

INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARS Pre-Arrival Guide



INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

WELCOME

Colorado State University is proud to welcome more than 1,600 international students and scholars from 90+ countries to study and work here in Fort Collins. Over the course of your stay, the Office of International Programs will assist you with your cultural adjustment, academic integration, professional growth, and personal support.

This guide provides information to help you prepare for your first few weeks in Colorado. By reading this guide thoroughly, you will understand the services we provide to assist you in your transition to CSU and to be prepared for the tasks ahead.

We look forward to having you on campus.





TABLE OF CONTENTS

Pre-Arrival Checklist	4
Visa & Immigration	6
Arriving in the U.S.	7
Finances	8
Health Insurance	8
Bringing Dependents	9
Housing Information	9-10
Arrival at CSU	11
About Fort Collins	12
What to Pack.....	13
Campus Resources/Safety.....	14
Health & Wellness	15
Money & Banking	16
Transportation	17

FOR THE LATEST INFORMATION:
<https://col.st/RBI64>

PRE-ARRIVAL CHECKLIST

1: Obtain Visa and Passport

- Make sure your passport is valid for at least six months from the date you plan to enter the U.S.
- Obtain a DS-2019 with a program start date.
- Pay the SEVIS I-901 fee.
- Schedule a visa application interview at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate.

2: Get Your Finances in Order

- Bring enough accessible money for your initial living expenses.

3: Complete Health Tasks

- Bring your immunization record with you.
- Fulfill the health insurance requirement.

4: Secure Housing

- Complete housing application as soon as possible.
- Arrange for temporary housing, if needed.

5: Arrange Transportation

- Reserve shuttle transportation from Denver International Airport to campus.





HOW TO CONTACT US:

iss@colostate.edu

international.colostate.edu/iss

Phone: (001) 970-491-5917



U.S. VISA AND IMMIGRATION-RELATED INFORMATION

For every immigration document you receive, check that the spelling of your name and your date of birth are exactly the same as listed on your passport. Your passport must be valid for at least six months beyond your intended entry into the United States. Copy all documents prior to departure. Carry all originals with you when you travel, and keep copies in a separate place.

OBTAINING A VISA

1. Receive your DS-2019 from CSU and complete orientation

You will receive an email with helpful resources, your DS-2019 form, and a link to the J-1 Scholar Orientation. Read the resources and complete the orientation, then print and sign the DS-2019 form.

2. Pay the SEVIS I-901 fee

At least two weeks before your visa interview, pay this fee online at fmjfee.com. Type your name exactly as it appears on the DS-2019 form. Print a copy of the online receipt and bring it to your visa interview. (Canadians should present this receipt at the U.S. border.) Make copies of this receipt and keep it with your other immigration documents.

3. Complete the DS-160 form

The DS-160 form is a non-immigrant electronic visa application, available on your local U.S. Embassy/Consulate website.

4. Pay visa application fee

Follow the instructions on your local U.S. Embassy/Consulate website to pay this fee.

5. Make your visa appointment at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate

Find your local U.S. Embassy or Consulate at usembassy.gov and schedule an appointment with them as early as possible. The wait time for a visa interview varies, but is always longer during the months of June, July, and August. Depending on your field of research and nationality, the visa officer may also have to get special clearances, which can require additional time.

6. Prepare and bring to your visa interview:

Remember to remain calm and answer all the visa officer's questions openly and honestly.

- Passport valid for at least six months
- DS-2019 form (signed/dated)
- Offer letter
- Two 2" x 2" photographs in the required format

- A receipt of the paid SEVIS I-901 fee
- Financial evidence of sufficient funds to cover living expenses during your program
- Any information that proves that you will return to your home country after finishing your program in the U.S. This may include proof of property, family, or other ties to your community.

7. Visa Delays

If you are unable to obtain a visa prior to your start date, contact ISSS (iss@colostate.edu) immediately so that we can update your DS-2019.

8. Home Country Physical Presence Requirement

If you are subject to the Two-Year Home Country Physical Presence Requirement, or 212(e), the Consular Officer will indicate this condition on your DS-2019 and/or visa. If you are subject to this requirement, it means that upon completion of your J-1 program, you will be required to return to your home country and must be physically present there for an aggregate of two years before you will be eligible to return to the U.S. in immigrant, H or L status.

