

worldskills
Shanghai 2026

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1 Introduction

This guide is for all media personnel seeking accreditation to attend the 48th WorldSkills Competition (WSC2026) in Shanghai, China. It covers media categories, the registration process, visa requirements, and key dates.

Media accreditation provides access to the Media Centres and the National Exhibition and Convention Centre (NECC) Shanghai. Accredited media may also apply for access to the Opening Ceremony, Closing Ceremony, and WorldSkills Conference 2026. Details on how to apply for Ceremonies and Conference access will be provided to accredited media prior to the Event.

Read this guide in full before beginning registration or your visa application. Requirements differ depending on your media category and nationality.

1.1 Media categories

WSC2026 media registration is open to the following groups:

Group	Description
Communication Officers	Staff working directly for a WorldSkills Member organization. Each Member may register up to two.
Media from Member	Media representatives from a Member can be accredited either with a media package or without a package.
Global Partner or Event Sponsor Communication Officers	Staff working directly for a WorldSkills Global Partner or Event Sponsor. Each organization may register up to two.
Partner Media	Contractors working on behalf of WorldSkills International Partners, WorldSkills Global Partners or Event Sponsors.
Media Pool A Participants	Nominated by Members or Global Partners for the Media Pool A programme.
National and International Journalists	Journalists and reporters working for a news organization, including print, broadcast, digital, wire services, trade publications, and education media.
Official WorldSkills Media	Media personnel employed by WSS2026 or WSI.

If you are unsure which category applies to you, contact WSS2026 before submitting your registration: media.registration@wss2026.com

2 Which visa process applies to you?

If you are not sure which category applies to you, contact WorldSkills Shanghai 2026 before completing your registration: media.registration@wss2026.com.

The visa you need depends on your media category and the nature of your activity in China.

If you are a foreign journalist conducting news coverage at WSC2026, you must apply for a J2 visa. This applies regardless of your nationality. A visa-free arrangement with China does not exempt journalists from this requirement. Go to **Section 4**.

If you are not conducting news coverage, proceed to **Section 5** for further information.

Summary

If you are...	Visa required	Go to
A journalist conducting news coverage	J2 visa	Section 4
A non-reporting media attendee requiring a visa	Refer to Section 5	Section 5
A non-reporting media attendee from a visa-free country	No visa required	Section 5



3 How to register

Media registration for WSC2026 opens on 15 May 2026 through the WSI Horizon system at <https://horizon.worldskills.org>. Register as early as possible. Both steps below (**Sections 3.1 & 3.2**) must be completed and approved before WSS2026 can issue the following:

- **J2 visa:** a J2 media visa invitation letter from WSS2026.
- **All other visa:** a visa application support letter.

Watch before you register

Watch the short registration tutorial before completing the steps below. It will walk you through the portal and help you avoid common errors.

Media registration Part 1 <https://youtu.be/lxQDmLbzCYo>

Media registration Part 2 <https://youtu.be/OlwiY2Z1Low>

3.1 Complete your registration

1. Visit <https://horizon.worldskills.org>. Create a new account or log in to your existing account.
2. Fill in all mandatory fields in the Registration section.
3. If you are applying for a J2 visa, complete the J2 Information section. See **Section 4** for guidance on what is required.
4. If you are not applying for a J2 visa, leave the J2 Information section blank.
5. Submit your registration for review. You will be notified by email once your registration is approved, rejected, or if additional information is required.

Not sure whether to complete the J2 Information section? Go to Section 2 and answer the question there first.

3.2 Complete your background check

A background check is mandatory for all registered participants attending WSC2026.

Once your registration is approved, return to <https://horizon.worldskills.org> and complete the following:

1. Complete all mandatory fields in **Section 2: Personal Details**.
2. Upload a compliant photo. See **Section 10** for photo requirements.
3. If you are a media applicant requiring a J2 visa, this will be emailed automatically after approval.
4. If you are a media applicant requiring a visa, check **I need a visa application support letter**.
5. Submit your background check for review.

There are two deadlines that apply to the background check:

- 🎨 If you require a J2 Media Visa Invitation Letter or Visa Application Support Letter, you must submit your background check by **5 July 2026**. Submissions received after this date will not be processed.
- 🎨 Otherwise, personal details must be submitted by **22 July 2026**.



