ALTERATIONS

FOR AN OUTDATED IMMIGRATION SYSTEM

Immigration Reform is Crucial for Maintaining Talent and Innovation in the U.S. Fashion Industry

FWD.us CFDA NFA NASHVILLE FASHION ALLIANCE SAINT LOUIS FASHION FUND

IMG Models. Courtesy of CFDA.

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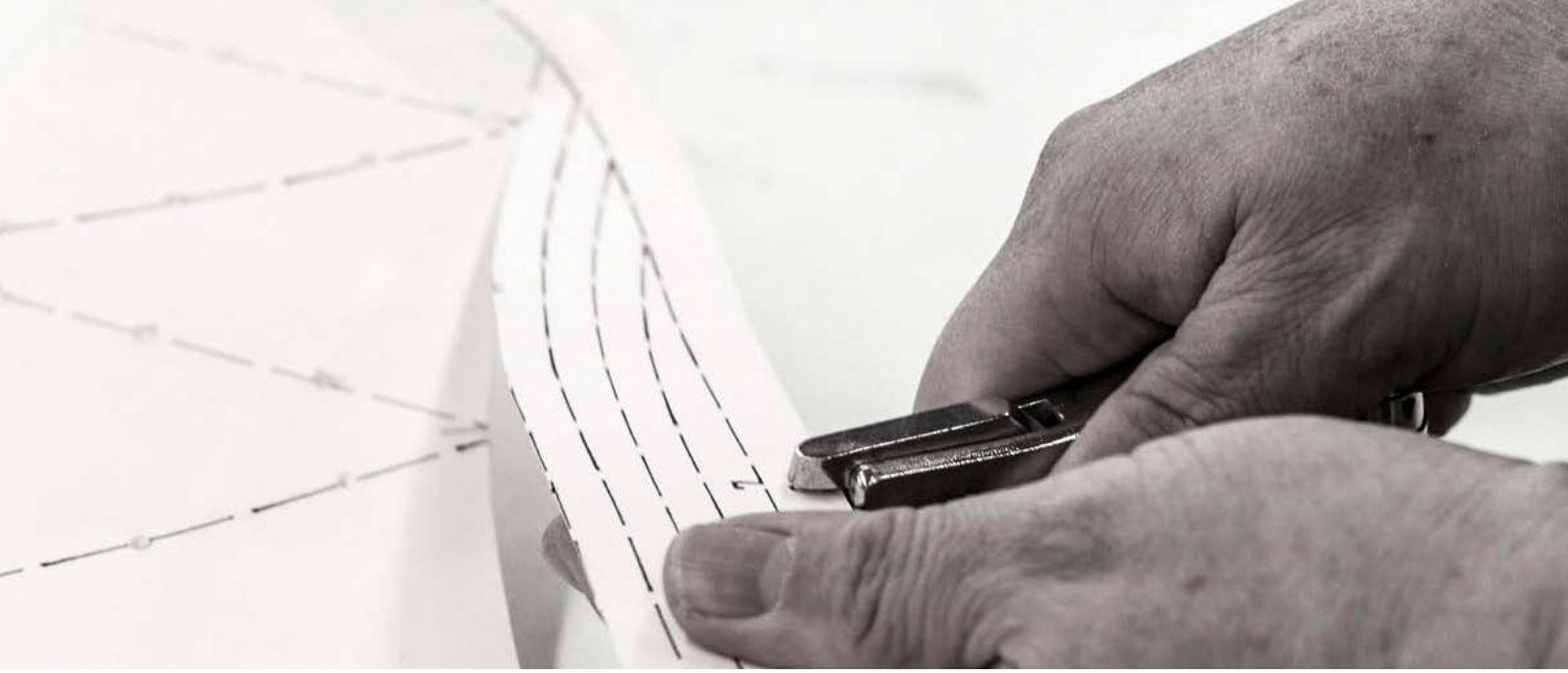


HC Contracting, Inc. Photo by Mac Shafer.

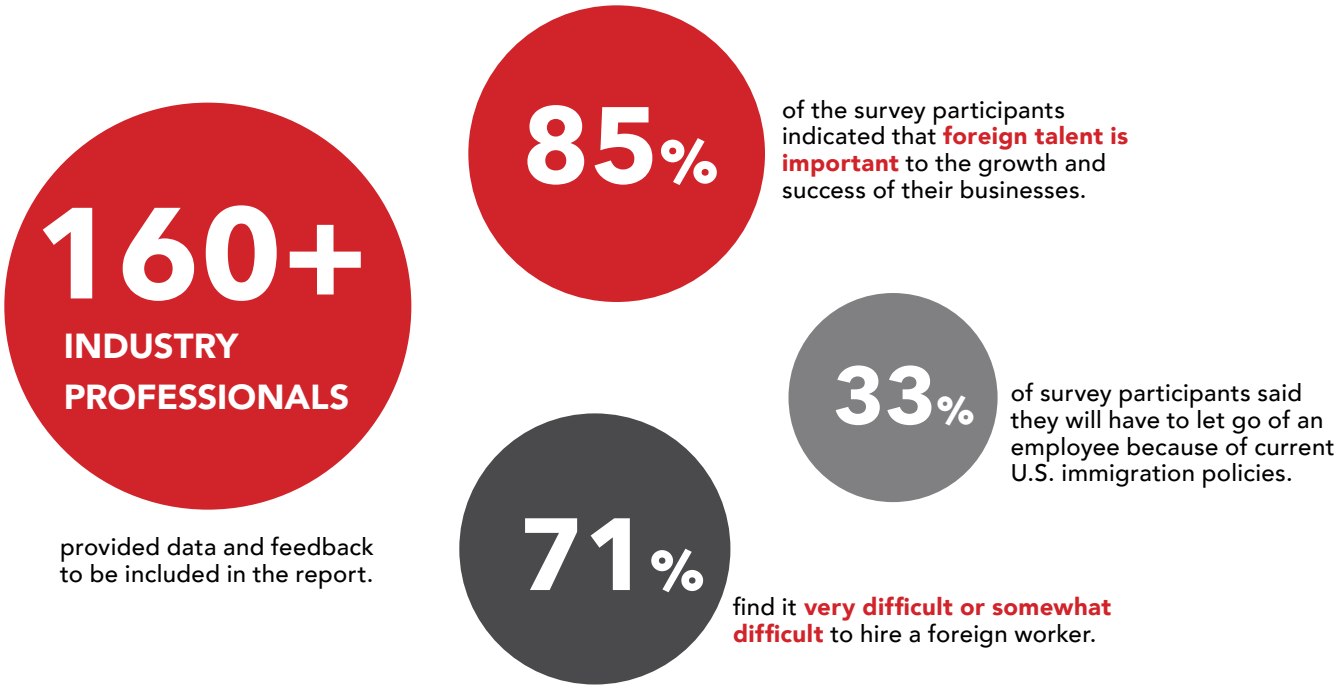
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The fashion industry is a significant economic engine in the United States, employing more than 1.9 million individuals nationwide, generating at least $250 billion in annual revenue, and bolstering the profits of numerous ancillary industries and businesses.[1] The industry's role in U.S. job creation is made possible by the considerable contributions of immigrants.

This report is a collaboration between the Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA) and FWD.us, with additional involvement from the Nashville Fashion Alliance (NFA) and the Saint Louis Fashion Fund (SLFF). It is a continuation of an April 2017 joint report between CFDA and FWD.us titled, "Designing an Immigration System that Works," focused primarily on the impact of immigration on the New York fashion industry. This new version expands on the regional scope of the original report by including data from regional fashion hubs in California, Florida, Missouri, Tennessee, and New York. It also evaluates recent restrictionist immigration policy efforts that will impact the fashion industry, and makes recommendations for reforms to protect workers, designers, and companies.

This report combines immigration policy research with qualitative data collected from conversations with more than 30 industry professionals, ranging from garment workers and designers to trade association members. FWD.us also surveyed CFDA members twice, during February and November 2017, with 28% of participants answering both. Between survey respondents and individual interviews conducted, this report comprises data and feedback from more than 160 industry professionals.

[1] "The Economic Impact of the Fashion Industry." *United States Congress Joint Economic Committee: Ranking Democrat Carolyn B. Maloney,* Feb. 6, 2015. https://bit.ly/1ljMmHq



Note: Given the size of the sample, the results from this survey are qualitative only; we are showing graphs in order to facilitate interpretation.

The findings from our surveys and interviews highlight the fashion industry's support for reforming the U.S. immigration system to better allow aspiring Americans to contribute to our economy and our communities, and thus further the American Dream. Two emerging themes from respondents were as follows:

1. Recruitment and Retention of Top Talent: 56% of study participants indicated that recruitment and retention of talent was their top concern, and 33% of respondents said they will have to let go of an employee because of current immigration policies.

2. Complicated and costly process: 89% of respondents said more resources are needed to help employers and graduating students navigate the immigration system, and a majority cited prohibitive legal costs of $5,000 to $10,000 or more per foreign employee.

America's legacy as a magnet for the best and brightest in global talent has allowed the fashion industry to sustain and expand its economic growth. The industry is thus directly impacted by restrictionist immigration policies advanced by the current administration. Ending the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program; an increasingly burdensome, unwieldy, and unpredictable visa application process; and declines in

Vogue Too Pleating, Stitching & Embroidery Inc. Photo by Mac Shafer.

foreign-born visitors[2] and students[3] have all caused deep concern among designers, labels, and schools, which do not wish to turn away qualified young people.

In recognition of the industry's support for reforming our broken immigration system, and in light of recent administration and congressional efforts to further inhibit immigration, we must prioritize and assign urgency to the following recommendations:

1. Provide a Pathway for Dreamers: Pass Dreamer legislation that provides a pathway to citizenship for young undocumented immigrants who came to this country as children, including hundreds of thousands of workers and students in the fashion industry.

2. Improve Access to Foreign Talent: Increase the number of H-1B visas offered, maintain premium processing services for H-1B visas, and reform the O-1 visa to meet the specialized needs of the fashion industry.

3. Expand Education and Resources: Provide more information to companies on how to navigate the immigration system when hiring foreign talent and to universities that graduate international and undocumented students. Study areas of efficiency to reduce time and costs for processing applications.

[2] Martin, Hugo. "Slowdown in International Visitors May Be the 'Trump Slump' Experts Have Predicted." *Los Angeles Times*, Sept. 9, 2017. https://lat.ms/2w06IyZ

[3] Saul, Stephanie. "Fewer Foreign Students Are Coming to U.S., Survey Shows." *New York Times*, Nov. 13, 2017. https://nyti.ms/2KnHm0K

Design by Calvin Klein. Photo by BFA.

FWD.us *is a bipartisan organization started by key leaders in the tech and business community to promote policies to keep the United States competitive in a global economy, starting with commonsense immigration reform and criminal justice reform.*

CFDA *is a nonprofit trade organization founded in 1962 for North American designers of fashion and fashion accessories. Currently chaired by Diane von Furstenberg and led by CEO Steven Kolb, CFDA's board includes Michael Kors, Marcus Wainwright, Mimi So and Vera Wang.*

NFA *is dedicated to building the regional fashion industry by amplifying early-stage fashion businesses with an ecosystem of support and resources.*

SLFF *is reclaiming St. Louis's fashion roots by supporting emerging designers, stimulating local interest in the industry and building awareness of global fashion trends.*

IMG Models. Courtesy of CFDA.

INTRODUCTION: REGIONAL FASHION HUBS

The U.S. has a vibrant and economically robust fashion industry that employs 1.9 million people.[4] We are home to several top design schools, and more than 200 U.S. schools offer fashion-related programs that attract talent from across the globe.

International talent has played a critical role in defining and sustaining the U.S. fashion industry. For more than a century, immigrant designers and garment workers have come to the U.S. seeking career opportunities. Their ideas and skill sets complement and heighten our workforce, increasing the productivity of American workers. Immigrants and the children of immigrants have launched many of the world-renowned fashion houses found across the U.S.

Fashion companies create an economic multiplier effect, supporting many ancillary U.S. industries and occupations, including – but not limited to – photography, graphic design, publishing, production, makeup, set design, styling, public relations, hospitality and restaurants. The number of fashion designers in the U.S. has grown by more than 50% in the past decade, totaling more than 17,000.[5] Today, cities such as New York, Los Angeles, Miami, Nashville, San Diego and St. Louis boast dynamic fashion economies that thrive from immigrant contributions.[6]

1.9 Million

the number of people employed by the U.S. fashion industry

[4] "The Economic Impact of the Fashion Industry." *United States Congress Joint Economic Committee: Ranking Democrat Carolyn B. Maloney,* Feb. 6, 2015. https://bit.ly/1ljMmHq

[5] "The New Economy of Fashion." *Joint Economic Committee: Ranking Democrat Carolyn B. Maloney,* February 2016. https://bit.ly/2qOZmvy

[6] "The Economic Impact of the Fashion Industry." *Joint Economic Committee: Ranking Democrat Carolyn B. Maloney,* Sept. 2016. https://bit.ly/2wF6XQx

In **New York City**, the fashion industry has long been a significant economic engine. More than 900 fashion companies are headquartered in New York City, employing 180,000 people, or 6% of the local workforce.[7] The New York fashion industry generates more than $2 billion in tax revenue with $10.9 billion in total wages.[8] New York Fashion Week brings in approximately $900 million in total economic impact each year.[9]

$12.9 Billion

annual total wages and tax revenue generated by the New York fashion industry

Intersecting with the entertainment industry and supported by an international workforce, California's creative economy is fueled by two fashion hubs, located in **Los Angeles** and **San Diego**. The industry footprint in these two cities has contributed to global trendsetting and provides significant and reliable economic development for the state. In Los Angeles, billions of dollars in apparel pass through the city's ports, while local companies capture more than $17 billion in revenue.[10] This geography's industry is experiencing an upward growth, as reflected in a 9% increase in employed fashion designers from 2014 to 2016.[11] In San Diego, the fashion and apparel market is responsible for 11% of local jobs.[12] For 11 years running, Fashion Week San Diego has hired more than 100 workers from ancillary trades and industries to support the runway and trunk shows of emerging brands, the majority of which are of immigrant-owned.[13]

$17.8 Billion

annual revenue generated for Los Angeles-area companies through textile and apparel imports

11%

percentage of local jobs created by the fashion and apparel market in San Diego

Miami is a widely recognized global fashion hub with a deep history of welcoming and attracting international talent and celebrating a diversity of cultures. Though the fashion sector declined in the 1990s, today the industry is on the rise and boasts a growing retail market. Miami has reestablished itself as a fashion destination due in part to

24,075

people employed in Miami's creative design industry in 2016

[7] "Mayor De Blasio Marks Beginning of Fashion Week, Announces Winners of Fashion Manufacturing Initiative Grant Program to Promote Growth and Support Local Manufacturers." *NYCEDC*, Feb. 6, 2014. https://bit.ly/2KVchCF

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid.

[10] "The Los Angeles Area Fashion Industry Profile." *CIT Group and The California Fashion Association*, Feb. 2016. https://bit.ly/2IfQPdZ

[11] Ibid.

