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US probes Harvard, MIT and seven more elite universities over visa fraud

The Trump administration's visa crackdown now reaches academia.

By **Manasee Kurlekar** | October 10, 2026



The Trump administration's visa crackdown now reaches academia, with probes initiated into Harvard, MIT and seven more elite universities over visa fraud.

Nine top universities face federal subpoenas over alleged misuse of J-1 exchange visas, which puts foreign research talent and federally funded science in the spotlight.

The Labor Department's inspector general, Anthony D'Esposito, announced a J-1 fraud investigation into Harvard, Yale, Stanford, Brown, Pittsburgh, UC Davis, Caltech, Arizona State and MIT. Subpoenas have been issued, and a new Visa Fraud Strike Team will bring together investigators from several federal agencies.

Officials raised concerns about Chinese scholars and the Chinese government's influence on research.

Vance said the schools use J-1 holders on federal grants at about 61%, against a 38% national average, but the administration has not released evidence about specific universities.

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