You could be subject to this requirement if you are admitted to the U.S. under one of the following conditions:

1. Your J-1 program is being funded by your home government or the U.S. government;
2. You have specialized knowledge or skills that are deemed necessary for the development of your home country as listed in the Exchange Visitor Skills List; or
3. You are receiving graduate medical education or training in the United States

If you are subject to this requirement, you (and your dependents) will be ineligible to change your immigration status within the U.S. but you may leave and re-enter in a new non-immigrant status before you have fulfilled the requirement. Please see page 2 of your DS-2019 for important program rules.

ARRIVING IN THE UNITED STATES

1. Plan your arrival

You will not be allowed to enter the country more than 30 days before the start of your program

Remember: Always carry your original DS-2019 and passport on your person, not in a checked bag!

2. At the port of entry

Proceed to the terminal area for arriving passengers. Present the following documents:

- Passport
- J-1 Visa (unless Canadian)
- DS-2019 Form
- Customs Declaration Form (CF-6059), which reflects the address where you will reside, not the address of the school or program.

All visitors entering the U.S. must state their reasons for wishing to enter the country. You will be asked to provide information about your final destination. It is important that you tell the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officer that you will be a scholar. Be prepared to include the name and address of the school program.

Once your inspection is successfully completed, the inspecting officer will:

- Assign you an Admission Number (I-94). You can locate your I-94 number at i94.cbp.dhs.gov. Be sure to check that your I-94 lists the correct visa type (J), correct date, and D/S for Duration of Status.

3. Secondary Inspection Requirements

If the CBP officer at the port of entry cannot initially verify your information or you do not have all of the required documentation, you may be directed to an area known as “secondary inspection.” Here the CBP Officer will attempt to verify your status by using the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS). If the officer needs to verify information with your school or program, contact International Student and Scholar Services at +1 (970) 491-5917.

In case of an after-hours emergency, please contact the Colorado State University Police Department at +1 (970) 491-6425. They will connect you to the on-call ISSS staff member.

4. International Post-Arrival Check-in

All new J-1 scholars must complete an online check-in form after arriving in the United States. You will receive additional information about this process by email. Please make sure you have the required documents:

- Passport
- Visa
- I-94
- DS-2019 form
- The name and address of an emergency contact in the U.S. or your home country
- Current U.S. address and phone number

International Programs requires these documents to validate your arrival in the SEVIS system as required by the U.S. government. If a report is not submitted, you may be considered in violation of your immigration status in the U.S. If you cannot complete this process online, please email ISSS@colostate.edu.



IMPORTANT INFO

For helpful information on applying for a U.S. visa, visit: bit.ly/studentvisatips

FINANCES

How much money should I bring?

Bring enough money to cover your expenses during your first few days in the U.S., such as food, transportation, personal items, and temporary housing. These expenses can be covered with major credit cards, debit cards and ATM cards. We don't recommend carrying more than \$1,000 in cash. You can set up a checking account at a local bank once you arrive, and wire money electronically as needed. Calculate the estimated expenses of your program [online](#).

HEALTH INSURANCE

For Current Information, visit: col.st/UPsJT

Federal regulations require all J-1 Exchange Visitors and their J-2 dependents to maintain comprehensive medical insurance meeting specific minimum requirements from the start date of the J-1 program (indicated in item 3 of the DS-2019) and continuing to the end of the J-1 program. Coverage must continue without breaks or lapses even if the exchange visitor travels outside the U.S. for an extended period of time during the J-1 program.

22C.F.R. 62.14 describes exchange visitor health insurance requirements as follows:

- Medical benefits of at least \$100,000 per person per accident or illness;
- Repatriation of remains in the amount of \$25,000;
- Expenses associated with the medical evacuation of exchange visitors to their home country in the amount of \$50,000;
- Deductible not to exceed \$500 per accident or illness

Insurance policies secured to fulfill the requirements:

- May require a waiting period for pre-existing conditions that is reasonable as determined by current industry standards;
- May include provisions for co-insurance under the terms of which the exchange visitor may be required to pay up to 25% of the covered benefits per accident or illness; and
- Must not unreasonably exclude coverage for perils inherent to the activities of the exchange visitor's J-1 program.