[12] "San Diego County Demographics Profile." *County of San Diego, Health & Human Services Agency, Public Health Services, Community Health Statistics Unit*, March 2013. https://bit.ly/2wH2FIr

[13] Andrews, Allison. "Re: CFDA x FWD Fashion Report." April 26, 2018. Email to Amy Cenicola.

large-scale industry events, such as Fashion Week Swim and Funkshion Fashion Week. In 2016, Miami's creative design industry, which encompasses fashion, employed 24,075 people at 3,512 companies, and had an economic impact of $1.1 billion.[14]

Led by the country music industry, **Nashville** is recognized as one of the nation's creative capitals. The Nashville fashion industry, though young, has experienced exponential growth in the last five years. Today, Nashville has the third largest per capita concentration of independent fashion companies in America. In 2015, the Nashville fashion industry generated more than $5.9 billion and employed more than 16,500 people. By 2025, the industry is projected to have an economic impact of $9.5 billion and create 25,000 direct and indirect jobs.[15]

$9.5 Billion

projected economic impact of Nashville's fashion industry by 2025

From the late-19th through mid-20th centuries, the **St. Louis** fashion scene was considered second only to that of New York in the country.[16] The city was not only one of the country's leading hubs for apparel manufacturing and distribution,[17] but was also responsible for pioneering designs, including the creation of "junior" sizing.[18] By the end of the 20th century, the St. Louis garment district and the fashion industry had endured many changes and ultimately declined. Today, however, the district is rejuvenated, and the industry is reviving. In 2015, nearly 8,000 people worked in the Missouri design industry, and an additional 2,500 individuals worked in printing on apparel and textile products.[19]

8,000

people working in the Missouri design industry in 2015

2,500

additional individuals worked in printing on apparel and textile products

[14] Benowitz, Shayne. "As Miami's vibrant fashion industry grows, a look at the pioneers who shaped it." *Miami Herald*, Oct. 23, 2016. https://hrld.us/2eeqnjd

[15] "NFA Fashion Cluster Impact Study." *Nashville Fashion Alliance*, Jan. 25, 2017. https://bit.ly/2rHIBQC

[16] "Historic Garment District." *Saint Louis Fashion Fund*, https://bit.ly/2wH3DV5

[17] "Garment District Placemaking Services." Request for Proposals. https://bit.ly/2L07tvL

[18] Cooperman, Jeannette. "The Height of Fashion." *St. Louis Magazine*, Aug. 19, 2013. https://bit.ly/2GewcZK

[19] "Missouri Industry Brief: Creative Industries." *Missouri Economic Research and Information Center*, August 2016. https://bit.ly/2IfRKuX

Lectra courtesy of CFDA

METHODOLOGY

This report's methodology includes research by immigration policy experts and detailed interviews with more than 30 industry professionals, ranging from garment workers and designers to trade associations. Based on those conversations, FWD.us prepared a survey of 25 questions to share with CFDA members. Additionally, we conducted a comparative analysis of the February and November 2017 survey results; 28% of respondents participated in both surveys.

We conducted both surveys through Survey Monkey, and they can be found in Appendix A and B. In the November 2017 survey, 100% of respondents were headquartered in the U.S., while in the survey from February 2017, 97% were headquartered in the U.S. Overall, more than 160 industry professionals provided data and feedback to be included in the report.

160+ INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS

provided data and feedback to be included in the report.

97%

In the survey from February 2017, 97% of respondents were headquartered in the U.S.

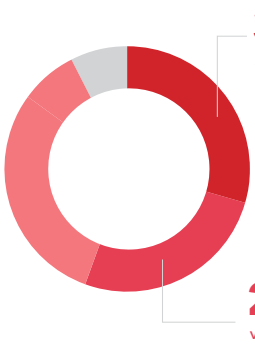
In the November2017 survey, 100% of respondents were headquartered in the U.S.

100%

FINDINGS: THE FASHION INDUSTRY

The U.S. fashion industry thrives on talented individuals from around the world. Of the companies we surveyed, 85% indicated that foreign talent is important to the growth and success of their businesses, with 55% remarking that it was either "very important" or "absolutely essential." Fashion industry leaders want to see immigration reforms that address two key concerns:

- Access and retention of top talent
- Complicated and costly processes



85% of the survey participants indicated that foreign talent is **important** to the growth and success of their businesses.

ACCESS AND RETENTION OF TOP TALENT:

Fashion is a global industry, and the U.S. economy's great competitive advantage is closely tied with attracting top talent from around the world. It is therefore no surprise that 56% of respondents said that their top concern with our existing immigration system is its impact on their ability to recruit and retain top talent. Nearly 67% of survey respondents employ international talent to support their businesses, the vast majority in design and atelier functions. One respondent remarked, "I have had several very talented young designers have to move back to their countries because they were not able to [obtain] a visa." This respondent is not alone; an alarming 33% of survey participants said they will have to let go of an employee because of current U.S. immigration policies.

33% of survey participants said they will have to let go of an employee because of current U.S. immigration policies.

Additionally, 37% of survey respondents said they have been impacted by recent immigration policy changes that have made it more difficult for immigrants to come to or remain in the U.S. This included: the rescission of DACA; the temporary suspension of premium processing for H-1B visas; and the "travel ban." One respondent said the U.S. needs to do a better job "communicat[ing] that immigration is friendly, not scary to people with families." Another participant said that recent policy changes "made potential customers think twice before traveling to the U.S."

37% of survey respondents said they have been impacted by recent immigration policy changes that have made it more difficult for immigrants to come to or remain in the U.S.

JK Fashion Studio LLC. Photo by Mac Shafer.

Recent studies underscore these statements, confirming significant declines in foreign-born visitors and students to the U.S. and outlining the serious economic consequences. According to ForwardKeys, a European travel-prediction firm, the number of international travelers arriving at U.S. airports dropped 1.4% between January and September 2017.[20] When considering travel-related expenditures such as hotels, shopping, food and car rentals, the Global Business Travel Association predicted that the U.S. could lose an estimated $1.3 billion and more than 4,200 jobs in 2017.[21] Enrollment of new international students declined in the fall of 2017 by 7%, according to a recent survey from the Institute of International Education.[22] Foreign students play a vital role in our economy, contributing $39 billion annually.[23]

48%

said passing the Dream Act was one of the top two reforms they would most like to see.

33%

said expanding H-1Bs was one of the top two reforms they would most like to see.

11%

said expedited H-1Bs was one of the top two reforms they would most like to see.

7%

said O-1 reform was one of the top two reforms they would most like to see.

18%

listed "other" as one of the top two reforms they would most like to see. Answers included: lowering the costs, more options for graduating students, and addressing the fear and uncertainty in the process.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Horowitz, Julia. "Trump is hurting American tourism." *CNNMoney*, June 7, 2017. https://cnnmon.ie/2rTc9wh

[22] Baer, Julie. "Fall 2017 International Student Enrollment Survey (Joint Survey)." *Institute of International Education*, November 2017. https://bit.ly/2sgEKgR

[23] Ibid.

When asking respondents to prioritize which reforms are most important to them, 48% listed Dream Act, 33% said expanding H-1Bs, 11% said expedited H-1Bs, 7% said O-1 reform, and 18% listed other answers such as lowering the costs, providing more options for graduating students, and addressing the fear and uncertainty in the process.

277,000

workers in the wholesale and retail trade could benefit from the Dream Act

When the current administration terminated the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program in September 2017, it created a dire emergency for Dreamers - undocumented immigrants who came to the U.S. as children - and the millions of Americans who live, work and study with them every day. The fashion community has taken notice of this decision. Several survey respondents mentioned having business partners or other vendors they work with who are anguished at the prospect of being separated from their families or being forced out of their jobs. Dreamer legislation that provides deportation protection, work authorization and a path to citizenship would benefit an estimated 277,000 workers in the wholesale and retail trade.[24]

Our research indicates that one of the most frequently used visas within the fashion industry is the H-1B, a non-immigrant visa that allows American companies to employ temporarily for up to six years individuals from other countries in specialty occupations. United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) issues only 85,000 H-1B visas annually to foreign-born workers.[25] In 2017, more than 199,000 H-1B applications were filed, a significant decrease from a peak of 236,000 in 2016, marking the first time since 2014 that fewer than 200,000 applications were filed.[26] In April 2018, the H-1B visa cap was filled within five days of applications opening. USCIS received 190,098 H-1B petitions, further continuing the trend in decreased applications.[27]

While policy experts are still studying why there was a decline in the number of H-1B applications this year, our survey respondents expressed concern about fear and uncertainty with the process, which they said dissuades people from applying. They also expressed frustration with additional barriers, such as the suspension of premium processing and increased requests for evidence (RFE's). One survey respondent told us, "[it] seems like all approval process[es] for H-1B and Green Card applications ... have stopped."

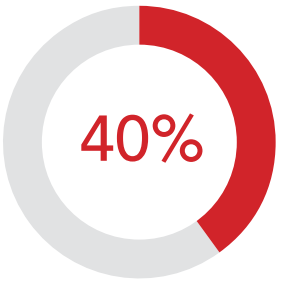
[24] Ortega, Francesc, Edwards, Ryan, and Wolgin, Philip E. "The Economic Benefits of Passing the Dream Act." *Center for American Progress*, Sept. 18, 2017. https://ampr.gs/2Gex54w

[25] "USCIS Reaches FY2018 H-1B CAP." *U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services*, April 7, 2017. https://bit.ly/2rG5HqT

[26] O'Brien, Sarah Ashley. "H-1B Visa Applications Decline for First Time in 5 Years." *CNNMoney*, April 17, 2017. https://cnnmon.ie/2oRFg1x

[27] "USCIS Completes the H-1B Cap Random Selection Process for FY 2019." *U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services*, April 12, 2018. https://bit.ly/2vf2CTA

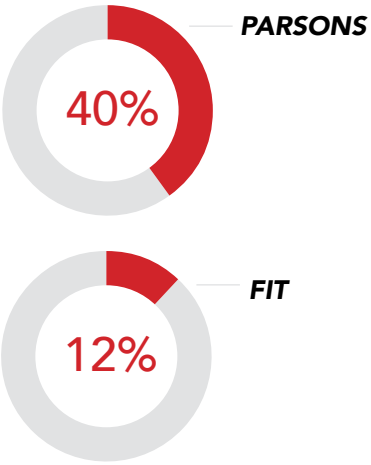
Regarding O-1 visa reform, our findings remain consistent with those of our April 2017 report. Outdated immigration rules poorly align to the skill sets and experience of professionals in the industry. The O-1 visa applies to individuals who possess "extraordinary ability" in the sciences, arts, education, business or athletics, or who have a demonstrated record of extraordinary achievement in the motion picture or television industry and have been recognized nationally or internationally for those achievements.[28] Approximately 40% of survey respondents have employees with O-1 visas, and many remarked that the supporting documentation and level of acclaim required to qualify for an O-1 visa are barriers for exceptional graduating students, emerging designers and newly discovered fashion models.



of survey respondents have employees with O-1 visas.

Our research also showed that fashion hubs across the country would like to see expanded options for graduating fashion students to join and contribute to the U.S. fashion workforce. There are more than 200 U.S. schools offering fashion-related programs attracting significant populations of international students, including Parsons School of Design (Parsons) and The Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT), which both consistently rank among the top 10 fashion schools in the world. According to the most recent enrollment data, 40% of students at Parsons are international students, and 12% of students at FIT are international students.[29] [30] Both the Miami and the St. Louis fashion incubators have developed relationships with local university design schools. Nearly 63% of survey participants "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that uncertainty with the immigration system impacted their ability to recruit foreign talent and foreign students.

% of international students enrolled at top NYC design schools.



Nearly 63% of survey participants "strongly agreed" or "agreed" that uncertainty with the immigration system impacted their ability to recruit foreign talent and foreign students.

[28] "O-1 Visa: Individuals with Extraordinary Ability or Achievement." *United States Citizenship and Immigration Services*, Jan. 5, 2017. https://bit.ly/24t7Jrl

[29] "Admissions FAQs." *The New School*, April 3, 2017. https://bit.ly/2rnheJr

[30] "Enrollment Data." *Fashion Institute of Technology*, 2014. https://bit.ly/2KrqlgC

COMPLICATED AND COSTLY PROCESS:

The application process to hire a foreign worker is complex and costly. Of respondents to the survey, 41% described the process of hiring a foreign worker as "somewhat difficult," and 30% described the process as "very difficult," an increase from April, when 24% described the process as "somewhat difficult." 78% of respondents (up from 68% in the April 2017 report) said they spent between $5,000 to $9,999 per employee on legal expenses related to the visa process. The remaining 22% spent upwards of $10,000 per employee.. It is important to note that while we had a similar number of participants in both surveys, 72% of survey respondents to the November survey did not participate in the original survey.

Fully 89% of the respondents either "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that additional resources are needed to help educate employers about how to navigate the immigration system. CFDA is committed to educating the fashion industry annually on changing regulations and processes. Additionally, 85% of respondents agreed that additional resources are needed to help advise foreign graduating students who wish to work in the U.S.

Survey participants agree that access to foreign talent is limited. Participants indicated that they:

Find it very difficult or somewhat difficult to hire a foreign worker.

Strongly agreed or agreed that additional resources are needed to help educate employers about how to navigate the immigration system

Agreed that additional resources are needed to help advise foreign graduating students who wish to work in the U.S.

Among our survey respondents, 11% listed "cost" as the main factor when deciding whether to hire a foreign worker. One elaborated by stating that it is very costly and time consuming to sponsor H-1B and O-1 visas. Another expressed that the uncertainty of the outcome and the low success rate made the process discouraging.

of our survey respondents listed "cost" as the main factor when deciding whether to hire a foreign worker.

New York Embroidery Studio. Photo by Mac Shafer.

CASE STUDIES

The following case studies summarize real-life examples from immigrants participating in and contributing to the U.S. fashion industry across Los Angeles, Miami, New York, Nashville, San Diego and St. Louis. Subjects range from seamstresses, merchandisers and recent university graduates to acclaimed foreign-born designers.

LOS ANGELES

CASE STUDY #1

Los Angeles sets global trends in fashion, arts and entertainment, and its creative economy flourishes with the support and entrepreneurship of international talent. One designer helping to sustain and grow the Los Angeles fashion industry is Colombian-born Juan Carlos Obando, who immigrated to Miami in 1994. After initially studying visual communications in the U.S., he obtained a series of work visas connected to his employment in advertising agencies. It was the name recognition and notoriety he earned through his then-budding fashion design career that made him eligible for a green card.

Courtesy of Juan Carlos Obando.

In addition to sharing his artistic vision through elegant evening wear, Juan Carlos views his role in the fashion industry as that of a job creator, and as someone who can enhance the skills of his local workforce. After establishing his own line of clothing as a permanent resident, Juan Carlos decided to manufacture his

designs exclusively in the U.S. as a testament to his values and sense of gratitude to the country. In addition to creating jobs directly, Juan Carlos has further contributed to economic development in Los Angeles by establishing technical training initiatives with local factories so that garment workers are able, according to him, to "acquire an advanced skill that allows them to expand their capabilities and competitive market share."

For his talent and ingenuity, Juan Carlos was named the 2013 runner-up for the prestigious CFDA/Vogue Fashion Fund award and has received recognition and support from powerhouse fashion companies such as Barneys New York, MAC Cosmetics and Swarovski. Notable celebrities, including Kendall Jenner to Gigi Hadid, are donning his designs on the red carpet.[31]

Juan Carlos would like to see reforms to our outdated and broken immigration system, and specifically urges Congress to pass a legislative solution for Dreamers. In his own words, he believes strongly in commonsense immigration reform to lift the restrictions on "**many of the incredible hands and hearts that currently produce and contribute to the growth of our industry.**"

MIAMI

CASE STUDY #2

Miami has long been a vibrant regional fashion hub, in large part because the city's richness of diverse cultural influences and access to international talent. Though the fashion sector declined in the 1990s, today the industry is on the rise. In 2016, the creative design industry in Miami, which encompasses the fashion sector, employed 24,075 people at 3,512 companies and had an economic impact of $1.1 billion.[32]

It is therefore fitting that Naeem Khan, one of New York's most acclaimed luxury womenswear and bridal designers, is making an incredible investment in the future of Miami's fashion scene. He is transitioning his operations to Miami by 2019 and serving on the board of advisors for Miami Fashion Institute (MFI), which offers a new two-year associate degree program with tracks in fashion design and merchandising and opened in 2016 with 100 students. The designer's success is a testament

Courtesy of Naeem Khan.

