

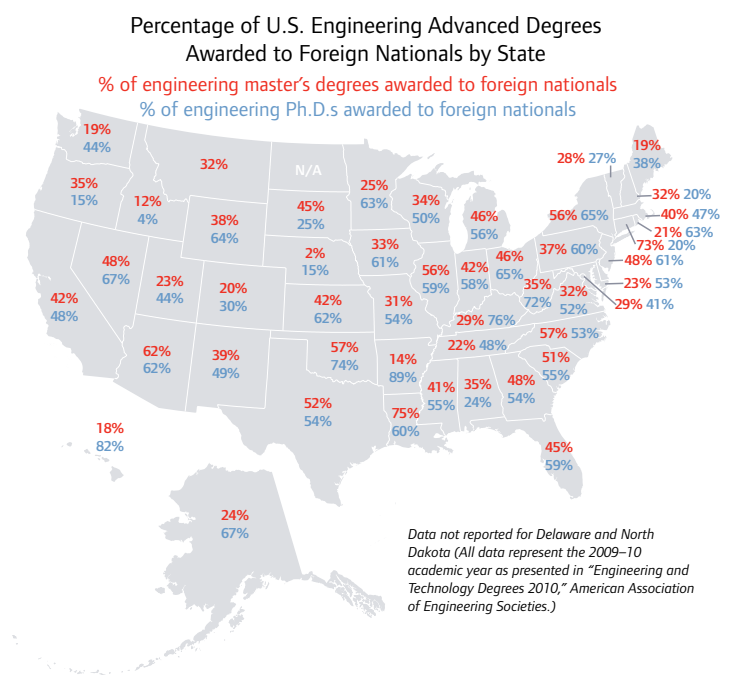


CONTRIBUTIONS OF HIGHLY EDUCATED WORLD TALENT

Fast Facts

- ▶ Immigrants or the children of immigrants founded 40 percent of Fortune 500 companies in the United States.¹
- ▶ More than a quarter of U.S. technology and engineering businesses launched between 1995 and 2005 had a foreign-born founder.²
- ▶ Foreign nationals residing in the United States were named as inventors or co-inventors in 26 percent of international patent applications filed from the United States in 2006, an increase of more than 15 percent since 1998.³
- ▶ Foreign nationals contributed to more than half of the international patents filed by a number of large, multinational companies, including Qualcomm (72 percent), Merck & Co. (65 percent), General Electric (64 percent), Siemens (63 percent) and Cisco (60 percent).⁴
- ▶ For every H-1B visa position requested, U.S. technology companies increase their employment by five workers.⁵
- ▶ In the field of engineering, more than half of the Ph.D.s (53 percent) from U.S. universities were awarded to foreign national students in the 2009–10 academic year.⁶

Foreign nationals account for a significant percentage of degrees in engineering.



Highly educated, foreign-born professionals have a long history of making great contributions to the United States. They drive economic growth, innovation and job creation. Immigrants are 30 percent more likely to form new businesses than U.S.-born citizens,⁷ and major U.S. employers, such as Intel, eBay, Yahoo! and Google, were all co-founded by immigrants. Among people with advanced degrees, immigrants are three times more likely to file patents than U.S.-born citizens,⁸ and for every high-skilled, temporary H-1B visa position requested, U.S. technology companies increase their employment by five workers.⁹

However, America's outdated, employment-based immigration policies shut the door to top world talent and all the great benefits they bring to U.S. economic growth and job creation. More than 1 million highly educated foreign-born professionals and their families are currently waiting for green cards, yet only 140,000 employment-based green cards are available annually, a cap set by Congress in 1990.¹⁰

While America fails to modernize its policies, the rest of the world has recognized the importance of welcoming top talent into their workforces. Consider that only 7 percent of the 1 million-plus green cards issued each year are allocated based on employment. Comparatively, Canada admits 25 percent of immigrants based on employment, Australia 42 percent, and the United Kingdom and Germany almost 60 percent.¹¹ Furthermore, opportunities abroad have become more attractive for foreign-born professionals. According to a Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation survey, more than 90 percent of Chinese and 60 percent of Indian returnee entrepreneurs said the availability of economic opportunities in their countries was a very important factor in their return, and roughly 75 percent of Indian respondents and more than 80 percent of Chinese respondents said that the chance to start their own companies was better in their own countries than in America.¹²

Reforms to the U.S. immigration system for highly educated, foreign-born professionals, many of whom graduate with advanced degrees from U.S. universities in the critical STEM fields, must be enacted to ensure that America welcomes top world talent.

Unfortunately, as with U.S. policy on education and the workforce, immigration policy is stalled. Although there is widespread, bipartisan agreement that giving American employers greater access to highly educated, foreign-born professionals is good for U.S. growth and job creation, these reforms have been tied to passing more controversial comprehensive immigration reform, which has produced a stalemate in Congress.

In addition to building domestic talent, the United States should welcome the best and brightest from around the world. BRT will continue to promote changes in immigration policies for highly educated, foreign-born talent, particularly for foreign nationals who receive advanced degrees in STEM fields from U.S. universities. Clearly, as a nation, America also needs to resolve longstanding problems with both legal and illegal immigration, and BRT will begin to develop the substance and strategy for a path forward on comprehensive immigration reform.

Solutions

- ▶ **Create a new STEM green card** for foreign students who graduate from U.S. universities with advanced degrees in STEM fields.
- ▶ **Recapture unused green cards** to ensure that the best and brightest have the ability to pursue their careers in the United States after graduating from top-flight U.S. universities.

“There are unfilled job openings in America today because employers can’t find the skilled workforce to fill them. If we want to continue to create economic growth we have to both comprehensively upgrade the U.S. education and worker training system and allow the world’s best talent to compete for jobs here.”

*— Ellen J. Kullman,
Chair and CEO, DuPont*

- ▶ **Exempt from the employment-based green card quotas** individuals who meet the standard for a National Interest Waiver petition, and clarify the standard for a National Interest Waiver in light of current agency interpretations.
- ▶ **Do not count dependent family members** of the principal sponsored as an employment-based immigrant toward the numerical limit.
- ▶ **Eliminate the per-country limit** on employment-based green cards.
- ▶ **Increase the standard H-1B visa cap from 65,000 to 90,000 and remove the 20,000 cap** for advanced degree holders so that all foreign nationals who receive a master's degree or higher from a U.S. university can be eligible for an H-1B visa.
- ▶ **Create a new immigrant entrepreneur's visa** to fuel startups in the United States. Individuals must have a bachelor's degree or higher and create three U.S. jobs (for nonrelatives) within two years to receive green card; self-funding or venture capital financing would be permitted.

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