You will be required to submit a Health Insurance Compliance Form to the Office of International Programs before you arrive, verifying that you have obtained health insurance for yourself (and your J-2 dependents, if applicable) that meets the regulatory requirements. More information is available here: <https://international.colostate.edu/iss/j-1-health-insurance-requirements/>



HOUSING INFORMATION

ON-CAMPUS HOUSING

Scholars are not guaranteed on-campus housing, and it is not meant to be long term. You may apply if you wish to live on campus for a short program (less than a year) or at the beginning of a longer program while you look for permanent housing.

Apartments

CSU offers both single and family apartments. Furnished apartments as well as short term leases are sometimes available. For more information about on-campus housing options, visit housing.colostate.edu.

OFF-CAMPUS HOUSING

Off-campus housing is another option available for scholars. Due to limited on-campus housing availability, scholars who will be at CSU for a year or more should plan to live off-campus, even if an on-campus housing assignment has been made initially.

The CSU Off-Campus Life office has many great resources for scholars looking for housing, including a useful tool: ocl.colostate.edu/international-students.

Finding furnished apartments is rare. Plan to pay your first and last month's rent before you move in plus a deposit.

Signing a Lease:

Most apartment owners require a one-year lease.

FAMILY HOUSING

As with all on-campus housing, availability is limited. You may apply if you wish to live on campus with your family for a short program (less than a year) or at the beginning of a longer program while you look for permanent family housing. On-campus family housing options include:

- [AGGIE FAMILY](#)
- [UNIVERSITY VILLAGE](#)

TEMPORARY HOUSING

Scholars are responsible for making their own housing arrangements and should do so before arriving in Fort Collins. For information about temporary housing, please visit:

international.colostate.edu/iss/resources/housing/temporary-housing/

BRINGING DEPENDENTS

Your spouse or child(ren) under 21 years old may accompany you on a J-2 dependent visa. J-2 visa holders are allowed to work (with permission from USCIS) or study.

Additional funding and documentation may need to be provided for your dependents.

If family members accompany you to CSU:

- Living expenses may increase by 50% because of increased housing, transportation, food, and childcare costs.
- J-2 dependents may apply for work permission from the USCIS only if the income earned is to be used for support of the spouse or children, not for support of the J-1 student or scholar. Learn more at: international.colostate.edu/iss/resources/employment/

If you plan to enroll your children in Poudre School District, please obtain the following documents from your home country before you arrive:

- An official birth certificate, a signed hospital certificate, or a passport as valid proof of your child's birth date
- Official copies of the child's school records
- All immunization records with names and dates of vaccines received

Visit the [Poudre School District](#) website for more information.

HOUSING INFORMATION



IMPORTANT INFO

If you arrive before the assigned move-in date for your program, and *did not* reserve housing prior to arrival, you will need to make temporary arrangements at a hotel or hostel.

HOTELS NEAR CAMPUS



[The Hilton Fort Collins](#)
425 West Prospect Road
Fort Collins, CO 80526
+1 (970) 482-2626



[The Best Western University Inn](#)
914 South College Avenue
Fort Collins, CO 80524
+1 (970) 484-2984



[Remington Flats Hotel](#)
813 Remington Street
Fort Collins, CO 80524
+1 (970) 699-1189

You may choose to stay in a hotel at an average cost of US \$100 to \$200 per night. Above are a few of the hotels closest to campus. Others may be inconveniently far from campus, possibly without public transportation.



ARRIVAL AT COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

DENVER INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Fort Collins is most easily accessed by way of Denver, Colorado, which is an hour south of CSU. This is the most common way for scholars to arrive in Colorado.

SHUTTLE SERVICE TO FORT COLLINS

The most economical way to travel between DIA and Fort Collins is to take [Groome Transportation](#) or [Landline](#). Both offer rides every day of the week, and will drop you at the CSU campus; Groome will drop you off at other locations, including your home. **You can use discount code “CSU” when making your Groome reservation.**

RIDE SHARE SERVICE TO FORT COLLINS

If you are traveling with others, you could split the cost of a ride share service such as Uber or Lyft to lessen the expense.

You can find a campus map here:
maps.colostate.edu

GET INVOLVED!