[31] Nnadi, Chioma. "Juan Carlos Obando." *Vogue.com*, March 5, 2017. https://bit.ly/2IkZtDR

[32] Benowitz, Shayne. "As Miami's Vibrant Fashion Industry Grows, A Look at the Pioneers Who Shaped it." *Miami Herald*, Oct. 23, 2016. https://hrld.us/2eeqnjd

to the economic and creative contributions of immigrants in growing and expanding the U.S. fashion industry. Khan emigrated from India to the U.S. in 1979, and launched his eponymous collection in 2003. Since then, his designs have been seen on the most prestigious red carpets in the world, worn by women such as Beyoncé, Jennifer Lopez, Taylor Swift, Rachel McAdams, First Lady Michelle Obama, Queen Noor of Jordan and the Duchess of Cambridge Kate Middleton.

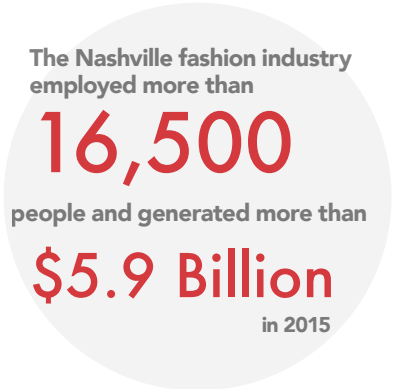
Along with Khan's extraordinary talent and perspective, his company's success is attributable to the high quality, strong work ethic and inherent skills of foreign-born workers. In describing his employees, Khan says, "**I would say 90 percent of my staff is immigrants. … They work so hard in an industry that can be difficult, and they inspire me.**"[33]

Khan's transition of his company's operations to Miami, along with his support and advisory role to MFI, will fortify the city's status as a fashion hub, and will create both a robust pipeline of talent as well as spark an economic multiplier effect for other industries. Khan has said, "The whole idea behind building a fashion house is to build a whole new industry [in Miami] … We want to bring high-end jobs that pay over $50,000. The couture I make is a dying art. We want to train as many people as we can."[34]

NASHVILLE

CASE STUDY #3

In 2015, the Nashville fashion industry generated more than $5.9 billion and employed more than 16,500 people. Nashville has the third-largest per capita concentration of independent fashion companies in the U.S., after New York and Los Angeles.[35] This economic development is fostered in part by the Nashville Fashion Alliance, which works to build the regional fashion industry by bolstering early-stage fashion businesses with an ecosystem of support and resources. Part of that ecosystem of support is international talent and an immigrant workforce.



Below are three examples of contributions by international and immigrant talent in sustaining and fueling Nashville's fashion industry.

[33] Karimzadeh, Marc. "Honoring Immigrant Heritage Month with Naeem Khan." *CFDA.com*, June 2017. https://bit.ly/2KmgRsh

[34] Alvarado, Francisco. "Fashion Powerhouse Naeem Khan Tweaks Design of Future Miami River HQ." *The Real Deal Miami*, March 6, 2017. https://bit.ly/2IFqLIo

[35] Ibid.

Atelier Savas is one of many fashion companies attributing its success to international talent. This company creates bespoke outerwear, and has been featured in *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, the *Financial Times*, and *Esquire*, to name a few. Owner Savannah Yarborough has experienced firsthand the economic and creative contributions of immigrants in her industry. In her own words:

"Sewing fine materials, like my atelier leather business, is a type of labor which requires the highest level of skills, combining precision, awareness, hand-eye coordination, intuition and experienced artisan craftsmanship ... In order to employ immigrant workers, the tools and resources need to exist that are cost-efficient and accessible, [and] less complicated. The workers who are from foreign nations need to be able to work in the U.S., and need to be able to stay and retain their jobs. It is currently very difficult for small businesses to afford, hire and retain these workers from overseas. If immigration laws change, we run the risk of the workers that we do have fleeing, and more so I [will] be unable to hire future skilled talent that is desperately needed to grow and scale my business."

"It is currently very difficult for small businesses to afford, hire and retain these workers from overseas."

The **Sewing Training Academy** (STA) is helping build a skilled, reliable workforce to support Nashville's rapidly growing fashion sector. Founded in 2015, STA is a joint collaboration between Catholic Charities and the Nashville Fashion Alliance, and works closely with small clothing designers and midsize manufacturers. Six-week courses are offered for a fee of $100 to $300 to a broad array of individuals, including many foreign-born refugees and immigrants. Instructor Trishawna Quincy highlighted the accessibility of this training in a previous interview, stating, "Because teaching others to sew is visual, it crosses the language barrier."[36] STA's inaugural class represented a wide range of geographies, with participants from countries including Congo and Burma.[37]

[36] Schults, Julia. "Nashville Fashion Alliance: Growing an Industry from Scratch." *Catholic Charities of Tennessee*, Inc.,, Jan. 14, 2016. https://bit.ly/2KXRC0C

[37] Boyer, E.J. "New Sewing Training Academy Opens in East Nashville." *Bizjournals.com*, Sept. 2, 2015. https://bit.ly/2Ifb5MO

Trishawna Quincy
Photo by Brenton Giesey

"Because teaching others to sew is visual, it crosses the language barrier."

Kharga is an immigrant who graduated from STA two years ago with skills that allow him to work for a local manufacturer and support his family. He fled his home in Bhutan because of religious and cultural persecution, and lived with his family in a refugee camp for 20 years, where he set up his own tailoring business. Eventually relocating to the U.S., he found work at a meatpacking plant but longed to continue his tailoring work. STA gave him instruction on industrial machines and connected him to employers with job opportunities in sewing.

Manuel Cuevas is known in the industry simply as Manuel, or by his nickname, "The Rhinestone Rembrandt." He emigrated to the U.S. from Mexico in the 1950s, and is a shining example of the contributions immigrants have made to Nashville's fashion industry.[38] Manuel has been sewing since he was just seven years old, and his designs define a style aesthetic that has become synonymous with couture country. He is an iconic fixture in the Music City, which drew 13.9 million visitors in 2016.[39]

Manuel's designs have permeated American culture for generations. **He has dressed the most famous artists in rock and roll, pop and country music, including Elvis, Frank Sinatra and Lady Gaga, as well as Hollywood legends such as James Dean and John Wayne.** Manuel was even responsible for creating country music icon Johnny Cash's "Man in Black" look.[40]

[38] Brown, Tanya Ballard, and Emily Martinez. "This Country Music Tailor Is Known As 'The Rhinestone Rembrandt'." *NPR*, March 31, 2017. https://n.pr/2GeM529

[39] "Record Number 13.9 Million Visitors Came to Nashville in 2016." *Nashville Convention & Visitors Corp.*, Jan. 26, 2017. https://bit.ly/2GdFxB5

[40] "'Rhinestone Rembrandt': Tailor to Country Stars." *CBS News*, Dec. 22, 2011. https://cbsn.ws/2wFHWo

NEW YORK

CASE STUDY #4

Lucy is a young, talented designer residing in Brooklyn who emigrated from the U.K. in 2011. She attended Parsons School of Design at The New School. She works in a residency program for a top American women's clothing designer creating a sustainable line of recycled garments. Additionally, she designs healthwear for chronically or seriously ill patients who require catheters or ports to receive life-saving medications.

Lucy previously held an F-1 student visa and, after graduation, was approved for Optional Practical Training (OPT), allowing her to work temporarily in the U.S. for up to 12 months. She currently holds an O-1 visa, which is issued to individuals with extraordinary ability or achievement. She described the visa application process as "painful emotionally and financially, quite rigorous, daunting, unclear and complex." She highlighted challenges with the timing requirements on the OPT application: As she understood the process, an applicant must "predict" his or her first date of employment when applying. In her words, if you list a premature date, "the clock starts ticking" on your allotted period to secure employment. If you find employment sooner than your listed date, you are legally prohibited from starting work, which in turn creates a financial burden for living expenses in the meantime, and forces the employer to delay projects and adjust business plans. Given her experience and the experiences of fellow design peers, Lucy would like to update the parameters of OPT to allow for two years (rather than one year) of work authorization. She said, "One year is not enough [time] for both employer and employee to put trust into an immigration form."

"One year is not enough [time] for both employer and employee to put trust into an immigration form."

Lucy sees her work in the fashion industry as an outlet to change public perception. Her functional yet fashionable healthwear meets the needs of individuals with serious and/or chronic illnesses, concealing medical devices and offering wearers a sense of dignity and style during treatment. For her talent and vision, Lucy has received many notable awards, including Womenswear Designer of the Year for "Seated Design" (Parsons) and the William Randolph Hearst Award for "Accessible Design" (2014).

CASE STUDY #5

Carmen is a New York City-based designer focusing on outerwear, sustainable design and technology innovations; she emigrated from Mexico in 2006. She worked as an au pair, and then graduated with honors from Parsons School of Design at The New School.

Carmen currently holds an O-1 visa and works for a top American women's clothing designer. She describes the visa application process as "very long, time-consuming and extremely costly." Out-of-pocket fees for her application process totaled nearly $8,000. Before her OPT period ended, her current employer sponsored her for an H-1B visa; however, she wasn't successful in the lottery. This left the O-1 visa as her "only option." **To meet extraordinary ability requirements, Carmen had to develop a 300-page portfolio and solicit 10 to 15 letters of recommendation from fashion industry leaders.** While the process came at significant personal expense, she considers herself "one of the lucky ones" because she was able to find a great job upon graduation and an employer willing to sponsor her.

Given her experience and the experiences of fellow design peers, Carmen would like to change the current immigration system by increasing the number of H-1B visas. She stressed the need for an easier, more accessible process for those who want to "pay taxes, [live] in the U.S. legally and, most importantly, fulfill our dreams of working in a country that allows our creativity to be part of our daily job."

Carmen sees her work in the fashion industry as an opportunity to contribute to environmental sustainability. She said, "I've contributed [by implementing] a scalable and profitable model to convert second-hand garments into new garments of the same or higher value … diverting thousands of clothing [pieces] from the landfill." Her talent and vision have been featured in *Women's Wear Daily* and *Seventeen*.

"I've contributed [by implementing] a scalable and profitable model to convert second-hand garments into new garments of the same or higher value ... diverting thousands of clothing [pieces] from the landfill."

CASE STUDY #6

Nejvi Bejko works in Washington, D.C., as a showroom manager for MM.LaFleur, a New York City-based, award-winning, $70 million fashion start-up that produces professional womenswear. Prior to this role, she worked as a visual merchandiser for watchmaker Shinola. Nejvi was born in war-torn Albania and moved to the U.S. in 1999. She spent her adolescence in Michigan learning English, studying, and working side jobs at family restaurants and dry cleaners. Nejvi qualified for and received DACA, which enabled her to attend Michigan State University and graduate with a B.A. in Apparel and Textile Design. Given her status, she was not eligible for financial aid and had to assume the entire expense of her education. Because DACA was recently rescinded, Nejvi's ability to work in the U.S. is tied to district court injunctions challenging the rescission remaining in place unless Congress passes a legislative solution. Should the injunctions be lifted, she will eventfully lose her job and be subject to deportation.

Highlighting the "strong work ethic" and "social standards" of her peers, Nejvi would like to change our current immigration system by passing a permanent legislative solution for fellow Dreamers. From her perspective, "It is now more crucial than ever to allow young adults the legal right to stay and contribute to the only country they've known as their home."

Nejvi embraces the title of "Dreamer," stating in her own words, "I obtained a degree that allowed me to seek out my dreams as a designer and stylist. I have entered and won competitions for my designs. We, as a family, have paid sales, federal and medical taxes [for the] 20 years we've lived here."

For her talent and vision, Nejvi was selected as one of 20 finalists nationwide to design and create a piece for the Cleveland Museum, using $200 in supplies in less than 10 days. Her gown was inspired by the "natural twists and folds" of the human brain and was constructed of chiffon, organza and tulle. Michigan State University opened one of its subsequent annual fashion shows with this piece.

Photo by Nejvi Bejko
Model: Rosie DeRoo

"It is now more crucial than ever to allow young adults the legal right to stay and contribute to the only country they've known as their home."

CASE STUDY #7

Gabriela Hearst is an acclaimed Uruguayan-born, New York-based fashion designer with an American luxury womenswear collection for ready-to-wear attire, shoes and handbags. She immigrated to the U.S. more than a decade ago. Gabriela's designs are lauded in the industry; *Women's Wear Daily* included her in its 2016 "Ten of Tomorrow" list and *Business of Fashion* included her in its 2017 list of the industry's 500 global influencers. Representing the U.S., she won the 2016-2017 International Woolmark Prize for womenswear. In March 2017, she was nominated for CFDA's Swarovski Award for Emerging Talent. Gabriela attributes her success to her international perspective, education and training. She is also adamant that hiring the "best talent" is essential to competing in a global marketplace.

Her current line prioritizes luxury material selections, sustainability and social awareness, inspired by "thousands of years of artisanal tradition" passed down in cultures outside of the U.S. To achieve her vision, international talent is instrumental. Gabriela experienced several setbacks when trying to build her company's team because a limited local talent pool and difficulty filling key positions; she was not successful in obtaining an H-1B visa for the designer of her choice in the annual lottery, an international graduate from the renowned Savannah College of Art and Design. These same restrictions impacted her ability to hire a head of production. Based on these experiences and similar experiences of her design peers, Gabriela would like to reform our current system by expanding and increasing the number of H-1B visas available for skilled foreign talent.

Gabriela states that "immigration is key" for the growth of the U.S. fashion industry. She adds, "Fashion is a global business, and without an international … perspective it is not possible to succeed. It enriches the quality of the products to have diverse backgrounds and educations of the people that conceptualize and make [the products]."

"Fashion is a global business, and without an international … perspective it is not possible to succeed. It enriches the quality of the products to have diverse backgrounds and educations of the people that conceptualize and make [the products]."

SAN DIEGO

CASE STUDY #8

For more than 11 years, Fashion Week San Diego has served as an accelerator program and launch pad for emerging fashion brands. Each year, approximately 15 to 20 designer brands participate and employ more than 100 additional professionals to execute their runway shows and post-trunk show activities. In addition to establishing San Diego as a regional fashion industry hub, Fashion Week San Diego has garnered significant exposure for its community, and contributed to growing tourism dollars and revenue for the city. As of 2011, fashion and apparel accounted for 11% of industry jobs in San Diego County.[41]

According to Founder and Director Allison Andrews, Fashion Week San Diego and its positive economic impact would not be possible without the contributions of immigrants. She estimates that 60% to 70% of the designers who participate annually are immigrants. Allison states, "**We couldn't do our event or showcase the incredible talent without them. They are vital to our industry here in San Diego, and we see it daily in our businesses.**" Moreover, Allison recalls the role her local fashion industry played in encouraging entrepreneurism in the wake of the 2008 financial recession. From this annual event, budding entrepreneurs have been spurred to open a boutique, manufacture goods and even start their own fashion line.

Miriam Baza is one of the many immigrant designers starting and building a fashion line in San Diego. She immigrated to the U.S. from Mexico nearly three years ago after "marrying the love of my life." Her husband's role as a local seafood company owner encouraged her to do the same and launch a new brand called Baza. Miriam says about the importance of fueling her city's economy, "I buy my fabrics in my community, [and] also I give work to [the] people of my community." She has also used her talent to bring awareness to local environmental causes by presenting an ecological dress for the Surfrider Foundation. Miriam recognizes that the "USA is a country of opportunities," and calls for reforms to our current immigration system, citing her own challenges with the "very slow" process.

Photo by 656 Photography courtesy of Fashion Week San Diego.
Design by Baza.
Model: Anna Baretta.

[41] "San Diego County Demographics Profile." *County of San Diego, Health & Human Services Agency, Public Health Services, Community Health Statistics Unit*, March 2013. https://bit.ly/2wH2FIr

Werkstatt. Photo by Mac Shafer.

