, **Direcciones**, and **Formación Académica** sections are required to be completed. The others are to be left blank and will have NO influence on your application. Follow the steps in the **PROFEX 2 Handbook**.*

1.5.2. ONCE APPLICATIONS ARE OPEN

Step 6: Fill out the online NALCAP application on PROFEX 2. Make sure to upload all the required documents, choose your preferred regions in Spain (called *Comunidades Autónomas*) and write in all the requested information. If you submit your application but do not upload all the required documents, your application will not be processed when reviewed, resulting in delays in the selection process. **Please DO NOT use your college email address. We have had considerable issues contacting applicants when needed with these types of email addresses.**

Step 7: Select a Consulate General of Spain office. When applying you will be asked to select a consulate. This question is solely for organizational purposes for consulate offices and is important to avoid delays in visa issuing come the summer. Please note that it does not mean that you can choose any consulate that you prefer. You must be a resident or student of a certain State and have a driver's license, State ID, or student ID from the area that corresponds to your local consulate. See the **How to apply for a Visa: Guidelines for U.S. citizens** on our website for a map of consular offices in the U.S. and their corresponding jurisdictions.

Step 8: Submit your application. Make sure you get an **EN REVISIÓN** status and not **BORRADOR**. *Borrador* means *draft* and as such, it means that your application **has not** been submitted. Only **EN REVISIÓN** status confirms that you have submitted your NALCAP application.

If you forget to upload a document or are asked to upload a new one by a reviewer, please upload it/them to the Attached Documents (*Documentos Anexos*) section under *MY PROFILE*.

If you would like to delete a draft application and start over, go to the bottom of Summary and click on Anular borrador. You can begin your new application in the Inicio (Home) section. You may also delete your application once submitted while the application period is still open and begin a new one. Keep in mind that, in this case, the application number will be a higher number. To delete your application, go to the bottom of the Summary section and click on (Anular borrador) Cancel Draft.

The next steps may take a considerable amount of time. We ask for your patience. Thanks in advance!

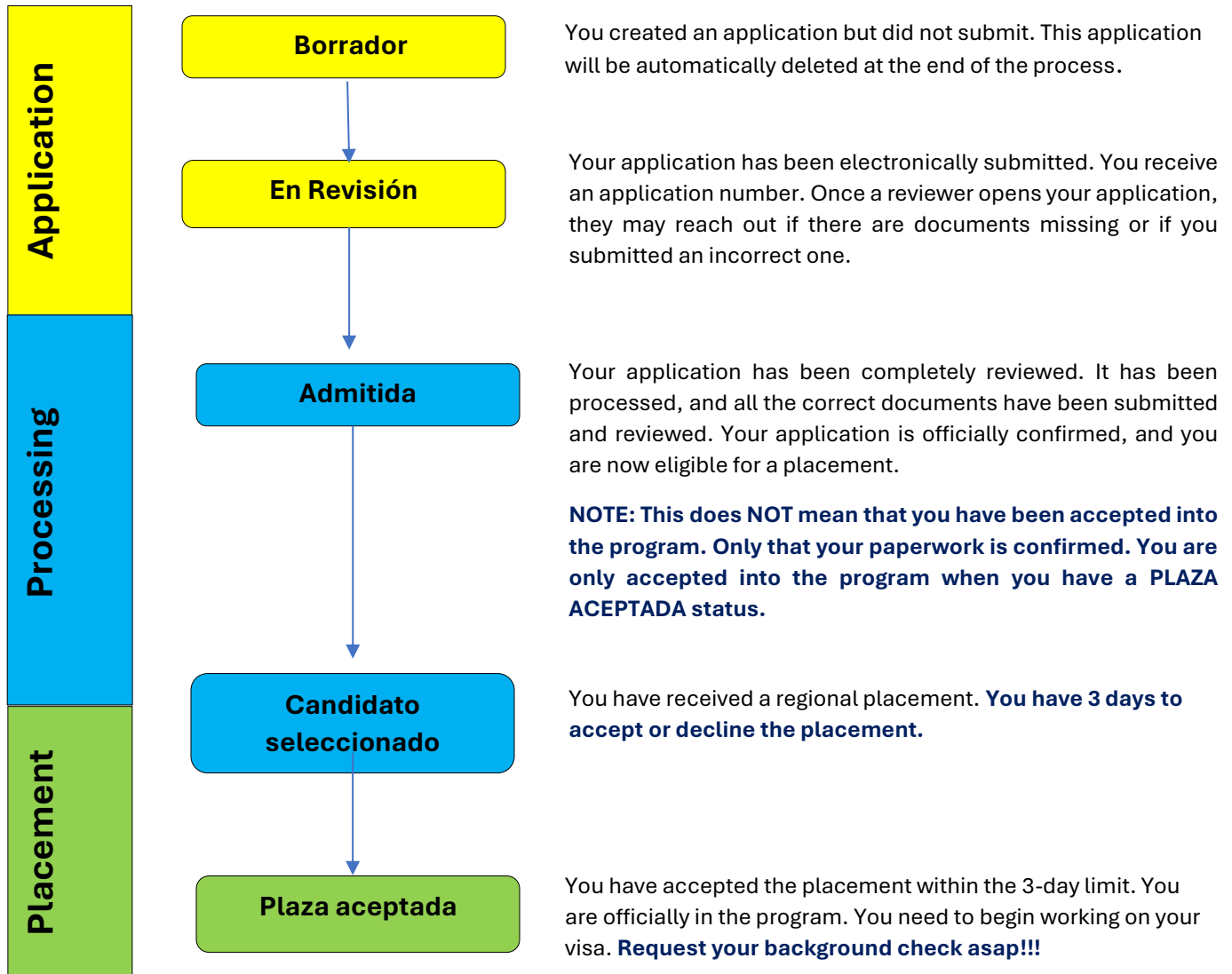
Step 9: Wait for an email that states that your PROFEX status has changed to ADMITIDA. This means that your application has been reviewed and approved. You now qualify to receive a regional placement. **ADMITIDA does not mean you have been admitted to the program.**