INTERNATIONAL RAMS ON FACEBOOK

Join us on [Facebook](#) to learn about upcoming events, plus other international student/scholar programming.

FORT COLLINS INTERNATIONAL CENTER (FCIC)

FCIC is a local volunteer organization devoted to fostering international understanding, cultural exchange, and friendship among international students/scholars, domestic students, and the Fort Collins community. Learn about their programs and services at fortcollinsinternationalcenter.org.



Colorado
State
University
Founded 1870

ABOUT FORT COLLINS



300+ DAYS OF SUNSHINE

Beautiful weather:
Fort Collins enjoys a
moderate, four-season
climate with 300+ days
of sunshine each year.

RANKED BEST PLACES TO LIVE

Low crime rate, clean air
and water, and low cost
of living make it one of
Money magazine's top
choices for American cities.

POPULATION 171,000

More than 30,000
people have moved to
Fort Collins in the last 10
years. They're moving
here for a reason.

Fort Collins Visitor's Guide: visitftcollins.com/maps-info/visitors-guide

WHAT TO PACK

CLOTHING

Due to weather changes, you will need clothing for both warm and cold seasons. All of these items are available for purchase in Fort Collins upon arrival. Only pack what you will need for the first few months after you arrive.

WINTER CLOTHING

It is very important to have a good winter coat, hat, gloves, and boots. You can purchase these items after you arrive.

ROOM ESSENTIALS AND DECORATIONS

Consider bringing decorations for your room that will remind you of home such as photos, books, music, recipes, and items associated with a hobby or sport you enjoy. Many scholars also choose to bring items of cultural significance such as their national dress.

APPLIANCES

U.S. electrical outlets are 110 volts AC and use a NEMA electrical socket. You may need an adaptor to use electronics from home. Appliances with exposed heating elements are prohibited in residence halls. Purchase appliances after you arrive.

WEATHER IN FORT COLLINS

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
Avg. High:	43F 6C	47F 8C	55F 13C	62F 17C	70F 21C	81F 27C	87F 31C	84F 29C	76F 24C	64F 18C	51F 11C	43F 6C
Avg. Low:	17F -8C	20F -7C	28F -2C	35F 2C	44F 7C	52F 11C	58F 14C	56F 13C	47F 8C	36F 2C	25F -4C	17F -8C
Avg. Rain:	0.4 Inches	0.4 Inches	1.59 Inches	2.06 Inches	2.43 Inches	2.17 Inches	1.71 Inches	1.60 Inches	1.33 Inches	1.15 Inches	0.76 Inches	0.5 Inches
Avg. Snow:	8 Inches	7 Inches	13 Inches	6 Inches	1 Inch	0 Inches	0 Inches	0 Inches	1 Inch	4 Inches	9 Inches	8 Inches

CELL PHONES

If you want a cell phone while living in the U.S., we recommend waiting to purchase the phone until you arrive.

LUGGAGE

Always label all of your luggage clearly. The label should have your full name and the address of International Programs.

CSU International Programs
700 Oval Drive
Fort Collins, CO 80523-1024
U.S.A.

WHAT TO CARRY ON THE PLANE

- Original DS-2019
- Valid passport and J-1 visa
- SEVIS I-901 fee payment receipt
- Evidence of funding for your living costs.
- Immunization documentation
- All medical prescriptions written in English
- Insurance documents
- Laptop computer

CAMPUS RESOURCES / SAFETY

COMPUTERS AND INTERNET ACCESS

There are many computer labs on campus and internet access is free on campus.

CAMPUS RECREATION

csurec.colostate.edu/

Campus Recreation offers you a variety of resources and activities including the Student Recreation Center, fitness classes, outdoor programs, and intramural sports.

PROGRAMS AND SOCIAL EVENTS

International Programs offers many trips and activities throughout the year including:

- Weekend in the Mountains
- Football 101
- Ski Trips
- Outdoor Programs
- Friday Afternoon Club (FAC)

CAMPUS SAFETY SERVICES

safety.colostate.edu

- Safewalk is a free service staffed with students who will walk with you any place on/ near campus. +1 (970) 491-1155
- Blue Light Emergency Phones are located around campus for communication with campus police.
- Campus police can provide additional services such as personal escorts and building access assistance.