ST. LOUIS

CASE STUDY #9

Led by the Saint Louis Fashion Fund & Incubator, the city is reclaiming its roots as a leader in fashion design and garment production. In the 1920s, downtown St. Louis was known as a thriving garment district and its sewing industry supplied women's fashions nationwide. In the decades following, with changing times and outside factors, the city transitioned out of this economic center and many businesses shuttered or relocated.[42]

Today, the Saint Louis Fashion Fund, along with other companies and organizations, is working to re-establish the city as a regional hub for the fashion industry. The St. Louis metro area's modern-day sewing industry is creating and producing a diversity of garments, including medical patient slings, dancewear, tool belts and high-end lingerie.[43]

A skilled, reliable workforce is needed to support economic development and to build out the businesses of budding designers attracted to the city's Incubator. One potential partner in this effort is the International Institute, which helps immigrants and their families be productive Americans, and which champions ethnic diversity as a cultural and economic strength. **For years, the International Institute's Alterations and Industrial Sewing Training program has instructed refugees, asylees and immigrants to support the emerging designers and companies in St. Louis.** Their intensive six-week course features hand sewing, basic machine sewing, alterations and industrial sewing machine instruction. The program also requires trainees to design and prepare projects, all while receiving instruction in English. Recent graduates span ages 19 to 60, and come from diverse regions such as the Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa and the Asian subcontinent.[44]

[42] Cooperman, Jeannette. "The Height of Fashion." *St. Louis Magazine*, Aug. 19, 2013. https://bit.ly/2jTCepE

[43] Written questionnaire, Chelsea Hand, International Institute.

[44] Ibid.

Not only are graduates and candidates with previous sewing experience filling jobs necessary to fuel the city's economic development, but the skills and techniques they bring are also valuable in their new places of employment. For example, because of the lower-tech nature of the sewing industry in cultures where many of the graduates may have originally come from, when a machine broke down at a sewer's new job, they were able to tackle the challenge quickly using more traditional sewing techniques. Overall, many sewing graduates and candidates can adapt to new situations, with the eagerness to learn.[45]

According to Saint Louis University Professor Jack Strauss's 2012 report, "The Economic Impact of Immigration on St. Louis," **immigrants in the St. Louis region are 60% more likely to be entrepreneurs as compared to the native-born population.** Moreover, program graduates tend to stay longer in "high turnover" jobs because of their determination to succeed in their new home.[46]

Below are two profiles of program graduates who are contributing to the St. Louis economy:

One graduate came from Sub-Saharan Africa with a career in health care but was unable to work in that field in the U.S. because of licensure processes. After enrolling in the sewing training program, this graduate was placed with an industrial material company as a sewing machine operator. After mastering her skills and techniques in this role, she returned to the International Institute for a job upgrade referral. She is now a full-time employee for a company creating safe patient handling equipment. She has a higher salary and benefits to support herself and her young child.

Another individual came from the Middle East already possessing strong sewing skills. The International Institute's workforce program was able to place him as a sewing machine operator creating safe patient handling equipment. After excelling in this role, he found new employment at another company. According to that company: "Within a couple of months, it was evident to the staff that this person showcased a natural ability not only to sew with ease, but to cohesively lead a team of sewing machine operators like himself. [He was] promoted to a Team Lead position and eventually a supervisor." Further exhibiting initiative in design skills, he and his spouse formulated new ideas for the company to improve processes and product outcomes. He now serves as an engineer at this company.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Strauss, Jack. "The Economic Impact of Immigration on St. Louis." *Saint Louis University*, April 2012. https://bit.ly/2ICKcB

CASE STUDY #10

One of the St. Louis fashion industry's up-and-coming designers is a woman who emigrated from Poland to the U.S. in 2004. Bringing with her a master's degree in European literature, she continued her education in the U.S. by earning a B.F.A. in fashion studies from Columbia College Chicago. She received U.S. citizenship through the green card lottery system, which she describes as a "lucky draw."

In 2014, this designer launched a luxury womenswear label based on artisan couture sewing techniques. She is focused on producing ethical, quality, limited-edition collections, and is recognized for her openness to technological advances and multidisciplinary collaborations. As a designer in the U.S. with European roots, one of her primary goals is to demonstrate the same skill and quality of work that was practiced by the formidable ateliers of Europe. For her design and vision, she was selected for coveted designer-in-residence positions at both the Chicago Fashion Incubator and the Saint Louis Fashion Incubator, and was named one of Chicago's Top 10 Designers to Watch. She has been featured in numerous publications regionally and nationally, including Vogue. Her work is exclusively manufactured in the U.S., which aligns with the CFDA's Fashion Manufacturing Initiative that was established to support high-end manufacturing jobs for U.S. workers. Her emerging fashion label employs three Americans and is growing.

"It is important we lend a hand to those who are not given the same opportunity as all of us."

This designer sees her success in the fashion industry as a mandate to help others through community service. In her own words, "It is important we lend a hand to those who are not given the same opportunity as all of us." She has served as a social worker for the Polish-American Association by helping other immigrants acclimate with language skills, financial support, health care and housing. Through the U.S.-based nonprofit organization Kiva, she has helped provide lending opportunities to other aspiring female business owners around the world to help alleviate poverty.

"Immigration policies supporting younger foreign talent and creativity in the fashion industry [are needed] more than ever. We all need to learn how to build our future and define the culture of our times."

Given her experience and the experience of her fellow design peers, she would like to modernize the current immigration system. She notes, "Immigration policies supporting younger foreign talent and creativity in the fashion industry [are needed] more than ever. We all need to learn how to build our future and define the culture of our times." Additionally, she is very troubled by the projected increase in children living in foster care as a result of their parents being detained in or deported from the U.S.[47]

[47] "Shattered Families: The Perilous Intersection of Immigration Enforcement and the Child Welfare System." *Applied Research Center*, November 2011. https://bit.ly/2Ku3pmb

IMG Models. Courtesy of CFDA.

IMPACTS OF RECENT IMMIGRATION POLICIES ON THE FASHION INDUSTRY

The U.S. fashion industry's success and innovation are derived from a constant influx of ideas, style and talent. From seamstresses and tailors on Washington Avenue in St. Louis to new trainees in East Nashville, to the runways of Miami Swim Week and New York Fashion Week, the fashion industry could not exist without immigrants. Unfortunately, recent policy efforts from the current administration and Congress are exacerbating an already broken immigration system, which will put the U.S. fashion industry at an economic disadvantage.

ELIMINATING THE DEFERRED ACTION FOR CHILDHOOD ARRIVALS (DACA) PROGRAM

On Sept. 5, 2017, the administration officially ended the DACA program, a policy that allowed young undocumented immigrants who came to the U.S. as children to apply for temporary protection from deportation and a renewable work permit, as long as they passed a rigorous background check and paid a fee.

The average DACA recipient arrived in the United States at six years old and today is 24, having lived in the U.S. for an average of two decades.[48] DACA has unlocked countless economic opportunities for roughly 800,000 young people, enabling them to enroll in college, open a bank account, pay taxes and provide for their families. Dreamers drive the U.S. economy forward by contributing to the tax base[49] and participating in the workforce, thus making the economy stronger and helping strengthen the middle class through their contributions.[50]

[48] Lopez, Gustavo and Krogstad, Jens Manuel. "Key facts about unauthorized immigrants enrolled in DACA." *Pew Research Center*, Sept. 25, 2017. https://pewrsr.ch/2ftSgrN

[49] Heinrich, Sen. Martin. "Dreamers contribute to our economy." *The Hill*, Oct. 4, 2017. https://bit.ly/2z0S3Bd

[50] Harris, Benjamin. "Why Your Economic Argument Against Immigration Is Probably Wrong." *Fortune*, Sept. 11, 2017. https://for.tn/2rHd7uN

DACA RECIPIENTS IN THE U.S.

of DACA recipients have launched businesses that employ native-born American citizens

of DACA recipients are either enrolled in school or employed

Passing Dreamer legislation would have significant benefits for the U.S. and the domestic fashion industry. As previously mentioned, 277,000 workers in the wholesale and retail trades could benefit from the Dream Act. Legislation would add $22.7 billion annually to the U.S. GDP and raise the average incomes of all Americans annually by as much as $273 each. It would provide nearly $505 million in additional state and local taxes, increasing total contributions to at least $2.53 billion a year.[51]

277,000 **workers in the wholesale and retail trades could benefit from the Dream Act**

this legislation would add **$22.7 Billion** annually to the U.S. GDP

INCREASED H-1B VISA OBSTACLES

The immigrants in the fashion industry who hold H-1B visas help fill a critical skills gap in the American workforce.[52] Despite the importance of these individuals' contributions, the current administration has pushed for a series of regulations that hinder economic growth by creating unnecessary challenges for the immigrants in fashion who rely on H-1B visas to work in the U.S. fashion industry.

[51] Ortega, Francesc, Edwards, Ryan, and Wolgin, Philip E. "The Economic Benefits of Passing the Dream Act." *Center for American Progress*, Sept. 18, 2017. https://ampr.gs/2Gex54w

[52] "Sizing Up the Gap in our Supply of STEM Workers." *New American Economy*, March 29, 2017. https://bit.ly/2KWBjBb

New York Binding Co. Photo by Mac Shafer.

Over the past two years, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has repeatedly suspended premium processing of H-1B petitions,[53] adding to the growing backlog and creating further uncertainty for prospective H-1B beneficiaries.[54] Premium processing allows recipients to fast-track the adjudication process of the H-1B petition to just 15 days from the usual three- to six-month processing time for an additional fee.[55]

The administration has also increased its scrutiny of H-1B petitions and its adjudicating of filings with more narrow interpretations of statutes and regulations than in years past. In October 2017, USCIS instructed its officers to review H-1B renewals as thoroughly as they would initial visa applications, creating duplicative work for the agency and adding delay and cost for employers.[56]

The overall effects of these additional barriers negatively impact the models and other specialized fashion industry workers whose employers apply for H-1B visas each year. These new developments create more uncertainty and legal costs for applicants and for employers.

[53] Siskind, Greg. "Siskind Summary H-1B Premium Processing Suspension FAQ." *American Immigration LLC*, March 5, 2017. https://bit.ly/2wCtvRW

[54] Jordan, Miriam. "Rural Areas Brace for a Shortage of Doctors Due to Visa Policy." *New York Times*, March 18, 2017. https://nyti.ms/2mHLZaq

[55] Bhattacharya, Ananya. "Trump administration targets H-1B visas - again." *Quartz*, March 21, 2018. https://bit.ly/2rGWuPX

[56] O'Brien, Sara Ashley. "Trump administration toughens H-1B visa renewal process." *CNNMoney*, Oct. 25, 2017. https://cnnmon.ie/2GfvBXI

DETERRING TALENTED INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS FROM PURSUING DEGREES AT AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES

American colleges and universities rank among the best in the world, and therefore attract the brightest students from across the globe to pursue higher education here. The U.S. is home to Parsons School of Design (Parsons) and The Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT), which both consistently rank among the top 10 fashion schools in the world. As previously mentioned in this report, the international student enrollment at Parsons is 40% and it is 12% at FIT. In addition to Parsons and FIT, more than 200 U.S. schools offer fashion-related programs that also attract a significant population of international students.

Ensuring that qualified students are able to enroll in our colleges and universities is beneficial to the U.S. because they contribute economic revenue and provide cultural and academic benefits to their campuses.[57] International students subsidize the cost of attending public universities and programming for American students, because they almost always pay higher tuition than students who are U.S. citizens.[58]

Unfortunately, recent reports show that international student enrollment at American universities is dropping at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.[59] Nationwide, the total number of international students enrolling at American universities declined an average of 7% in the fall of 2017, with 45% of campuses reporting drops in new foreign-born enrollment, according to a report conducted by the Institute of International Education, which surveyed more than 500 academic institutions.[60] According to the report, there is compelling evidence that the decrease in international student enrollment is a response to the current administration's anti-immigrant policies and rhetoric. The "vast majority" of university respondents identified the U.S. social and political climate as a significant impact on their university, and that it had a negative effect on the attitudes and perceptions of international students.[61]

This is a recent trend, and it is unclear how international fashion school enrollment has been affected. However, if general international student enrollment continues to decline across the board, this development will mark a move in the wrong direction, and will create a less welcoming environment for talented students from around the world.

[57] "Talking Points." *NAFSA: Association of International Educators*, 2014. https://bit.ly/2lku092
[58] Ibid.
[59] Redden, Elizabeth. "International Student Numbers Decline." *Inside Higher Ed*, Jan. 22, 2018. https://bit.ly/2DCgv20
[60] Saul, Stephanie. "Fewer Foreign Students Are Coming to U.S., Survey Shows." *New York Times*, Nov. 13, 2017. https://nyti.ms/2KnHm0K
[61] Redden, Elizabeth. "International Student Numbers Decline." *Inside Higher Ed*, Jan. 22, 2018. https://bit.ly/2DCgv20

Covet Fashion. Courtesy of CFDA.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Our findings support the urgent need to reform and modernize the U.S. immigration system. The current immigration visa system was designed more than 50 years ago and has not been updated in nearly a quarter-century. Given the current administration's rescission of DACA and its attempts to drastically cut legal immigration levels, the fashion industry has adjusted its original policy recommendations outlined in the April 2017 report to prioritize reforms that will protect Dreamers, create more American jobs, strengthen the American middle class, ensure vibrant communities and cities for our families, and grow the U.S. economy.

1. Provide a Pathway for Dreamers: Pass Dreamer legislation that provides a pathway to citizenship for young undocumented immigrants who came to this country as children, including hundreds of thousands of students and workers in the fashion industry.

2. Improve Access to Foreign Talent: Increase the number of H-1B visas offered, maintain premium processing services for H-1B visas, and expand and reform the O-1 visa program to meet the specialized needs of the fashion industry.

3. Expand Education and Resources: Provide companies with more information about navigating the immigration system when hiring foreign talent. Provide resources to international and undocumented students who graduate from American institutions. Study areas of efficiency to reduce time and costs for processing applications.

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Appendix A

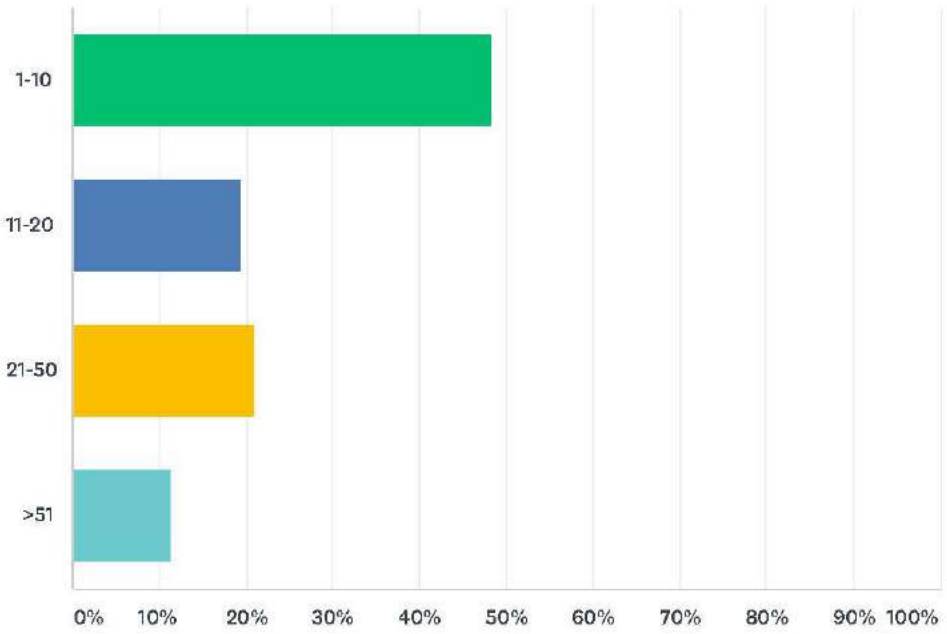
CFDA x FWD.us

Immigration Survey Results

November 2017

Q1 Number of employees:

Answered: 62 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1-10	48.39%	30
11-20	19.35%	12
21-50	20.97%	13
>51	11.29%	7
TOTAL		62

Q2 Location(s) of office(s):

