

EB-1A Petition Builder Worksheet

By Exelita



EB-1A Petition Builder

Workbook

Friendly guide + fill-in templates to plan, build, and file a strong EB-1A (Extraordinary Ability) petition.

Educational only; not legal advice.





How to Use this Workbook

- Work stage-by-stage. Each section explains the goal, gives quick self-checks, reflective prompts, and simple templates.
- Duplicate pages you need more of (e.g., extra recommender rows). Keep your files organized using the Exhibit Index template in Stage 4.
- Tip: Schedule 2–3 short work sessions per week to keep momentum.
- Tip: You can download and work in this document or you could just follow it stage-by-stage and create your own worksheet.

STAGE 1

Understand EB-1A & Your Fit

Goal: Get a plain-English grasp of EB-1A, how it differs from EB-1B/C and NIW/O-1, and whether it fits your profile right now.

What good looks like

You can explain EB-1A in one paragraph, name 3–6 evidence criteria you might meet, and decide whether to move forward now or after short profile-building.

Quick scan: “Is EB-1A plausible for me right now?”

Check the boxes that apply.

I can clearly satisfy 3+ of the 10 EB-1A criteria with strong proof.

My achievements show sustained National/international recognition (not a single spike).

I can get 4–6 credible expert letters (mix of independent and collaborators).

I will continue working in the same field in the U.S., with a clear beneficial plan

I have the time and focus to assemble a well-organized filing in the next 6– 8 weeks.

Score yourself

0-2
Boxes

Pause; consider NIW/O-1, or build a profile for 6–12 months.



3-4
Boxes

Potentially viable—proceed to Stage 2 to pressure-test evidence.



5
Boxes

Strong starting point—proceed and aim for 4–6 criteria.



Reflective prompts

- In one sentence: What is the headline of my career? (e.g., “AI safety researcher shaping enterprise standards.”)
- What 3 achievements would you be proud to see on a billboard? Why do they matter beyond your resume?
- In the U.S., what will you do in the next 2 years that clearly advances your field?

Exercise — Pathway picker

Complete: Why EB-1A (self-petition, top-of-field standard) fits me better than: EB-1B (employer-sponsored research), EB-1C (multinational executives), EB-2 NIW (national interest, lower bar but different test), O-1 (nonimmigrant, temporary).

Call to action:

Write a one-paragraph “**Why EB-1A, why now**” note. Save it for your petition intro.

STAGE 2

Self-Assess Against USCIS Criteria

Goal: Map your achievements to the 10 criteria, choose your strongest 3–6, and identify gaps to close.

Criterion	My evidence (bullets)	Proof artifacts to collect	Strength (1–10)	Gaps/ Risks	Actions & owner	Due date
Awards						
Selective memberships						
Major media about you						
Judging others						
Original contributions (major significance)						
Scholarly/ Industry articles author						
Exhibitions /showcases (arts)						

Criterion	My evidence (bullets)	Proof artifacts to collect	Strength (1–10)	Gaps/ Risks	Actions & owner	Due date
High salary remuneration						
Commercial success (performing arts)						

Strength rubric (quick guide)

1–3: fragile/unclear; 4–6: plausible but needs context; 7–8: solid with third-party proof; 9– 10: flagship evidence.

Sample entries

Researcher

- C6: 12 peer-reviewed papers (2 first-author in top-tier venues); include first pages, impact factors, citations.
- C4: Journal peer-reviewer (editor letter + invitation emails).
- C5: Method adopted by 3 external labs (citations + PI letters).

Entrepreneur

- C8: CEO/Founder of venture featured by national accelerator (press + org prestige).
- C3: Profiles in TechCrunch/Forbes; full-page PDFs with mastheads/dates.
- C5: Product used by 1M+ users; client letters and analytics screenshots.

Reflective prompts

- Which 3–6 criteria feel obvious wins? Why will a stranger believe it?
- For any criterion <7 strength: What single document would lift it most (e.g., bylaws proving selective membership, publication circulation data, salary survey)?
- Who are experts (independent and collaborators) best positioned to explain your impact credibly?

Call to action:

Circle your **primary 3–6 criteria**. List the **one action** per criterion that would most strengthen it (e.g., obtain bylaws; secure editor letter; get usage data).

STAGE 3

Plan Your Petition (Timeline, Narrative, Risks)

Goal: Turn your strategy into a 2–8 week project with milestones, responsibilities, and a coherent story

Milestone planner (suggested 45-day track; use dates)

Day range	Milestone	Owner	Done
0-7	Finalize criteria & story; create task list; book attorney consult if desired	Me	[]
8-14	Kick off document gathering; invite recommenders; pull citations/press	Me	[]
15-30	Draft petition letter; draft rec letters; collect criterion exhibits	Me + Recommenders	[]
31-40	Finalize letters & exhibits; translate; QA for consistency	Me	[]
41-45	Assemble packet; forms; fee checks; file	Me	[]

Ultra-fast track (14 days)

- Days 0–2: Outline petition + invite recommenders.
- Days 3–7: Draft/refine; organize exhibits.
- Days 8–12: Finalize letters; complete forms.
- Days 13–14: QA + file.

