

L-1 Visa for Indian Entrepreneurs: The "New Office" Pathway Checklist

Overview: Use this checklist to track your progress in establishing U.S. business operations and securing your L-1 visa.

1. Entity Setup

- **Incorporate U.S. Entity:** Form your U.S. company (e.g., LLC, C-Corp).
- **Tax Strategy:** Review Indian and U.S. tax implications with a professional.
- **FEIN Registration:** Obtain your Federal Employer Identification Number from the IRS.
- **Bank Account:** Open a U.S. corporate business bank account.

2. Premises

- **Identify Location:** Search for commercial office space in the target U.S. market.
- **Compliance Check:** Ensure the space is "L-1 compliant" (not a "mailbox-only" or virtual office).
- **Execute Lease:** Secure a signed commercial lease proportionate to your first-year staffing plan.

3. Hiring Plan

- **5-Year Roadmap:** Develop a detailed staffing plan for the first five years of operation.
- **Organizational Chart:** Create a chart clearly showing both U.S. and foreign roles.
- **Job Descriptions:** Define specific duties for the executive/manager and the initial U.S. hires.

4. Business Plan

- **USCIS-Grade Plan:** Craft a comprehensive business plan specifically for the L-1 "New Office" petition.
- **Financial Projections:** Include detailed 5-year revenue and expense projections.
- **Market Analysis:** Provide an in-depth analysis of your U.S. industry and competition.

5. Petition (Form I-129)

- **Compile Evidence:** Gather all corporate records, lease agreements, and professional credentials.
- **File Form I-129:** Submit the petition to USCIS.

- **Processing Choice:** Determine if "Premium Processing" is required for a 15-day response.

6. Stamping

- **DS-160 Form:** Complete the online non-immigrant visa application.
- **Interview Scheduling:** Book your appointment at a U.S. Consulate in India (Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata, or Mumbai).
- **Final Stamping:** Attend the interview to receive your L-1 visa stamp.