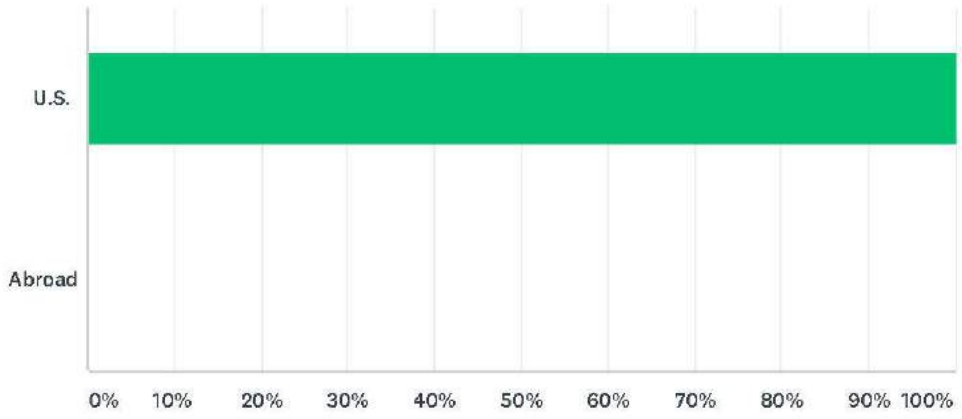
Answered: 61 Skipped: 1

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	NEW YORK CITY	11/11/2017 7:47 AM
2	Los Angeles. Ca. Vernon. Ca	11/10/2017 2:35 PM
3	New York, NY	11/10/2017 12:24 PM
4	New York	11/9/2017 3:11 PM
5	Florence, Alabama	11/9/2017 7:27 AM
6	New York City	11/8/2017 9:56 PM
7	Los Angeles, CA	11/8/2017 6:46 PM
8	NYC	11/8/2017 4:15 PM
9	Los Angeles	11/8/2017 1:47 PM
10	324 Canal Street, 5th floor. NY, NY 10013	11/8/2017 12:16 PM
11	257 W 39 th Street, NYC NY 10018	11/8/2017 12:08 PM
12	New York	11/8/2017 11:45 AM
13	nyc	11/8/2017 11:39 AM
14	New York, NY	11/8/2017 11:38 AM
15	New York City	11/8/2017 11:28 AM
16	NY, LA	11/7/2017 7:30 PM
17	NYC	11/7/2017 3:24 PM
18	NYC	11/7/2017 12:32 PM
19	New York City	11/7/2017 10:19 AM
20	New York	11/7/2017 9:49 AM
21	new orleans	11/7/2017 8:37 AM
22	2	11/6/2017 11:24 PM
23	new york, new york	11/6/2017 10:38 PM
24	Tribeca	11/6/2017 10:27 PM
25	LA, CA	11/6/2017 6:36 PM
26	New York City	11/6/2017 5:16 PM
27	NYC	11/6/2017 3:10 PM
28	san francisco	11/6/2017 2:47 PM
29	NYC	11/6/2017 2:45 PM
30	new york	11/6/2017 2:33 PM
31	Mumbai and NYC	11/6/2017 2:19 PM
32	New York	11/6/2017 2:03 PM
33	New York	11/6/2017 1:17 PM
34	240 CPS Suite 13 I NYC NY 10019	11/6/2017 1:14 PM
35	Los Angeles & New York City	11/6/2017 1:09 PM

36	New York	11/6/2017 1:03 PM
37	Miami, Fl.	11/6/2017 12:55 PM
38	Nyc	11/6/2017 12:53 PM
39	Greenpoint, Brooklyn	11/6/2017 12:50 PM
40	Soho NYC	11/6/2017 12:49 PM
41	2	11/6/2017 12:45 PM
42	New York & New Jersey	11/6/2017 12:32 PM
43	culver city, ca	11/6/2017 12:30 PM
44	Miami & Aliso Veijo CA	11/6/2017 12:28 PM
45	Showroom:20 west 22st nyc10010,warehouse: 22-35 44 th road, LIC, NY.11101	11/6/2017 12:26 PM
46	NYC	11/6/2017 12:26 PM
47	New York, Los Angeles	11/6/2017 12:24 PM
48	Los Angeles	11/6/2017 12:23 PM
49	new york city	11/6/2017 12:16 PM
50	Miami, New York, Fabriano Italy, Carpi Italy	11/6/2017 12:15 PM
51	New York City	11/6/2017 12:14 PM
52	Soho	11/6/2017 12:14 PM
53	New York	11/6/2017 12:13 PM
54	nyc	11/6/2017 12:13 PM
55	Spring Lake NJ	11/6/2017 12:11 PM
56	New York	11/6/2017 12:10 PM
57	158 east 64th NYC	11/6/2017 12:09 PM
58	New York City	11/6/2017 12:08 PM
59	new york	11/6/2017 12:06 PM
60	Tribeca	11/6/2017 12:05 PM
61	fdsaf	11/6/2017 11:25 AM

Q3 Are you headquartered in the U.S. or abroad?

Answered: 61 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
U.S.	100.00%	61
Abroad	0.00%	0
TOTAL		61

Q4 Can we follow up with you for comment? Email:

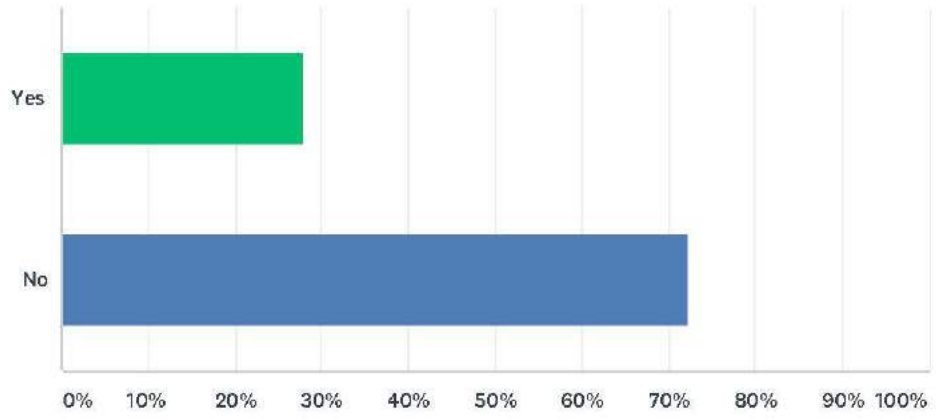
Answered: 46 Skipped: 16

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	NORMA@NORMAKAMALI.COM	11/11/2017 7:47 AM
2	aisha@naeemkhan.com	11/10/2017 12:24 PM
3	dao@publicschoolnyc.com	11/8/2017 9:56 PM
4	sue@st-roche.com	11/8/2017 1:47 PM
5	peterchan@sunrisestudiofashion.com	11/8/2017 12:08 PM
6	Gabriela@gabrielahearst.com	11/8/2017 11:45 AM
7	tricia@lelarose.com	11/8/2017 11:38 AM
8	Kathryn@lizziefortunato.com	11/8/2017 11:28 AM
9	rc@rachelcomey.com	11/7/2017 7:30 PM
10	katrin@exovo.com	11/7/2017 12:32 PM
11	John@lambertsontruex.com	11/7/2017 9:49 AM
12	mpatmos@mpatmos.com	11/6/2017 11:24 PM
13	yes	11/6/2017 10:38 PM
14	yes	11/6/2017 10:27 PM
15	Yes	11/6/2017 5:16 PM
16	linda@amourvert.com	11/6/2017 2:47 PM
17	araks@araks.com	11/6/2017 2:45 PM
18	kbould@marahoffman.com, mara@marahoffman.com	11/6/2017 2:33 PM
19	yes, robertgeller@mac.com	11/6/2017 2:03 PM
20	dana@apeacetreaty.com	11/6/2017 1:17 PM
21	Yes. hgrethel @verizon.net	11/6/2017 1:14 PM
22	courtney@rachelzoe.com	11/6/2017 1:09 PM
23	eddie@modernsolutionsmgmt.com	11/6/2017 12:55 PM
24	sandydalal@gmail.com	11/6/2017 12:53 PM
25	Yes	11/6/2017 12:49 PM
26	MICHELLE@COOMI.COM	11/6/2017 12:45 PM
27	jschlottmann@dereklam.com	11/6/2017 12:32 PM
28	elizabeth@ireneneuwirth.com	11/6/2017 12:30 PM
29	ce@christianroth.com	11/6/2017 12:28 PM
30	javitsjr@aol.com	11/6/2017 12:26 PM
31	laura@vitafede.com	11/6/2017 12:26 PM
32	april@jonathansimkhai.com	11/6/2017 12:24 PM
33	sarah@ashleypittman.com	11/6/2017 12:23 PM
34	jonathan@titleofwork.com	11/6/2017 12:16 PM
35	Guido@cosabella.com	11/6/2017 12:15 PM

36	weiyi@cushnieetochs.com	11/6/2017 12:14 PM
37	sordomonica@gmail.com	11/6/2017 12:14 PM
38	Pablo@carloscampos.com	11/6/2017 12:13 PM
39	bbaas@donalddeal.com	11/6/2017 12:13 PM
40	bbzipper@mac.com	11/6/2017 12:11 PM
41	Sure	11/6/2017 12:10 PM
42	vanessa@vanessanoel.com	11/6/2017 12:09 PM
43	zeno@paulandrew.com	11/6/2017 12:08 PM
44	yes - ariel@ovadiaandsons.com	11/6/2017 12:06 PM
45	Laura@monse.com	11/6/2017 12:05 PM
46	fdaf	11/6/2017 11:25 AM

Q5 Did you participate in the February 2017 survey?

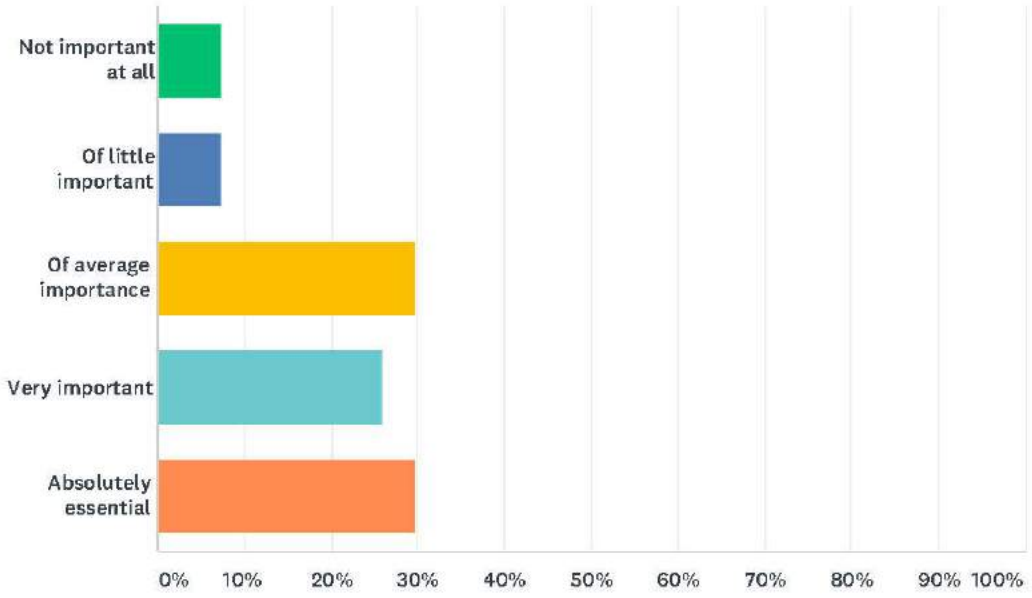
Answered: 61 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	27.87%	17
No	72.13%	44
TOTAL		61

Q6 How important is foreign talent to the success and growth of your business?

Answered: 27 Skipped: 35



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Not important at all	7.41%	2
Of little important	7.41%	2
Of average importance	29.63%	8
Very important	25.93%	7
Absolutely essential	29.63%	8
TOTAL		27

Q7 What is your top concern(s) with our existing immigration system as it relates to your company and industry?

Answered: 27 Skipped: 35

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	My concern is mainly from a humanitarian aspect but also from the tourism perspective.	11/9/2017 7:32 AM
2	we won't be able to recruit and maintain foreign talent.	11/8/2017 10:05 PM
3	Timing and the amount of documentation	11/8/2017 5:24 PM
4	Block the potential skill workers to the fashion industry.	11/8/2017 12:13 PM
5	That we are limited to the talented pool in the US. When fashion is a global buisness and we need worldly perspective	11/8/2017 11:52 AM
6	Many qualified candidates who do not have work papers or where getting work visas for people is too expensive for our small company	11/8/2017 11:50 AM
7	employment	11/8/2017 11:43 AM
8	We want to ensure every individual involved with our business and industry is properly cared for and looked after by our government; be it in wages and healthcare	11/7/2017 10:23 AM
9	It is of 50% importance to me.	11/6/2017 10:44 PM
10	it narrows the search for new talent and experience. limits the world knowledge	11/6/2017 10:32 PM
11	na	11/6/2017 3:12 PM
12	My concern is that although I am employing Americans and built my business in the US, I might not be able to stay in the US after May 2018 if my green card is not approved by then. My investor visa cannot be renewed because I am not a majority shareholder anymore in the company I created.	11/6/2017 2:54 PM
13	None	11/6/2017 2:22 PM
14	It is prohibitively difficult to get a visa for a foreign national in the fashion industry.	11/6/2017 2:08 PM
15	The current immigration system does not work with small companies. The requirements are too high too sponsor workers from outside of the country.	11/6/2017 1:44 PM
16	Current immigration policy (pre-the current administration) has allowed us and many others to nurture domestic and international talent based on qualifications and requirements. Changes and threats to it including fear-mongering create instability, inconsistencies and lower morale for those affected directly and indirectly. All in all it threatens creative and commercial activity.	11/6/2017 1:08 PM
17	How it will impact the talent that is available for future and current positions.	11/6/2017 12:58 PM
18	For us, to be frank, with the new laws, in the end, nothing has changed as of today.	11/6/2017 12:36 PM
19	Uncertainty	11/6/2017 12:35 PM
20	It is challenging to secure a H-1B visa for foreign talent	11/6/2017 12:23 PM
21	Employees not granted working Visas.	11/6/2017 12:22 PM
22	Visa for foreign talent. DACA continuing.	11/6/2017 12:21 PM
23	Hiring foreign design talent, especially young talent, has proven to be a challenge in the past.	11/6/2017 12:20 PM
24	It does not affect me, i produce in Italy	11/6/2017 12:18 PM
25	It is very cost&time consuming to sponsor H-1B and O-1. Moreover we have no certainty on the outcome and the success rate percentage is going down and that is discouraging	11/6/2017 12:17 PM
26	Ease of attracting and retaining employees, regardless of current visa status.	11/6/2017 12:16 PM
27	fdsa	11/6/2017 11:25 AM

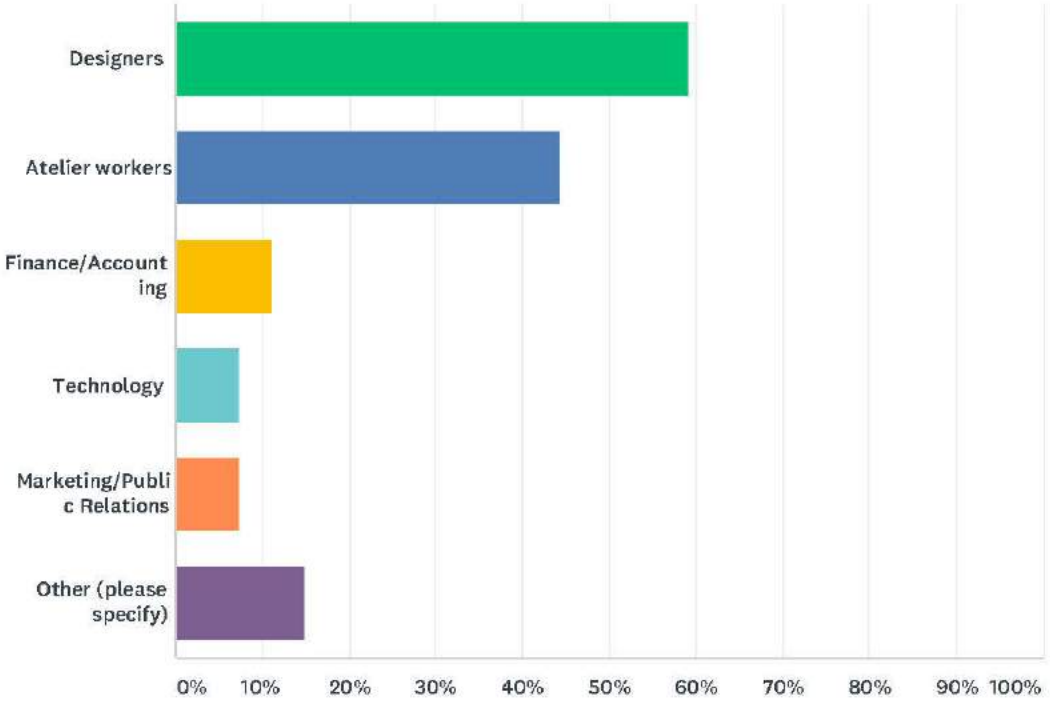
Q8 Have recent immigration policy changes such as DACA repeal, Immigration Ban, and suspension of the H-1B expedited process impacted your business. If yes, in what way?