CAMPUS SAFETY TIPS

CSU is a very safe and welcoming place, but it is important to follow these steps to help ensure the safety of you and your property.

- Lock your bicycle to bike rack that is secured to the ground whenever you leave it unattended. If you lock your bike to anything other than a bike rack, you can be fined. A U-Lock is recommended for locking your bike.
- Do not leave items unattended in the library, classroom, or cafe.
- Always keep your Ramcard with you in a safe place.
- Always lock the doors, and windows in your housing.
- Always lock your car and do not leave valuable items in it.
- Do not keep a lot of cash with you or in your housing.
- Keep your passport and other important documents in a safe, locked location.
- When traveling at night, do so with a friend or in a group.

EMERGENCY
Ambulance | Police | Fire
Dial: 911



HEALTH AND WELLNESS

CSU HEALTH CENTER

health.colostate.edu



151 West Lake Street
+1 (970) 491-7121

ASSOCIATES IN FAMILY MEDICINE - URGENT CARE

afmnoco.com/location/csu-office



151 West Lake Street
+1 (970) 237-8200

UC HEALTH - URGENT CARE AT HARMONY

uhealth.org



2127 East Harmony Road, Suite 140
+1 (970) 297-6250

UC HEALTH - WALK-IN CLINIC

uhealth.org



1025 Pennock Place, Suite 121
+1 (970) 495-8980

POUDRE VALLEY HOSPITAL - UC HEALTH

uhealth.org



24-Hour Emergency Services
1024 South Lemay Avenue
+1 (970) 495-7000

CSU HEALTH NETWORK - COUNSELING

health.colostate.edu/about-counseling-services/

Whether you're experiencing a situational problem, an immediate crisis, or have a longstanding mental health concern, our professional staff is here to help.



+1 (970) 491-6053
+1 (970) 491-7121 After Hours

NOTE: Please verify your insurance coverage and benefits so you know what is eligible for coverage under your plan. Any services not covered are the responsibility of you (the patient.)

EMERGENCY
Ambulance | Police | Fire
Dial: 911



MONEY AND BANKING

CASH

When you arrive in the United States, you should bring at least \$500 in cash to cover immediate needs such as a cell phone, and other living expenses. Cash is accepted at most locations.

- One dollar (\$1) is equal to 100 cents.
- Common coins include:
 - Penny (1 cent)
 - Nickel (5 cents)
 - Dime (10 cents)
 - Quarter (25 cents)
- Common paper bill amounts are: \$1, \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, \$100.



CREDIT/BANK CARDS

In the United States, the most widely accepted bank and credit cards are Visa and MasterCard. Bank cards can either be debit, which pulls funds directly from your bank account, or credit, which you pay off at the end of each month. Apply for a credit card in your home country before you travel since it may be difficult to get one after you leave.

BANK ACCOUNTS

It is not recommended to regularly carry large amounts of cash with you, so once you arrive, you will need to open a bank account. To open an account, you will need two pieces of photo identification (your passport and your Ramcard,) your U.S. mailing address, and money to deposit.

There are two banks located inside the Lory Student Center.

Canvas Credit Union

[canvas.org](https://www.canvas.org)