Narrative one-pager

- **Headline:** “I am a(n) [role] whose work in [field] has [impact].”
- **3 proof points:** (award/media/usage/judging/etc.)
- **Why it matters (final merits):** Why these facts show you’re among the top of your field, with sustained acclaim.
- **Future U.S. work:** 2–3 sentences on how you’ll continue benefiting the U.S.

Risk Log

Risk (what could slow/undercut the case)	Probability	Impact	Mitigation action	Owner
Recommender delay	Med	High	Ask alternates:	Me
			prep bullet points; set deadlines	
Weak context for award	Med	Med	Add stats/bylaws; letter from awarding body	Me
Inconsistent dates	Low	High	Single source of truth spreadsheet; cross-check	Me

Recommender strategy map

- Mix: 2–3 independent leaders + 2–3 collaborators/supervisors.
- What each can speak to: specific criteria and concrete examples.
- Packet to send: CV + bullet highlights + draft skeleton (if they prefer) + deadline + signature method.

STAGE 4

Gather Evidence & Organize

Goal: Collect high-quality, third-party, easily verifiable proof for each claimed criterion and general requirements

Criterion-by-criterion quick guide (use what fits your field)

- **Awards:** Certificates + press + selectivity stats (winners/entrants; national/international scope).
- **Selective memberships:** Proof of election/fellowship + bylaws showing “outstanding achievement” requirement.
- **Media about you:** Full-page PDFs with masthead/date/URL; prioritize major outlets; include circulation/reach if not obvious.
- **Judging others:** Invite/thank-you emails; editor confirmation; program screenshots.
- **Original contributions:** Citations report; standards adoption; usage metrics; expert letters tying *why* it’s significant.
- **Authorship:** First pages; venue prestige (impact factor/acceptance rate); citations.
- **Exhibitions/showcases (arts):** Catalogs/programs/photos; venue prestige proof; reviews.
- **Leading/critical role:** Org reputation proofs (rankings/awards/revenue) + appointment letters + detailed letters describing your pivotal role.
- **High salary:** Pay stubs/contracts + industry surveys showing top percentile.
- **Commercial success (performing arts):** Sales/box office/ratings + certifications.

Exhibit Index (master list) — template

Label	Document Title	What it proves	Criterion/section	Source (3 rd Party)	Notes
A	CV	Background overview	Background	Self	
B	Statement of Future U.S. Work	Continuing work + benefit to the U.S.	Final Merits	Self	Signed & Dated
C1	2023 National innovation Award (Certificate + Press)	National Award (Selective)	Awards (C1)	Awarding Body	Include Acceptance ratio
E1	TechCrunch feature on Product X	Major Media about you	Media (C3)	TechCrunch	Full PDF with masthead
G1	Patent #123456& License	Original contribution used by industry	Contributions (C5)	USPTO	Link + license evidence

File naming & Versioning

Exhibit_[Label]_[ShortName]_v1_YYYYMMDD.pdf (e.g.,

Exhibit_E1_TechCrunch_v1_20250104.pdf). Keep a single spreadsheet as your

source of truth for all dates/titles.

Translation & authentication tracker:

Doc Language Translator certificate on file? Notes Letters of recommendation — quality checklist

- On letterhead, signed, recent (\leq 3–4 months).
- Recommender credentials stated up front.
- Specific achievements with concrete outcomes; minimal fluff.
- Explains why your work is important to the field, not just to one team.
- Clearly indicates independence when applicable.
- Offers to provide more info.

Call to action

Upload your **top 3 exhibits per claimed criterion** and draft **at least 4 recommender letters** this week.

STAGE 5

Write the Petition Letter (Support Brief)

Visit www.exelita.com to begin your petition drafting process

Goal: Convert evidence into a clear, persuasive, easy-to-verify narrative that proves 3+ criteria and passes the final merits test.

Suggested Structure

1. Introduction (who you are; EB-1A classification; 2–3 headline achievements).
2. Background (optional).
3. Criteria sections — one heading per criterion with concise context + cited exhibits.
4. Final merits (holistic case that you're among the small percentage at the top with sustained acclaim).
5. Prospective U.S. work & national benefit.
6. Closing & respectful request for approval.

Paragraph Scaffold (Use and repeat)

- Claim: State the criterion and your qualifying achievement.
- Evidence: Reference labeled exhibits (e.g., “See Exhibit E1...”).
- Why it matters: 1–2 sentences putting impact in field-level context (adoption, citations, rankings, selectivity).
- Pointer: Guide the officer to the next piece (“Additionally, Exhibit F2...”).

Voice & quality rules

- Personalize; avoid boilerplate.
- Prefer third-party proof over self-statements.
- Be explicit about significance; avoid hype without data.
- Keep facts consistent with forms; proofread names/dates/titles.