Answered: 27 Skipped: 35

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Yes, because it's made potential customers think twice before traveling to the US.	11/9/2017 7:32 AM
2	we've seen a delay in H-1B processing	11/8/2017 10:05 PM
3	Yes - made the process more difficult	11/8/2017 5:24 PM
4	N/A	11/8/2017 12:13 PM
5	Yes. We wanted to hire a graduate from SCAD for our design team. The limited H1B quota stop that. It is a shame that someone that's invested four years of training in the US wasn't able to get a job because of this limitiations.	11/8/2017 11:52 AM
6	No	11/8/2017 11:50 AM
7	no	11/8/2017 11:43 AM
8	Not to our core business but absolutely with our tier 1 and tier 2 partners. People are unable to work or have been, or had family members, practically exiled. It's a violent and unfair system in place that takes away skilled workers from contributing to an important industry that has a major impact on our country's economy	11/7/2017 10:23 AM
9	No.	11/6/2017 10:44 PM
10	no	11/6/2017 10:32 PM
11	no	11/6/2017 3:12 PM
12	suspension of the H1B expedited process	11/6/2017 2:54 PM
13	No	11/6/2017 2:22 PM
14	I have had several very talented young designers have to move back to their countries because they were not able to attain a visa.	11/6/2017 2:08 PM
15	Not at this time, but we can forsee it becoming an issue in the future.	11/6/2017 1:44 PM
16	Luckily not at this time, but we are aware of many tenuous situations in the structures of our people we collaborate with and know.	11/6/2017 1:08 PM
17	No	11/6/2017 12:58 PM
18	no	11/6/2017 12:36 PM
19	Yes All approval process for H-1B and Green Card applications seem to have stopped	11/6/2017 12:35 PM
20	Not yet.	11/6/2017 12:23 PM
21	No	11/6/2017 12:22 PM
22	Talent having to return to country orleaveorganization. Stress levels and morale of team ashow these changes relate to them or their family.	11/6/2017 12:21 PM
23	Not at the moment.	11/6/2017 12:20 PM
24	no	11/6/2017 12:18 PM
25	Not currently but for sure in the future	11/6/2017 12:17 PM
26	Yes, we lost an employee because her H1B wasn't even reviewed in the lottery system, even though she spent $200K on a fashion education at an American university.	11/6/2017 12:16 PM
27	fdas	11/6/2017 11:25 AM

Q9 Which functional areas at your company have the highest demand for foreign workers (select all that apply)?

Answered: 27 Skipped: 35

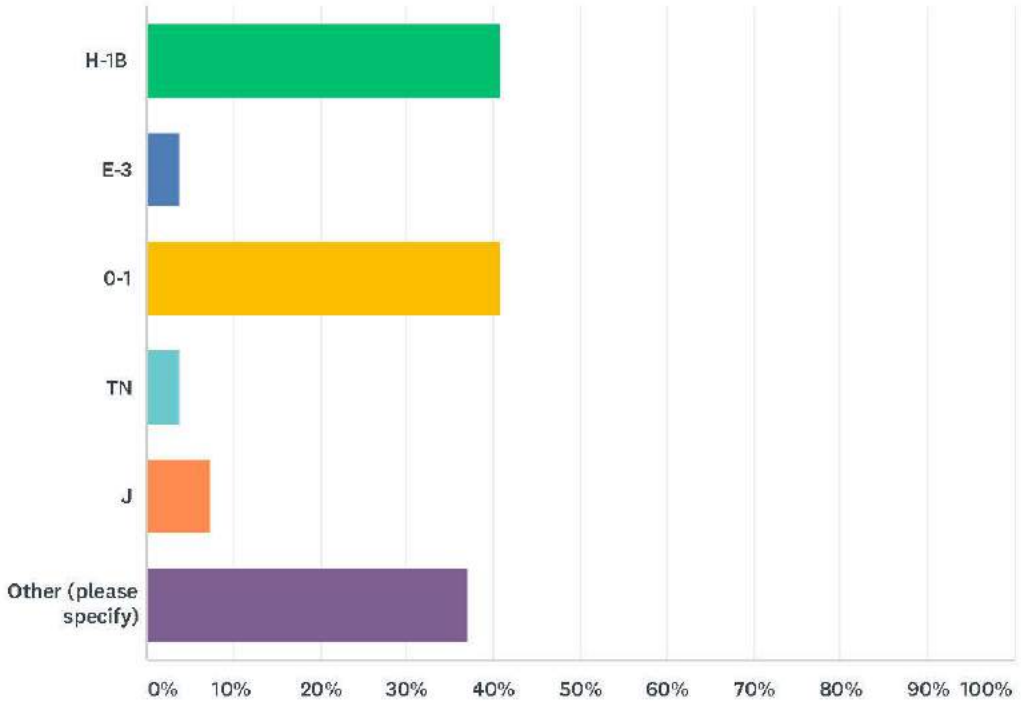


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Designers	59.26%	16
Atelier workers	44.44%	12
Finance/Accounting	11.11%	3
Technology	7.41%	2
Marketing/Public Relations	7.41%	2
Other (please specify)	14.81%	4
Total Respondents: 27		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Skilled fashion sewers, cutters and workers	11/8/2017 12:13 PM
2	all	11/6/2017 10:44 PM
3	Our entire company in some form	11/6/2017 12:21 PM
4	none	11/6/2017 12:18 PM

Q10 Which of the following employment based visas do you utilize (select all that apply):

Answered: 27 Skipped: 35



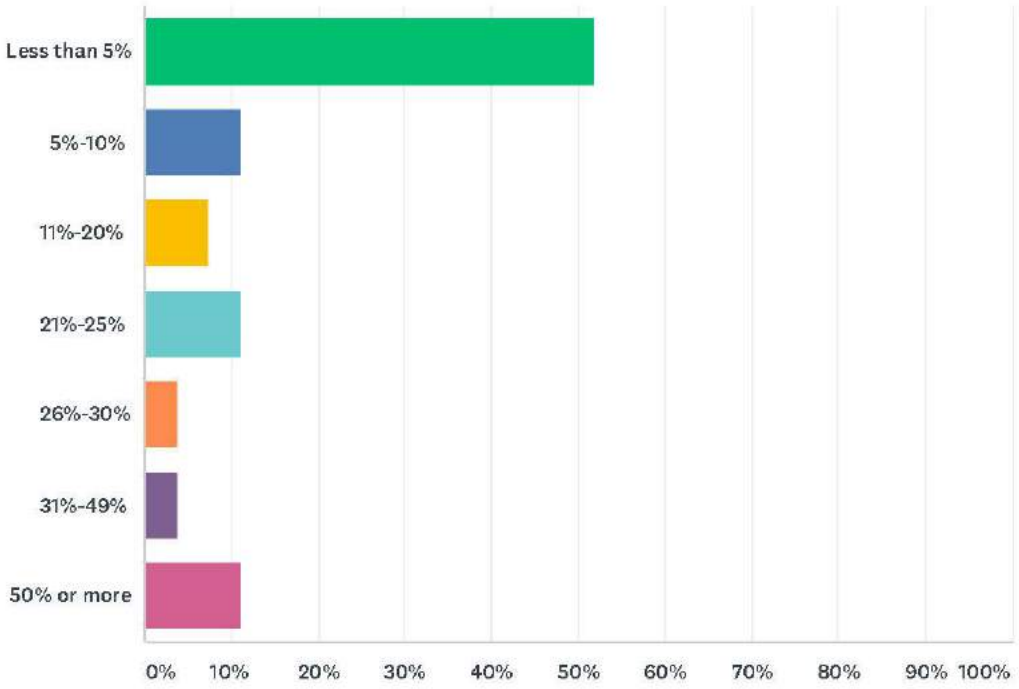
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
H-1B	40.74%	11
E-3	3.70%	1
O-1	40.74%	11
TN	3.70%	1
J	7.41%	2
Other (please specify)	37.04%	10
Total Respondents: 27		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	none	11/9/2017 7:32 AM
2	N/A	11/8/2017 12:13 PM
3	none	11/8/2017 11:50 AM
4	none	11/6/2017 10:44 PM
5	N/A	11/6/2017 10:32 PM
6	none	11/6/2017 3:12 PM
7	NA	11/6/2017 1:44 PM
8	Currently none	11/6/2017 1:08 PM

9	E-2	11/6/2017 12:36 PM
10	none	11/6/2017 12:18 PM

Q11 Which answer best describes the percentage of employees at your company currently utilizing an employment based visa?

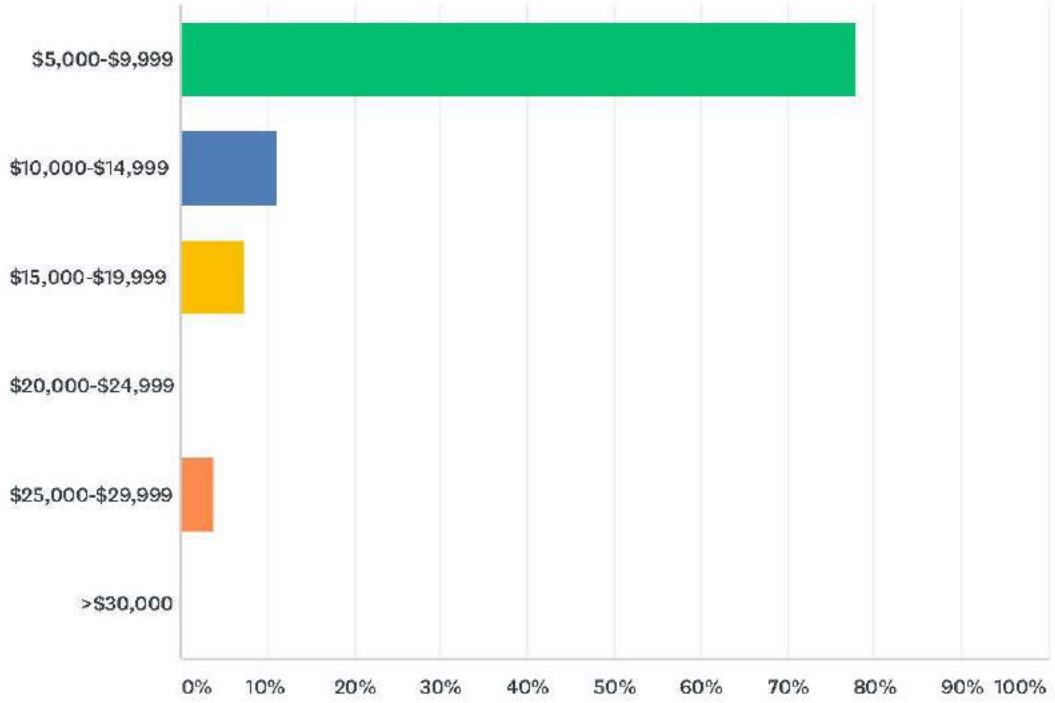
Answered: 27 Skipped: 35



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than 5%	51.85%	14
5%-10%	11.11%	3
11%-20%	7.41%	2
21%-25%	11.11%	3
26%-30%	3.70%	1
31%-49%	3.70%	1
50% or more	11.11%	3
TOTAL		27

Q12 How much does your company typically spend on legal expenses related to the visa process and interaction with the immigration system per employee?

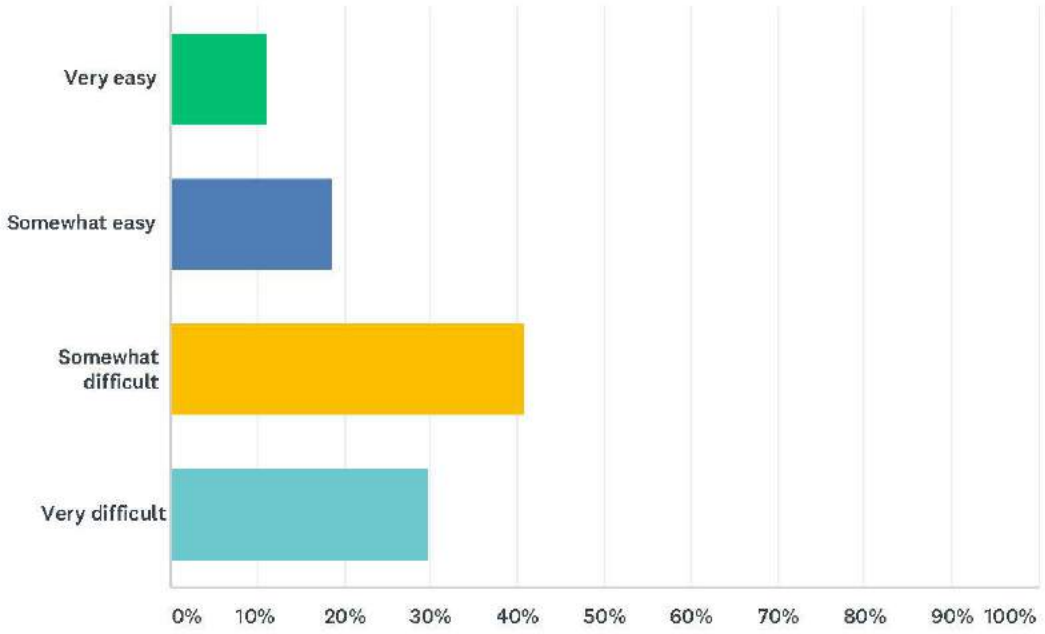
Answered: 27 Skipped: 35



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
$5,000-$9,999	77.78%	21
$10,000-$14,999	11.11%	3
$15,000-$19,999	7.41%	2
$20,000-$24,999	0.00%	0
$25,000-$29,999	3.70%	1
>$30,000	0.00%	0
TOTAL		27

Q13 Overall, how would you rate the ease or difficulty of hiring a foreign worker?

