

International STEM Students: Key to American Innovation

ACTION

To keep the U.S. a destination of choice for international STEM students, members of Congress should co-sponsor and pass the bipartisan, bicameral Keep STEM Talent Act (H.R.2627 / S.1233).

Retaining U.S.-Trained International Students Spurs Innovation

As of 2022, one-quarter of the billion-dollar startup companies in the U.S. had a founder who first came to America as an international student.



Source: National Bureau of Economic Research, "The Contribution of High-Skilled Immigrants to Innovation in the United States"

International Students Fuel Economic Growth

"We should be doing more merit-based immigration."

— Jamie Dimon, CEO, J.P. Morgan

"As one of many immigrants at NVIDIA, I know that the opportunities we've found in America have profoundly shaped our lives. And the miracle of NVIDIA [...] would not be possible without immigration."

— Jensen Huang, Founder and CEO, NVIDIA



A one-third decline in U.S.-trained international STEM workers during the next decade would shrink our GDP by 0.79 to 1.57 percent — the equivalent of losing the entire economy of South Carolina or Wisconsin.

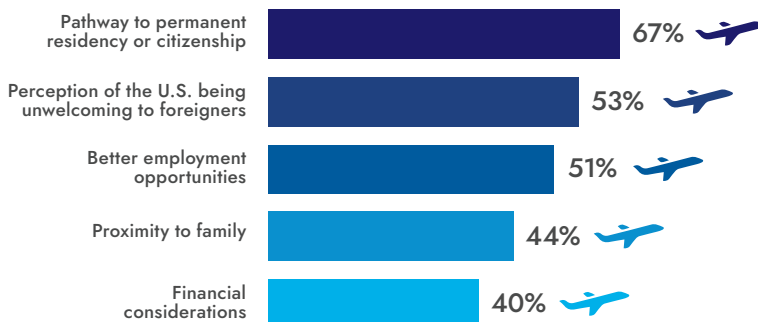
Source: "Brain Freeze: How International Student Exclusion Will Shape the STEM Workforce and Economic Growth in the United States"

U.S. Losing Ability to Attract and Retain Global Talent

As of 2022, 72% of U.S. international graduate students and early career scientists had considered pursuing a career in a country other than the U.S.

Reported Factors in Considering Pursuing a Career in a Country Other than the U.S.

Percentage of respondents that chose the following options



Results from Fall 2022 APS survey of more than 200 international physics graduate students currently in the U.S. and early career professionals, i.e., APS members who are PhD graduates with fewer than five years of experience, who are working in the United States, and are holding or have held U.S. visas.

Immigration Reform Is Necessary to Attract and Retain STEM Talent

Competition for top international students is growing. To encourage the best and brightest students to remain in the U.S. and contribute their skills to our scientific enterprise, the Keep STEM Talent Act would:

- 1. Authorize declaration of dual intent:** International students pursuing advanced STEM degrees in the U.S. could legally declare their plan to stay and pursue careers here post graduation.
- 2. Exempt from green card caps:** International students, along with their spouses and children, would be exempt from green card caps when they earn an advanced STEM degree from an accredited U.S. institution and receive an offer of employment from a U.S. company.
- 3. Standardize the vetting process:** International students already in the U.S. on a student visa for an undergraduate program would undergo the same strengthened vetting at USCIS that the State Department currently performs for prospective advanced STEM degree students applying for a student visa from outside of the U.S.