Step 10: You receive an email that you have been assigned to a certain region in Spain. **You will have 2 days to accept the position.** You must accept it on the PROFEX 2 portal. If you would like to decline your position, you **DO NOT HAVE TO DO ANYTHING**. You will be withdrawn from the system automatically after three days. Please note that if you decline the position, you will not be assigned another position for the 2026-2027 school year.

Please refer to 1.8 in these guidelines for specific instructions as to how to accept or decline a position on PROFEX 2.

Step 11: Once you accept the regional placement, you should receive an email that confirms that you have accepted the placement. Your status on PROFEX 2 should be **PLAZA ACEPTADA**.

PROFEX 2 STATUSES



Step 12: Now that you have a **PLAZA ACEPTADA** status, you may begin to request your background check for your visa application, and then the subsequent apostille certification and the official translation. Some of the American offices that issue these documents may experience delays. Note that Spanish consulates will accept background checks with a validity of 5 months when submitting your visa application, so you will have to consider the possible request and issuing dates to make sure you meet the requirements for all of the offices involved in the process.

Step 13: Regional education offices in Spain will begin to send out the **Placement Letters**. This letter is of the utmost importance. All the pertinent information concerning your assignment can be found on it. In addition, you will need the letter to apply for a visa before leaving the U.S. and then for a residency card (TIE) once you have arrived in Spain.

Step 14: If the application period is approaching its final stages and you are still awaiting a PLAZA ACEPTADA status, we recommend requesting your background check to help avoid delays with your visa application. You should also book your visa appointment as soon as you receive your placement letter, keeping in mind the processing time needed for the background check and apostille. Please do not purchase airline tickets, or make sure any ticket purchased can be changed, until your visa has been issued and is in your possession.

1.6 REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

There are only 5 required documents. You must upload them to the portal in PDF format.

- A. A copy of the main page of your valid **U.S. passport**.
- B. An **official** college transcript or a copy of your diploma(s).
- C. A **signed Statement of Purpose** explaining why you would like to participate in the program with the following requirements:
 - 250-300 words max.
 - Written in English
 - Addressed to the Ministry of Education of Spain
 - Stating that you are a native-like speaker of English
 - Signed and dated by you. Digital/electronic signatures are accepted

*Please note that your signature on this statement is **an application requisite**.*

- D. A **letter of recommendation** from a college professor/instructor/employer with the following requirements:
 - Be on an organization's **official** letterhead
 - Include the writer's **name, job title, and contact information**
 - Explain **how the writer knows the applicant and for how long**
 - Assess the **applicant's qualifications and qualities** towards their success in NALCAP
 - Provide a **final statement** where the writer speaks to the applicant's ability to be a language assistant in Spain
 - Be written in **English or Spanish**
 - Be no **more than 1 page** in length
 - Be **addressed** to the Ministry of Education of Spain
 - Be signed and **dated** by the writer no earlier than **September 1, 2025**
 - Digital/electronic signatures are accepted.

Please share the Recommendation Letter Guidelines on our website with the writer.