Answered: 27 Skipped: 35



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very easy	11.11%	3
Somewhat easy	18.52%	5
Somewhat difficult	40.74%	11
Very difficult	29.63%	8
TOTAL		27

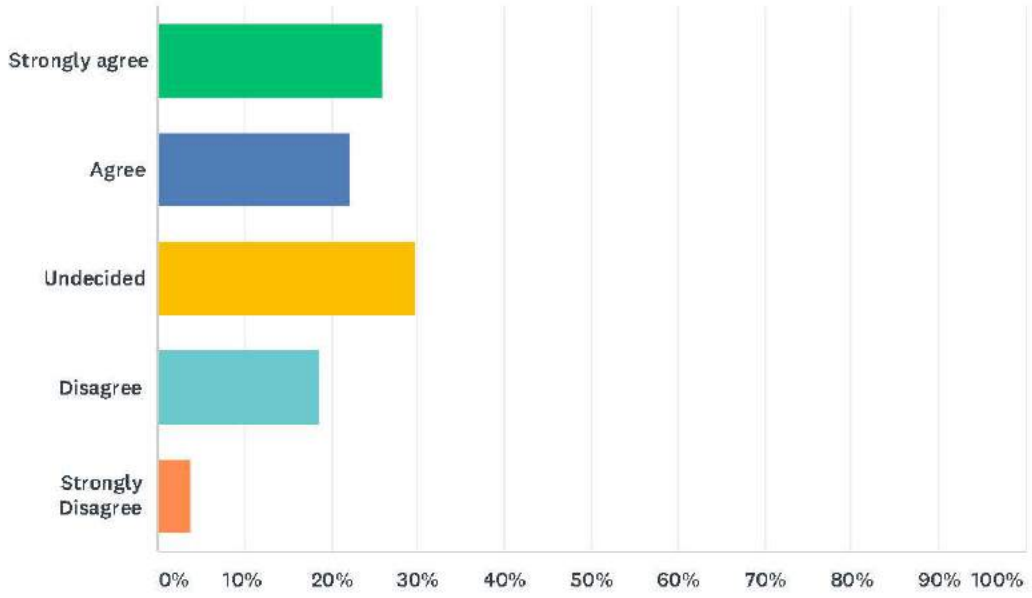
Q14 What is the total annual percentage of time spent by your human resources department and related employees on the visa process?

Answered: 27 Skipped: 35

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Last year less than 10 hours	11/9/2017 7:32 AM
2	10%	11/8/2017 10:05 PM
3	25%	11/8/2017 5:24 PM
4	N/A	11/8/2017 12:13 PM
5	Not much as we haven't been able to employee international talent	11/8/2017 11:52 AM
6	5%	11/8/2017 11:50 AM
7	small	11/8/2017 11:43 AM
8	0	11/7/2017 10:23 AM
9	tbd	11/6/2017 10:44 PM
10	N/A	11/6/2017 10:32 PM
11	not sure	11/6/2017 3:12 PM
12	N/A	11/6/2017 2:54 PM
13	15%	11/6/2017 2:22 PM
14	0	11/6/2017 2:08 PM
15	0	11/6/2017 1:44 PM
16	Currently none	11/6/2017 1:08 PM
17	30	11/6/2017 12:58 PM
18	it depends, if all required docs are in order, it does not take long. What takes time is the travel to the foreign embassy, to schedule an appointment.	11/6/2017 12:36 PM
19	10%	11/6/2017 12:35 PM
20	n/a it is up to the employee to secure their visa/	11/6/2017 12:23 PM
21	5%	11/6/2017 12:22 PM
22	5%?	11/6/2017 12:21 PM
23	In terms of entire time spent on HR by our team, approximately 5% is spent on the visa process.	11/6/2017 12:20 PM
24	none	11/6/2017 12:18 PM
25	10-15%	11/6/2017 12:17 PM
26	10%	11/6/2017 12:16 PM
27	fda	11/6/2017 11:25 AM

Q15 I have been unable to hire the best candidate for a job because of complications with the visa system.

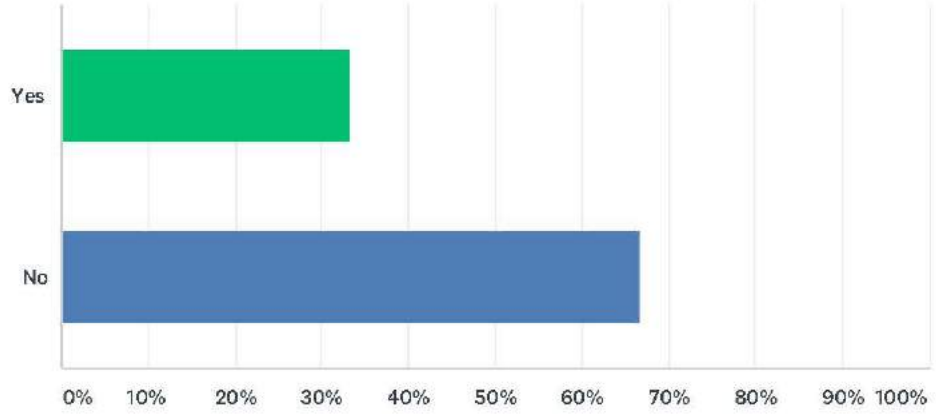
Answered: 27 Skipped: 35



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	25.93%	7
Agree	22.22%	6
Undecided	29.63%	8
Disagree	18.52%	5
Strongly Disagree	3.70%	1
TOTAL		27

Q16 I have or will have to let go of an employee because of our current immigration policies (this could be interns who did not win the H-1B lottery, or DACA recipients who will lose their work authorization).

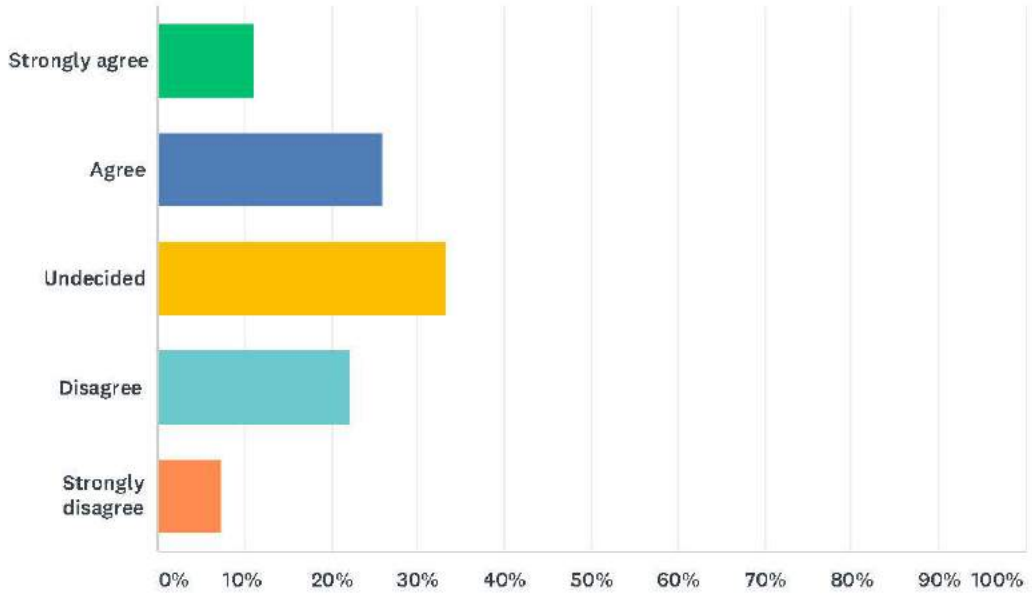
Answered: 27 Skipped: 35



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	33.33%	9
No	66.67%	18
TOTAL		27

Q17 Not being able to hire a foreign worker has hurt my business financially.

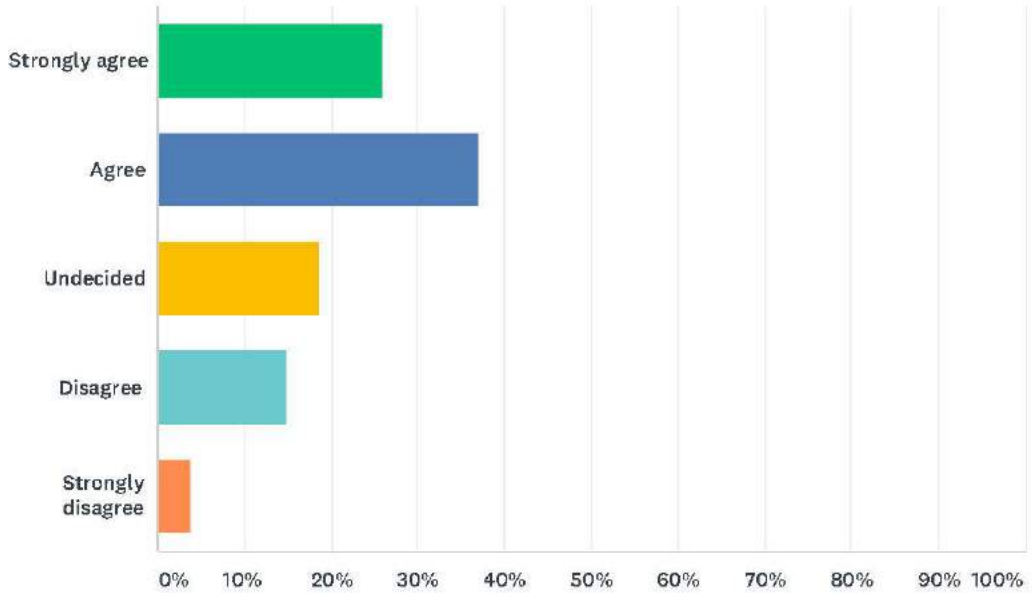
Answered: 27 Skipped: 35



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	11.11%	3
Agree	25.93%	7
Undecided	33.33%	9
Disagree	22.22%	6
Strongly disagree	7.41%	2
TOTAL		27

Q18 Uncertainty with the immigration system has impacted my ability to recruit foreign talent and/or foreign students.

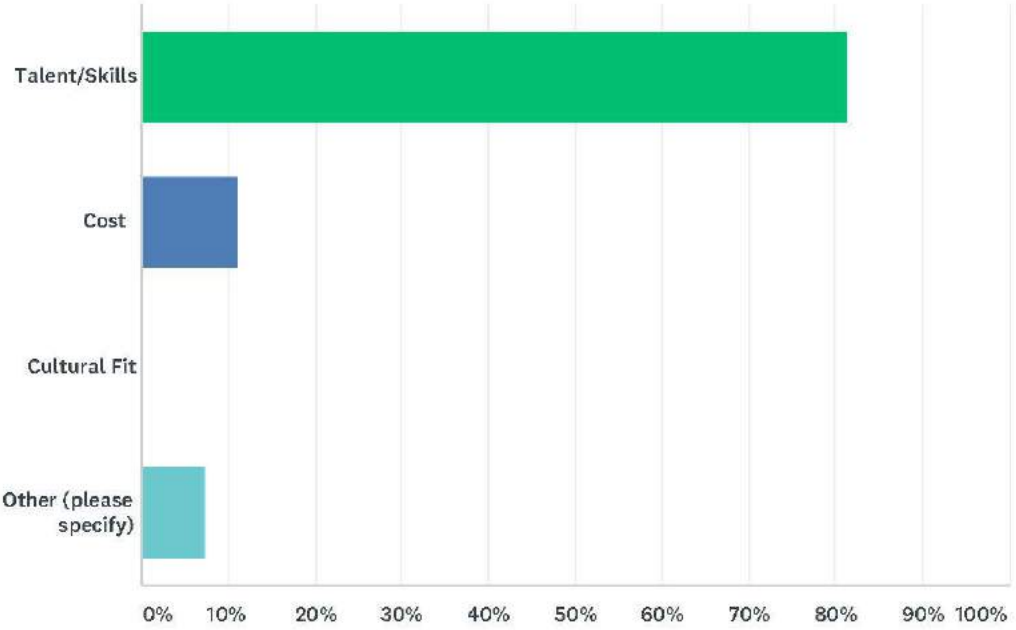
Answered: 27 Skipped: 35



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	25.93%	7
Agree	37.04%	10
Undecided	18.52%	5
Disagree	14.81%	4
Strongly disagree	3.70%	1
TOTAL		27

Q19 What is the main factor that you consider when deciding to hire a foreign worker?

Answered: 27 Skipped: 35

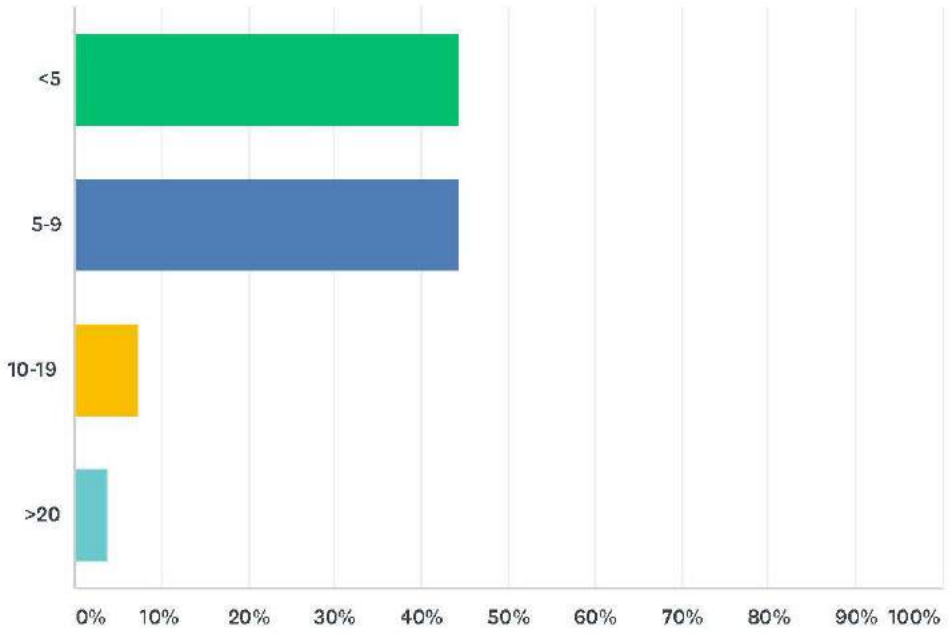


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Talent/Skills	81.48%	22
Cost	11.11%	3
Cultural Fit	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	7.41%	2
TOTAL		27

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	i have a small company and do not need to hire	11/6/2017 12:18 PM
2	fda	11/6/2017 11:25 AM

Q20 How many jobs are created around one domestic photo shoot? (i.e. a foreign or domestic model in a U.S. photo shoot or ad campaign requires hiring: photographer, makeup artist, set designer, digital team, marketing team, public relations team. etc. Please define "jobs created" as someone hired for the shoot outside of your company.)

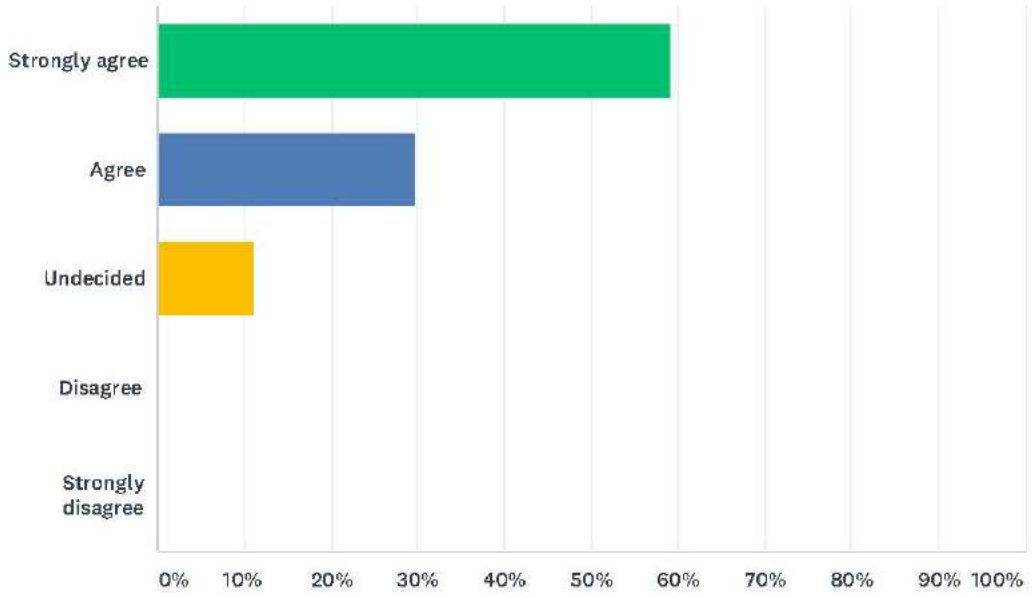
Answered: 27 Skipped: 35



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
<5	44.44%	12
5-9	44.44%	12
10-19	7.41%	2
>20	3.70%	1
TOTAL		27

Q21 Additional resources are needed to help educate employers about how to navigate the current immigration system.