Mini-examples (for inspiration)

Researcher — Original Contributions (C5)

“Dr. Rivera introduced the X algorithm, now embedded in two open-source libraries used by >2,000 labs (Exhibit G2). Peer groups cite it in 180+ papers, including three field-defining surveys (Exhibit G3). As Prof. Chen notes, ‘Rivera’s method has become a standard baseline for Y tasks’ (Exhibit L1).”

Entrepreneur — Leading/Critical Role (C8)

“As CEO of Acme AI, Ms. Okoye led the launch of Product Atlas, adopted by two Fortune 100s within six months (Exhibit J2). Industry press profiled the rollout as ‘category-shaping’ (Exhibit E1), and investor letters confirm she directed the go-to-market and technical roadmap (Exhibit L3).”

Final Metrics Checklist

- Multiple **independent** sources confirm influence (citations, adoption, rankings, awards).
- Achievements show a **pattern over time**, not a one-off.
- Letters explicitly place you **among the top experts** in the field.
- Clear plan to **continue** work in the U.S. with identifiable benefits.

Call to Action

Draft your **support letter** to 80% today using this outline. Flag where a stronger third-party source would help.

STAGE 6

File the Petition (Forms, Fees, Assembly)

Goal: Accurately complete forms, decide on premium & concurrent filing, and assemble a clean packet.

Forms & Choices

- **I-140** (self-petition; select EB-1A).
- **G-1145** (optional SMS/email receipt).
- **I-907** (optional premium processing, 15-day action).
- **I-485 + I-765 + I-131** (optional if adjusting status concurrently; one set per applicant).

Decision Matrix

Topic	Option A	Option B	My Pick
Processing	Premium (fast, extra fee)	Regular (cheaper, slower)	
Filing	Concurrent I-485 now	I-485 later after I-140	

Forms & Choices

- Cover letter (logistical) + Petition support brief on top.
- Exhibit index + labeled exhibits (tabs/slip sheets).
- Signed recommendation letters on letterhead.
- Proof of current status (I-94/visa/passport).
- Separate checks/cards per fee; payable to U.S. Department of Homeland Security.
- Copies retained of everything filed.
- Trackable mailing; envelope notes "I-140 Premium Processing" if applicable.

Call to Action

Complete the matrix and assembly checklist. Book your courier pickup/date.



STAGE 7

Post-Filing Follow-Up (Receipts, RFEs, Outcomes)

Goal: Track your case, respond decisively to any RFE/NOID, and manage timelines calmly.

Case tracker

Item	Date	Notes
USCIS receipt (I-140)		
Premium response window (if used),		
Biometrics (if I-485)		
EAD/AP est. window (if I-485)		
RFE deadline (if issued)		

RFE readiness Kit

- **Playbook:** Copy the officer's question → bullet a direct answer → attach 1–3 new or clearer pieces of third-party proof → add a short cover explaining significance.
- **Common asks:** Prestige of award/membership; independence of letters; proof your role was leading/critical; objective impact metrics.
- **Speed tips:** Keep a digital folder of optional proofs (venue stats, salary surveys, traffic/citation exports) you can drop in quickly.

Expectations Snapshot

- Premium: action in ~15 calendar days.
- Regular I-140: several months.
- If I-485 filed: receipts → biometrics → interim EAD/AP → final green card timeline varies.

Call to action

Set monthly check-ins on your calendar. If you get an RFE, block 48–72 hours to draft a tight, point-by-point response.

Appendices

A. “Why EB-1A, Why now” (Fill-in)

I am a(n) **role** in **field** whose work has **impact**. I meet EB-1A via **criteria** and will continue my work in the U.S. by **plans**, benefiting **who/what**.

B. Evidence Strength rubric (detail)

- **Independent source present?** (Y/N)
- **Scope:** international, national, sector, local.
- **Selectivity:** top X%, juried, invited.
- **Adoption/impact:** citations, downloads, revenues, standards, audience size.
- **Recency & pattern:** sustained over years, not just one event.

C. One-page petition outline (Printable)

- 1. Intro (2–3 sentences).
- 2. Criterion A (context → exhibits → significance).
- 3. Criterion B (...)
- 4. Criterion C (...)
- 5. Final merits summary (pattern, independence, top-of-field).
- 6. Prospective U.S. work & benefits.
- 7. Closing

D. Document naming & storage tips

- Keep one Exhibit Index spreadsheet as your master.
- Store PDFs only (avoid dead links).
- Highlight relevant lines on long documents.
- Maintain a Change Log when you replace any exhibit with a new version.

E. Sample letter scaffolds

Independent expert

- Who I am (credentials). How I know of the applicant (independent).
- What they did (specifics) and why it's important to the field (evidence).
- My professional opinion of their rank/standing (comparative language).
- Close with strong endorsement and availability.

Collaborator/supervisor

- Role + relationship context.
- Concrete outcomes attributable to the applicant (metrics, awards, adoption).
- Why the org/industry relied on them (leading/critical role).
- Endorse continued U.S. work and impact.

Final Encouragement

You don't need "perfect." You need clear, truthful, **verifiable** evidence and a story that connects it all. Work the plan, keep everything labeled, and let third-party proof do the heavy lifting.
You've got this.

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