3.3 Media packages

Media packages are available for purchase during registration and are not mandatory. Purchasing a package is strongly recommended, as it ensures seamless coordination of your accommodation and transport arrangements for the duration of WSC2026. Full details of what each package includes are outlined in the WSC2026 Media Package Brochure.

Note that media package fees are non-refundable if a visa application is rejected. WSS2026 strongly recommends securing travel or event insurance that covers non-refundable costs.





4 J2 visa application

This section applies to journalists conducting news coverage at WSC2026. All J2 applicants must be able to provide an Official Application Letter signed by the head or authorized representative of their media organization.

If this does not apply to you, go to **Section 5**.

4.1 What is the J2 visa

J2 visa is issued to foreign journalists entering China to conduct short-term news coverage or journalistic activities, including on-camera work, reporting, and publishing. It is a specific visa category and is different from a tourist, business, or F visa.

All international journalists planning to conduct news coverage in China must enter on a J2 visa. This applies regardless of nationality. A visa-free arrangement with China does not exempt journalists from this requirement.

For J2 visa regulations, visit the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China:

https://ipc.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wgjzzhzn/201007/t20100714_742264.htm

4.2 Documents required

The following documents are required for a J2 visa application. These documents must be in hand before submitting your application to your nearest Chinese Embassy or Consulate.

1. Application Letter from your Media Organization

A letter from your media organization confirming your assignment to cover WSC2026. It must be on official letterhead, signed by the head or authorized representative of the organization, and must include the following:

- Full name of the journalist.
- Arrival and departure dates.
- Venue and outline of the interview(s) to be conducted.
- Brief introduction to the media organization.
- Address, telephone, and fax of the media organization.
- The detailed schedule of the applicant's activities in China.
- Signature of the officer in charge.

2. J2 media visa invitation letter from WSS2026

WSS2026 will generate this letter once your background check is approved. It will be sent to the email address registered in the portal.

Submit this letter to your nearest Chinese Embassy or Consulate as part of your J2 visa application.



3. Passport valid for at least six months beyond your intended stay, with at least two blank visa pages.
4. Copy of your passport data page and photo page.
5. Copy of your professional journalist credentials.
6. Completed visa application form.

Requirements may vary by country and consulate. Confirm the specific requirements for your country at <https://www.visaforchina.cn> or with your local Chinese Embassy or Consulate.

4.3 How to apply

Procedures vary by country and consulate. To confirm the requirements for your country, visit your nearest Chinese Embassy, Consulate, or visa processing centre, or check the official visa application portal at: <https://www.visaforchina.cn>

4.4 Key advice

- The deadline for background check submission by media personnel requiring a J2 visa is **5 July 2026**.
- Visa applications must be submitted within three months of your intended arrival date in China. We strongly recommend booking your appointment as early as possible within this window. Please note that any delays in applying are the sole responsibility of the applicant.
- Visa approval is at the sole discretion of Chinese authorities. WSS2026 and WSI cannot influence or guarantee the outcome.
- Book your consulate appointment as soon as your documents are ready. Appointments fill quickly.
- Keep copies of all documents submitted and all correspondence with the Embassy or Consulate.
- If your application is rejected, contact WSS2026 immediately at media.registration@wss2026.com





5 Additional visa application and visa-free entry

This section applies to media personnel who are not conducting news coverage at WSC2026 and who are therefore not required to apply for a J2 visa. If you are unsure whether this section applies to you, go back to **Section 2**.

5.1 Do you need a visa?

Each person is responsible for checking whether they require a visa to enter mainland China. Requirements and visa types may vary by nationality, passport type, and country of residence.

To confirm requirements, visit the website of your nearest Chinese Embassy, Consulate, or visa processing centre, or check the official visa application portal: <https://www.visaforchina.cn>

- Chinese Embassy and Consulate contact details: <https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zwjg/>

Participants should also note the following:

- Holders of diplomatic or service passports may have different requirements and must apply for the appropriate diplomatic or service visa.
- Visa policies, including visa exemption arrangements, are subject to change. Always refer to official Embassy or Consulate websites for current information.
- Participants residing outside their country of citizenship must apply at the Chinese Embassy or Consulate in their current country of residence. Proof of legal entry will be required.