Note that only applicants will be able to upload the recommendation letter to the portal. If the person you ask to write your letter does not feel comfortable, you may have to ask someone else to write it for you. Unfortunately, no exemptions can be made due to the way the portal works. We apologize for any inconvenience.

E. Health Statement and Statutory Declaration

- STATUTORY DECLARATION ON HEALTH STATUS
- STATUTORY DECLARATION ON THE CONDITIONS OF THE LANGUAGE ASSISTANT PROGRAM

Please make sure you follow these steps:

- Download the pdf document
- Fill out the form including your name and nationality as required
- Print it out
- Sign the document in both spaces required
- Scan the document and upload it to the portal in PDF format

If you have dual citizenship, European Union and the United States, it is important to make sure that:

When you apply on PROFEX, in the field **Nacionalidad** you enter the citizenship with which you will be entering Spain, and in the field **País seleccionador** you enter the country you are applying from (the US or Canada)

If you enter Spain as an EU citizen, you will be able to do so without a visa, so you don't need to apply for one.

Once in Spain, you need to register in the Registro de Ciudadanos de la UE to get your NIE Número de Identidad de Extranjero.

You also must bring these documents to Spain because they will be required for different purposes:

- **A medical certificate.** The medical certificate needs to be on a doctor's letterhead and on a standard sized sheet of paper. The certificate must verify that you are free of drug addiction and are in good mental and physical condition and have no limitations that would impair your ability to be in a classroom.
- **A background check.** You will need to request a police background check in your country of origin.

Both of these documents must be presented at your school upon arrival. You do not need to provide them with your application.

If you have dual nationality and one of them is from one of the member countries of the European Union or the Schengen Area, you can use this passport to enter Spain without applying for a visa. To apply, you will need to select the Nationality for the UE country. Then under Interest Data you will select the organization or embassy office through which you are applying. Please note that copies of both

passports must be uploaded. The only exception is if you hold citizenship from Spain. In this case, you can only use one passport, and it cannot be the Spanish one. Please follow the instructions as if you do not have dual citizenship. After arriving in Spain, language assistants must apply for their TIE card (Tarjeta de Identidad de Extranjero) within a month at the latest. The TIE is a residency permit for your time within the program and will have an assigned number (NIE or *Número de Identificación del Extranjero*), personal information, and your photo. You will need to make an appointment with your local immigration office, *Oficina de Extranjería*, or police station to request this residency card. Appointments are usually made online. Please note that it can take weeks just to get an appointment, depending on where you are located (in bigger cities, it will take longer). You will also need to check on what documents are required at your local office. Your school should be able to guide you through this process. Please note that you have to apply for your visa before leaving the U.S. and that you can only apply for the TIE once you are in Spain at your local *Oficina de Extranjería*. You cannot apply for a visa in Spain.

Please make sure you submit ALL 5 required documents when submitting your application. If you submit an incomplete application, your status will be EN REVISIÓN and a reviewer will reach out to ask you for your missing documents only when they have the availability to do so. This will not only delay the process of your individual application but also for all applicants. We kindly ask you to only submit completed applications for a speedier process for all. We cannot stress the importance of this step for a smoother application process for all involved.

We kindly ask you to avoid emailing us just to check if your email has been received. Applications are reviewed by the Ministry of Education in Spain and not by NALCAP, so we are unfortunately unaware of its status. Know that your application will be reviewed, and if the application needs to be corrected or completed in any way, you will be contacted via email by a reviewer.

1.7 THE SELECTION PROCESS

- **Assignments are given on a first-come, first-served basis.** You are therefore advised not to submit your application until you have uploaded all the necessary documents, as this will involve delays with your application, as well as for those of all applicants.
- Once each application is submitted electronically, it is given **an application number** (ex. 21_1AX000423) and its status will be **EN REVISIÓN**.
- Your application will then be reviewed. Applications from new applicants will be **reviewed in order of submission**.
- **ADMITIDA** means that your application has been **completely reviewed**, and you are all set. You now qualify to receive a regional placement. Please keep in mind that being **ADMITIDA does not guarantee you a placement**. It just means that you have met and completed the requirements for documentation. Your placement will depend on having one available when a reviewer reaches your **ADMITIDA** application.