Located on the 2nd level of the Lory Student Center
+1 (970) 416-5000

First National Bank of Omaha

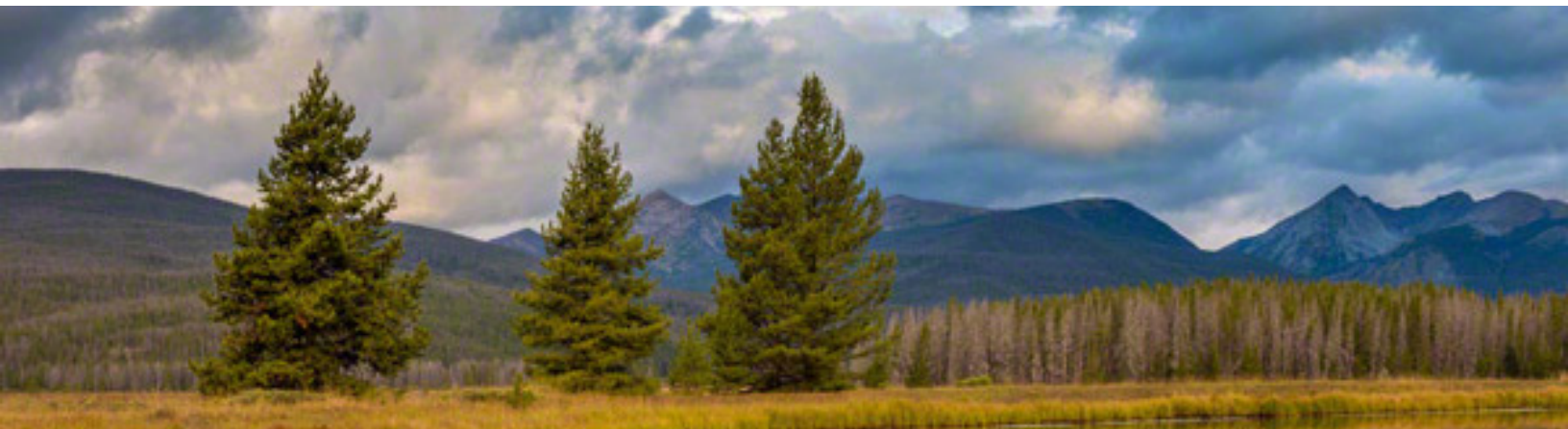
[fnbo.com](https://www.fnbo.com)



Located on the 2nd level of the Lory Student Center
+1 (970) 494-5216

TRANSFERRING MONEY

Before you leave your country, you need to know your government's regulations and your home bank's procedures for transferring money to the United States. Consider your living situation and lifestyle to plan ahead. Will you live on campus? Do you like to eat at restaurants? Do you need to buy clothes or supplies?



TRANSPORTATION

BICYCLES

Many people ride bicycles in Fort Collins. Fort Collins is a community that is nationally recognized for its support of bicyclists and the resources that exist here. Bicycling is a great way to get across town and campus easily.

Make sure to register your bike with the CSU

Police Department:

police.colostate.edu/register-your-bike/

CSU CAMPUS SHUTTLE - AROUND THE HORN

pts.colostate.edu/transportation-options/transit-general/horn/

Around the Horn is an on-campus shuttle system. It is designed to help CSU students, faculty, staff and guests get across campus quickly and conveniently. The shuttle is free and runs every 10 minutes. It makes a loop around campus with 14 stops along the way.

GETTING AROUND FORT COLLINS TRANSFORT BUS SYSTEM

ridetransfort.com

Transfort offers a multitude of stops close to campus many times per day. The CSU Transit Center is located at the north end of the Lory Student Center on the ground floor. You can board buses here and also get bus route maps. The Transfort buses are free for scholars. Show your RamCard to the bus driver.

MAX BUS

The MAX bus is also free for scholars and runs from Old Town in the north to shopping in the south end of Fort Collins.

Z-TRIP TAXI SERVICE

If you need a ride from a taxi (cab), you will need to know the address of your current location and the address of your destination. Make sure you have cash and ask for change if you don't have the exact amount that you owe. It is customary to tip your taxi driver 15-20% of the fare.



ztrip.com/northern-colorado

+1 (970) 224-2222

UBER AND LYFT TAXI SERVICE

Uber and Lyft are apps that you can download onto your iPhone or Android. The apps are extremely simple and allow you to order a car from your smart phone and are normally cheaper than a taxi. It is customary to tip your driver 15-20% of the fare.

BUSTANG

Bustang connects Fort Collins with Denver, Grand Junction, Colorado Springs, and other cities across Colorado.

ridebustang.com/north-line-schedule

Email: infobustang@aceexpresscoaches.com



Phone (Monday-Friday): 800-900-3011

Phone (Weekends): 800-900-3011



CONTACT AND CONNECT

- Facebook: facebook.com/groups/CSUInternationalRams
- Email: iss@colostate.edu
- Phone: (001) 970-491-5917
- Fax: (001) 970-491-5501
- Website: international.colostate.edu/iss
- YouTube: youtube.com/CSUInternational

International Programs
Laurel Hall
1024 Campus Delivery
Fort Collins, CO 80523-1024 U.S.A.
international.colostate.edu