5.2 Visa-free entry

Participants with ordinary passports from certain countries may be eligible for visa-free entry to the Chinese mainland. There are two arrangements currently in effect.

5.2.1 Unilateral visa exemption

Holders of ordinary passports from the following 50 countries may enter and stay in China for up to 30 days without a visa for business, tourism, exchange, transit, or visiting family.

Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Brazil, Brunei, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Uruguay, the Netherlands, the Republic of Korea, the United Kingdom.

5.2.2 Mutual visa exemption

Citizens of the following countries holding any type of passport generally do not need a visa in advance for short-term travel to the Chinese mainland:

Armenia, Azerbaijan, Barbados, Ecuador, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan.



5.3 How to apply for an additional visa

Apply through the Chinese Visa Application Service Centre at <https://www.visaforchina.cn/globe/>

If your country or region does not appear in the drop-down list on that website, contact your local Chinese Embassy, Consulate, or visa centre directly.

In most cases, applications must be submitted in person. Book your appointment in advance. Appointments fill quickly in the months before WSS2026.

When completing Section 6.2 (Inviting person or organization) of the application form, enter the WSS2026 organization details below. Leave Section 6.2B blank.

6.2 中国境内邀请方/ 联系人或组织/ Inviting person or organization in China	6.2A 姓名或名称/Name of person or organization : WorldSkills Shanghai 2026 Executive Bureau	6.2B(联系人)与您的关系/ Relationship to you (if invited by an individual):
	6.2C 电话号码/ Phone number : +86 18918882279	6.2D 电子邮箱/ E-mail address : foreign.affairs@wss2026.com
	6.2E 地址 (城市、省/自治区、邮政编码) / Address (city, province/state, postal code):	

5.4 Required documentation

The following documents are required for most visa applicants. Participants applying in person must bring originals and copies.

- Completed visa application form.
- Visa application support letter from WSS2026 (when applicable).
- Passport valid for at least six months beyond the intended stay, with at least 2 blank visa pages.
- Copy of passport data page and photo page.
- One passport photograph. Refer to the website for specifications <https://www.visaforchina.cn>
- If applying outside one's country of citizenship, the proof of legal entry must be provided including but not limited to a legal entry stamp.

Additional documents may be required depending on nationality or country of application. Participants must confirm the specific requirements for their country or region via the Chinese Visa Application Service Centre (<https://www.visaforchina.cn/globe/>) or with the local Chinese Embassy or Consulate. A consular interview may also be requested.

Participants currently residing outside their country of citizenship must apply at the Chinese Embassy or Consulate in their country of current residence. Proof of legal stay in that country is required. Requirements may differ from those applying in their home country.





5.5 Key advice

- The deadline for background check submission by media personnel requiring a visa is **5 July 2026**.
- Visa applications must be submitted within three months of your intended arrival date in China. We strongly recommend booking your appointment as early as possible within this window. Please note that any delays in applying are the sole responsibility of the applicant.
- Visa approval is at the sole discretion of Chinese authorities. WSS2026 and WSI cannot influence or guarantee the outcome.
- Book your consulate appointment as soon as your Visa Application Support Letter is received. Appointments fill quickly.
- Keep copies of all documents submitted and all correspondence with the Embassy or Consulate.
- If your application is rejected, contact WSS2026 immediately at media.registration@wss2026.com



6 Key deadlines

Deadline	Milestone	How
5 July 2026	Deadline to submit background check details if you require. (a) a J2 media visa invitation letter, or (b) visa application support letter.	The J2 media visa invitation letter will be sent automatically upon approval. For those who require a different visa type - select the visa application support letter option in the background check section.
22 July 2026	Deadline to submit background check details if you do not require a visa.	
June - August, 2026	Recommended timeline to submit visa applications.	Via nearest Embassy, Consulate, or visa processing centre.



7 Important notes

Visa approval is not guaranteed

Visa approval is at the sole discretion of the Chinese authorities. WSS2026 and WSI cannot intervene in or guarantee the outcome of any visa application. Media accreditation approval by WSS2026 does not guarantee that a visa will be granted.

Start early

Processing times vary by country and consulate. Do not wait until the final weeks before WSS2026. Apply as soon as your visa support letter is received and your documents are ready. Consulate appointments fill quickly — book as soon as possible.