- If something is missing or does not meet the requirements, you will be notified by a reviewer via email. When one of the 5 documents is missing or does not meet the requirements, your status will be **EN REVISIÓN**. It will remain **EN REVISIÓN** until you upload the missing documentation, and the reviewer is able to get back to reviewing your application. Please be aware that this will delay your application.
- You are only **guaranteed a placement** when you have a **PLAZA ACEPTADA** status on PROFEX 2. You now need to begin your visa process asap. Request your background check asap.
- **Placements are given in areas across the country.** Not everyone may get placed in their region of choice. Please know that every effort is made to give you one of your preferred regions or at least a region located near your preferred ones. School communities in Spain look forward to having a language and culture assistant. Please keep an open mind to placements in small towns, as they offer endless opportunities to enjoy real life in Spain, and you may end up having a life-changing experience in an unexpected place. On top of that, the cost of living in these towns is significantly lower, and therefore, the standard of living is usually better than in big cities. You never know what might be waiting for you there!
- You may only express your **preference for a region**, not for a specific city or school, except in the region of Andalucía.
- Please be aware that **no changes in your regional preference order will be possible** after you have submitted your application. If you would like to change your region of preference once you have submitted your application, your only option is to have your first application deleted and complete a new one. Keep in mind that this means that you will lose your first application number and thus, that earlier position for assignments. This option is only available while applications are open.
- Please contact auxiliares.extra@educacion.gob.es or profex.soporte@educacion.gob.es with your application number **to delete a submitted application**.
- The regional education offices in Spain (e.g.: Junta de Andalucía, Junta de Castilla La Mancha, Comunidad de Madrid, Xunta de Galicia...) will **assign school placements after you have accepted** the regional placement offer. Kindly note that our offices in the U.S. (NALCAP) do not make any decisions in this regard.
- Once you get a regional placement, your regional education office takes over. You will receive your **Placement Letter** (*Carta de Nombramiento*) from them with the name and location of your school. They will provide your grant and medical insurance as well. From the moment that you receive your letter, you should contact them with any questions you may have related to all issues concerning your placement.
- Placements for more than one school, although not common, may be offered. This will depend on your regional education office. This will be stated in your Placement Letter.

Placements are assigned according to your application number AND the following criteria:

Priority in assignments works as follows:

- 1 First-year renewals in the same region
- 2 First-year renewals in a different region
- 3 First-year applicants
- 4 Second- and third-year renewals

Here is an example:

If you are a first-year **applicant** with application number #1, you will probably **not** be the first person to be assigned a position. If there is a first-year **renewal** applying in your same preferred region with application number #4,786 this person will be assigned a position before you.

If you **wish to participate in the program with** a family member, significant other or friend, please make sure that you are both applying at the same time, expressing your preferences for the same regions, and including a note on both your application forms explaining that you are applying together and including the full name of the other person. Applications for placement with another person will only be considered when **both applications have been submitted**. We strongly encourage you to submit your applications together at the same time.

Once you receive a regional placement, contact the regional education office (email addresses are on our website under the Contact Us section) and request to be placed together. Please note that while every effort is made to accommodate this preference, there are no guarantees.

If your **significant other** is planning to join you for your stay in Spain but is not applying for a grant, they are eligible for a visa but not medical insurance coverage. In addition, they are not allowed to work in Spain.

1.8 HOW TO ACCEPT OR DECLINE YOUR REGIONAL PLACEMENT

Applicants **MUST accept or decline an assignment within three days** of receiving their placement notification email. We urge you to check your junk mail folder often to avoid missing this deadline.

Follow these steps to accept or decline your placement:

- Log in to your account on PROFEX 2.
- Click on **Acceso al trámite**.
- Then click on **Mis solicitudes**.
- Your new status on PROFEX 2 should be **Candidato seleccionado**.
- Click on **Ver**.

- In the new window, click on **Aceptación o rechazo**
- Click on **Aceptar Plaza** to **accept**.
- Click on **Rechazar Plaza** to **decline**.

If you choose to decline the offer, you will not be considered for any other placement for the upcoming school year. You may apply again next year if you so wish.

Please give careful consideration to accepting a position. If you withdraw from the program at a later stage, there are no personal consequences. However, your allotted school may not be assigned another grant recipient and thus, not have a language assistant during the school year. We ask you to please take this into consideration when deciding. Thank you.

In case of an emergency or extenuating circumstances once you have accepted your placement and you need to withdraw, please email the following offices as soon as possible:

- If you were allocated to **a regional education office**, please contact them directly (contact info on our website - CONTACT US section).
- If you were allocated to **cupo ministerio**, contact renuncias.auxminis@educacion.gob.es
- You will also need to contact the school you were placed in.

1.9 THE PLACEMENT LETTER

Each regional education office sends out a *Placement Letter* to each grant recipient. This letter is extremely important as it **provides key information** such as:

- Program start and end dates
- School and location information
- Stipend amount and class periods to complete
- Health insurance information

The *Placement Letter* and all the information it contains is required for your visa application. The letter, in itself, is a requisite for your student visa.