Media packages are non-refundable

Media packages will not be refunded if a visa application is rejected. WSS2026 strongly recommends that all media personnel secure travel or event insurance that covers non-refundable costs in the event of visa rejection.

Keep records

Keep copies of all documents related to your registration and visa application, including:

- Completed visa application form.
- All supporting documents submitted.
- Submission confirmation and reference number.
- Consulate appointment confirmation.
- Visa Application Support Letter or J2 Media Visa Invitation Letter from WSS2026.
- Proof of payment if applicable.
- Courier or tracking details if documents were sent by post.
- Visa issuance confirmation.

If your visa application is rejected

Contact WSS2026 immediately at media.registration@wss2026.com. WSS2026 will advise on next steps.

Include details of your full name, application number, and the visa centre where you made your application.

Note that WSS2026 cannot intervene in the decision of Chinese authorities and media package fees remain non-refundable.



8 Contact details and additional resources

For any questions about media registration, accreditation, or media visa application support letters, contact WSS2026:

Email: media.registration@wss2026.com

Key Resources

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China (J2 visa information):

https://ipc.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wgjzzhzn/201007/t20100714_742264.htm

Chinese Embassies and Consulates:

<https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zwjg/>

Chinese Consular Services

<https://cs.mfa.gov.cn/wgrlh/>

Visa Application Service Center:

<https://www.visaforchina.cn/globe/>

International Services Shanghai:

<https://english.shanghai.gov.cn/>

<https://wsb.sh.gov.cn/wjrszhfwsc/index.html>





9 Frequently asked questions

1. If I am approved by WSS2026 for media accreditation does that mean I will be approved for a visa?

No. Media accreditation and visa approval are separate processes. While WSS2026 approval allows you to proceed with your visa application and receive supporting documents, the final decision on visa approval is made solely by the relevant Chinese authorities.

2. Do I need a visa to attend WSC2026?

Visa requirements depend on your role and nationality. Journalists must apply for a J2 visa. If you are not a journalist, refer to **Section 5.1** to determine whether you require a visa and what type.

3. If I have a Media for Member package do I need to apply for a J2 visa?

Journalists with a Media for Member package are required to apply for a J2 visa.

4. If I applied for media accreditation, when will I receive my visa application support letter?

Your visa application support letter will be generated once your background check has been completed and approved. It will be sent to your registered email address.

5. Do I need to do a Background Check, if I am also applying for a visa?

Yes. All registered participants attending WSC2026 must complete and pass a background check.

6. How do I request a visa application support letter?

Refer to **Section 3.2 Complete your background check**.

7. What if I am unsure which media category I fall under?

Contact WSS2026 at media.registration@wss2026.com before submitting your registration.

8. How will I get access to the Opening and Closing Ceremonies, and the WorldSkills Conference?

Prior to the event, accredited media will receive information on how to apply for media access to the Ceremonies and Conference.



10 Background check photo requirements

- **Aspect ratio:** strictly 3:4. Do not stretch, distort, or crop the proportion.
- **Resolution:** Minimum 480px × 640px, maximum 2160px × 3240px.
- **Background:** Must be a solid-color, clearly contrasting with the clothing. White, light blue, and light gray standard ID photo backgrounds are preferred. Must be free of clutter, textures, patterns, gradients, shadows, and reflections.
- **Headwear:** Not allowed; face and facial features must be fully visible (no obstructions).
- **Recency:** Must be a recent photo of the applicant. The photo must not be taken of an existing photo or scanned.
- **Appearance:** No extensive makeup; no photo editing or retouching (including filters or Photoshop). Hair must not cover the eyebrows, eyes, cheeks, chin, or other key facial features. The face must not be covered by masks, hands, or any other objects.
- **Format:** JPG / JPEG only
- **File size:** Must be under 1MB
- **Head size:** The head (from top of hair to chin) must occupy 20%–50% of the total photo area.
- **Posture:** Face the camera directly with shoulders levelled. No angled or side profile photos.



Examples of Non-Compliant Photos



Not 3:4 aspect ratio



Incorrect background color



Head horizontally oriented



Face or facial features obstructed or obscured



Face or facial features obstructed or obscured



Head taking up too much of the photo





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