The *Placement Letter* is **always** received via email.

Some regional educational offices are timely in mailing the Placement Letter, whereas some others may take longer. Sending out the letters may begin in May and continue through the fall. Please be patient and check your junk mail folder regularly.

For contact information for each regional education office, check our website.

1.10 TYPE OF COHORT

Although all language assistants have similar conditions, your placement may depend on the Ministry of Education or the Regional Educational Office (Valencia, Madrid, Andalucía, etc.).

The first group of assistants are called **Cupo Ministerio** and the second one **Cupo Comunidad Autónoma**

Certain procedures will be different depending on whether you belong to *Cupo Ministerio* or *Cupo Comunidad Autónoma*, therefore it is extremely important that you know what your status is and that you indicate it whenever you must make any query.

In order to find out whether you belong to *Cupo Ministerio* or *Cupo Comunidad Autónoma*, you can:

1. Check your profile on Profex 2 once you have received the placement offer.
2. Check your *Placement Letter*. If this letter was sent to you directly by the *Ministerio de Educación, Formación Profesional y Deportes*, you belong to *Cupo Ministerio*, otherwise you belong to *Cupo Comunidad Autónoma*.

2. APPLYING FOR A VISA and TIE (RESIDENCY CARD)

- **Visa applications are consular matters.** Only the Consulates General of Spain in the U.S. have the authorization to handle visa applications. Award recipients must apply for a National/student visa in order to travel to Spain. The visa will be valid for 90 days after the visa issuing date. This allows you 3 months to process your application for your residency card (TIE) in Spain.
- **Updated information** regarding visa requirements from the Consulates General of Spain will be posted on our website usually by April. This information will guide you through the visa application process but any and all information provided by the consulates overrules any information provided by us on our website.
- If you have **dual citizenship**, the U.S. plus the European Union, you do not need a visa. However, you are required to present a medical certificate and a background check upon arrival at your school in Spain.
- **After arriving in Spain, you must apply for their TIE card** (*Tarjeta de Identidad de Extranjero*) within a month at the latest. The TIE, an ID card and residency permit, will have an assigned number (NIE), personal information, and your photo. Some provinces may experience delays in offering appointments. Your school or regional education office should be able to offer support with this procedure.
- Please note that you have to apply for your visa before leaving the U.S. and that you can only apply for the TIE once you are in Spain at your local “*Oficina de Extranjería*”.

3. MAP OF SPAIN

This is a map of Spain divided into its 17 regions (called Comunidades Autónomas) and the cities of Ceuta and Melilla. It is important to note that some of the regions in Spain, such as Cataluña, Valencia, Baleares, Galicia, País Vasco, and Navarra have two official languages. In these regions, please keep in mind that you will come across the use of both languages – Spanish and the regional language – both at your school and in your everyday life.



4. IMPORTANT INFORMATION. PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

DATA PROTECTION

The Ministry of Education of Spain will use the information you provide on your application form for the purpose of reviewing your application and sharing updates and information concerning your application with you. If accepted into the program, we may use the information provided for the handling of your participation in NALCAP and for NALCAP promotional services. We may also share your information with collaborating institutions, government departments, and other third parties involved in the program. Applying to the program concedes acceptance of these conditions.

BE AWARE OF POSSIBLE SCAMS

The Ministry of Education reminds applicants that registration for the program is **FREE**. We will never ask for any type of payment via email or any other means.

We also ask you to be aware that we will never ask for or require any financial information concerning credit or debit cards and/or bank access codes when you are in the US. Once in Spain, your regional education office will ask you for your Spanish bank account information in order to process your stipend.

Please keep in mind that all the email addresses that belong to the Ministry of Education of Spain end with the domain **@educacion.gob.es**

PLEASE NOTE

The Education Office of the Embassy of Spain in the U.S. and Canada is only responsible for the promotion of the official program in these two countries and for providing general information concerning the program, as well as assistance during the application process. Once you have received your *Placement Letter*, meaning you have received a placement from the Ministry of Education or a regional education office in Spain, all further information concerning your assignment and experience in the program needs to be handled by these offices in Spain. Only your regional education office in Spain will be able to assist you with any issues or concerns. As much as we would like to help you resolve certain issues, once assigned to a school/region, we are limited in our reach.

It is our sincere wish that you have a meaningful and valuable experience in Spain sharing your language and culture while making a meaningful impact in your school communities, contributing to the vibrant educational landscape in Spain and fostering cross-cultural understanding.