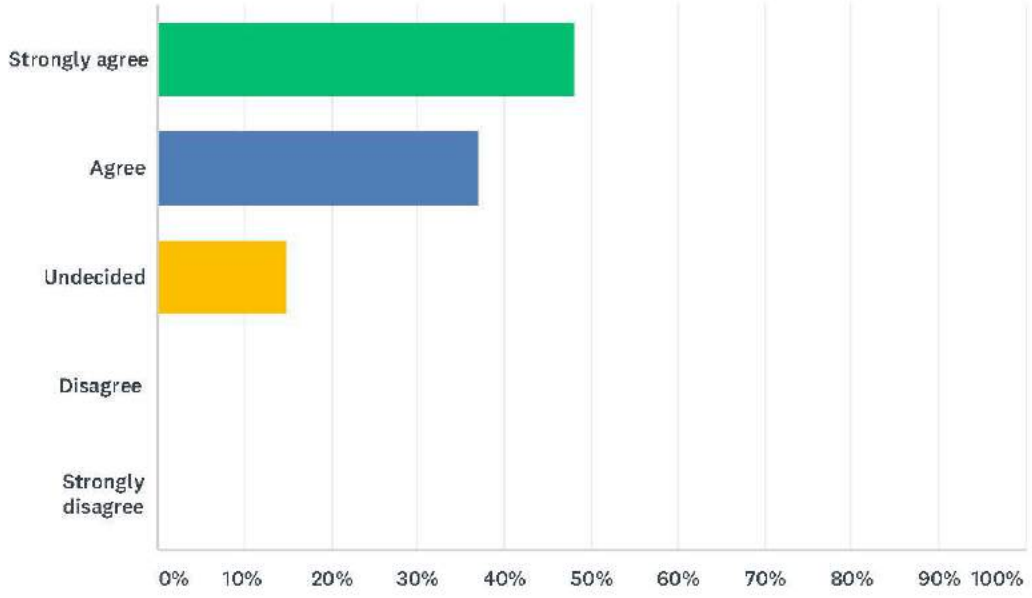
Answered: 27 Skipped: 35



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	59.26%	16
Agree	29.63%	8
Undecided	11.11%	3
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		27

Q22 Additional resources are needed to help advise foreign or undocumented graduating students who wish to work in the United States.

Answered: 27 Skipped: 35



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	48.15%	13
Agree	37.04%	10
Undecided	14.81%	4
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		27

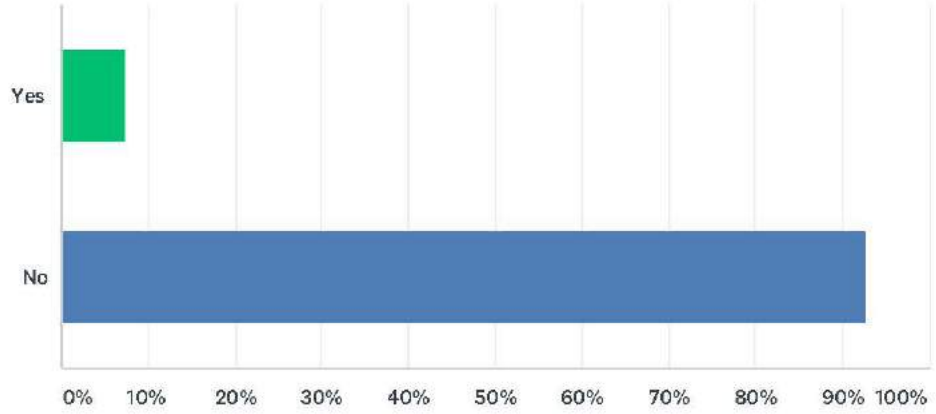
Q23 What are the top two changes or reforms to the immigration system you would most like to see? Please specifically include legislation or policy changes such as expanded H-1B visas or Pass the Dream Act, if applicable.

Answered: 27 Skipped: 35

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	NA	11/9/2017 7:32 AM
2	Expanded H-1B and Pass Dream Act.	11/8/2017 10:05 PM
3	expedited H-1 not on a lottery basis	11/8/2017 5:24 PM
4	H-1B visas expansion.	11/8/2017 12:13 PM
5	Expand the quota for H-1B and Pass the Dream Act.	11/8/2017 11:52 AM
6	Expand H-1B Visas; Pass DACA	11/8/2017 11:50 AM
7	no answer	11/8/2017 11:43 AM
8	n/a	11/7/2017 10:23 AM
9	open	11/6/2017 10:44 PM
10	Pass the Dream Act	11/6/2017 10:32 PM
11	n/a	11/6/2017 3:12 PM
12	expanded H1B	11/6/2017 2:54 PM
13	None	11/6/2017 2:22 PM
14	expanded h-1b and O Visas	11/6/2017 2:08 PM
15	Pass the dream act, that would be the most important at this time.	11/6/2017 1:44 PM
16	Pass the Dream Act, Ensure and communicate that Immigration is friendly, not scary, to people with families.	11/6/2017 1:08 PM
17	1. Pass the Dream Act	11/6/2017 12:58 PM
18	Pass the Dream Act.	11/6/2017 12:36 PM
19	Certainty	11/6/2017 12:35 PM
20	Pass the dream act and ct the red tape from h1-b visas	11/6/2017 12:23 PM
21	Easier validation of Visas, Encouragement of foreigners to apply for US jobs	11/6/2017 12:22 PM
22	Pass dream..save DACA Make H-1B visa fair and simpler butnotnecessarily expanded	11/6/2017 12:21 PM
23	Expanded H-1B and O-1 visas.	11/6/2017 12:20 PM
24	they need to give jobs to the foreign students that are being educated here and do away with the lottery so well vetted immigrants are allowed to work in the US	11/6/2017 12:18 PM
25	-Expanded H-1B visas -A fund offered to business employing foreign employees to ease costs	11/6/2017 12:17 PM
26	Expanded H1B visas, Pass the Dream Act	11/6/2017 12:16 PM
27	dfsafa	11/6/2017 11:25 AM

Q24 Have you, or someone you know in your industry, applied for OPT (Optional Practical Training) under the "STEM exception" (Science Technology Engineering Mathematics) as a designer?

Answered: 27 Skipped: 35



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	7.41%	2
No	92.59%	25
TOTAL		27

Q25 What happened?

Answered: 27 Skipped: 35

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	NA	11/9/2017 7:32 AM
2	N/A	11/8/2017 10:05 PM
3	N/a	11/8/2017 5:24 PM
4	N/A	11/8/2017 12:13 PM
5	They got the OPT but after they got an offer from our company to get and H1B. The quota was limited the candidate had to go back to his country and eventually probably move to Canada or Europe	11/8/2017 11:52 AM
6	NA	11/8/2017 11:50 AM
7	nothing	11/8/2017 11:43 AM
8	N/A	11/7/2017 10:23 AM
9	n/a	11/6/2017 10:44 PM
10	N/A	11/6/2017 10:32 PM
11	n/a	11/6/2017 3:12 PM
12	-	11/6/2017 2:54 PM
13	N/A	11/6/2017 2:22 PM
14	they were able to stay for one year and then had to leave the country	11/6/2017 2:08 PM
15	NA	11/6/2017 1:44 PM
16	N/A	11/6/2017 1:08 PM
17	My above answer is no, not recently.	11/6/2017 12:58 PM
18	Since none applied under the "STEM" exception, we can't tell what happened. Or do I misread your question?	11/6/2017 12:36 PM
19	NA	11/6/2017 12:35 PM
20	n/a	11/6/2017 12:23 PM
21	.	11/6/2017 12:22 PM
22	N/a	11/6/2017 12:21 PM
23	N/A	11/6/2017 12:20 PM
24	nothing	11/6/2017 12:18 PM
25	n/a	11/6/2017 12:17 PM
26	n/a	11/6/2017 12:16 PM
27	fdsa	11/6/2017 11:25 AM

Appendix B

CFDA x FWD.us

Immigration Survey Results

April 2017

Summary of Results

Total Responses: 60

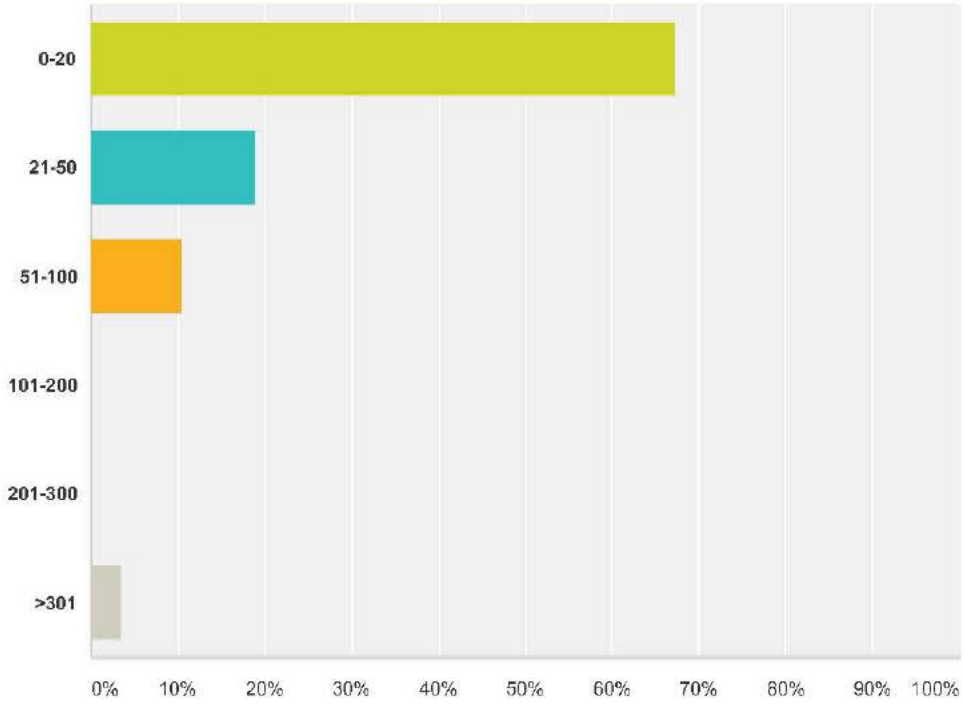
- About 78% of respondents are located in New York (Q 2).
- About 97% of respondents are headquartered in the US (Q 3).
- Foreign talent is very important to 48% of respondents (Q 5).
- 82% of respondents hire foreign workers for their talent/skills (Q 16).
- 60% of respondents need foreign workers for the design function of their company (Q 7).
- 45% of respondents have found it difficult to hire foreign workers because they are uneducated about the immigration system (Q 15).

Top concerns with the existing immigration system are:

- Lack of access to top talent
- The inability for current employees to stay in the US
- High costs
- Difficult/complicated process

Q1 Number of employees:

Answered: 58 Skipped: 2



Answer Choices	Responses	
0-20	67.24%	39
21-50	18.97%	11
51-100	10.34%	6
101-200	0.00%	0
201-300	0.00%	0
>301	3.45%	2
Total		58

Q2 Location(s) of office(s):

Answered: 60 Skipped: 0

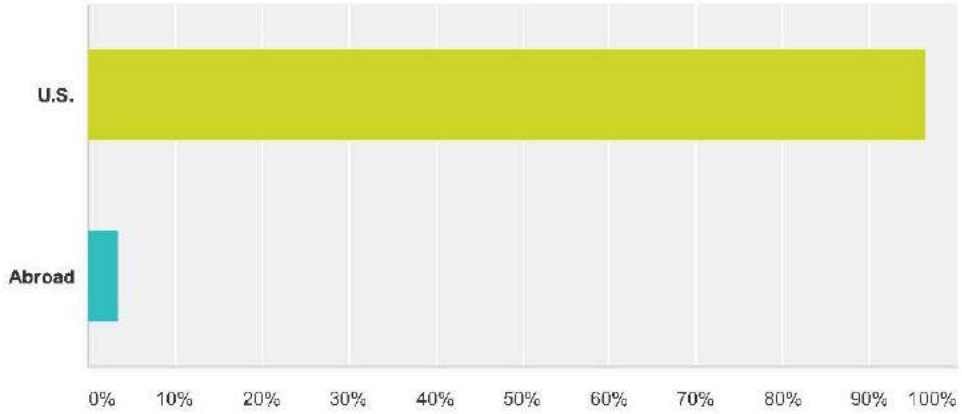
#	Responses	Date
1	New York	2/15/2017 3:04 PM
2	New York	2/14/2017 10:20 AM
3	NY	2/13/2017 12:46 PM
4	fdsf	2/10/2017 10:40 AM
5	NYC, Japan, China	2/9/2017 1:25 PM
6	151 West 19th street, 12th floor NY, NY 10011	2/9/2017 10:55 AM
7	New York City, Flatiron District	2/7/2017 3:08 PM
8	Brooklyn, NY	2/7/2017 3:08 PM
9	2	2/7/2017 1:08 PM
10	NYC	2/7/2017 1:01 PM
11	New York City	2/7/2017 11:51 AM
12	New York City	2/7/2017 11:23 AM
13	Manhatten	2/7/2017 11:12 AM
14	Soho, NYC	2/7/2017 6:53 AM
15	USA India	2/7/2017 5:29 AM
16	Manhattan 7th and 27th	2/7/2017 5:00 AM
17	Ny, LA	2/7/2017 3:45 AM
18	New Jersey New York City Ft Lauderdale	2/6/2017 10:05 PM
19	Los Angeles	2/6/2017 9:45 PM
20	Noho	2/6/2017 9:11 PM
21	Texas	2/6/2017 8:48 PM
22	nyc	2/6/2017 8:15 PM
23	los angeles, new york	2/6/2017 7:11 PM
24	Miami	2/6/2017 7:09 PM
25	225 West 35 th New York NY 10001	2/6/2017 6:47 PM
26	NYC	2/6/2017 6:10 PM
27	Westchester	2/6/2017 5:58 PM
28	Lower East Side, NYC	2/6/2017 5:49 PM
29	New York, NY	2/6/2017 5:45 PM
30	NYC	2/6/2017 5:43 PM
31	New York	2/6/2017 5:40 PM
32	Mexico and the USA	2/6/2017 5:40 PM
33	2	2/6/2017 5:39 PM
34	Vancouver CA	2/6/2017 5:37 PM
35	Florence, Alabama	2/6/2017 5:36 PM

36	New York City	2/6/2017 5:29 PM
37	7 Bond street. NYC NY 10012	2/6/2017 5:23 PM
38	NYC	2/6/2017 5:20 PM
39	New York, NY	2/6/2017 5:18 PM
40	New York	2/6/2017 5:16 PM
41	251 West 39th Street New York, NY 10018 (Garment District, Manhattan)	2/6/2017 5:12 PM
42	Tribeca, New York	2/6/2017 5:09 PM
43	new york	2/6/2017 5:07 PM
44	New York city	2/6/2017 5:06 PM
45	new york	2/6/2017 5:03 PM
46	Spring Lake, NJ	2/6/2017 5:01 PM
47	New York City	2/6/2017 4:58 PM
48	Greenpoint, bk	2/6/2017 4:57 PM
49	New York (Manhattan) , NY Bergen , NJ	2/6/2017 4:56 PM
50	New York	2/6/2017 4:55 PM
51	los angles california	2/6/2017 4:53 PM
52	New York, NY	2/6/2017 4:53 PM
53	New York city	2/6/2017 4:51 PM
54	New york	2/6/2017 4:51 PM
55	Nyc	2/6/2017 4:51 PM
56	28 Marcy Avenue, Brooklyn NYC 11211	2/6/2017 4:51 PM
57	NYC	2/6/2017 4:24 PM
58	nyc	2/6/2017 2:48 PM
59	New York	2/6/2017 1:12 PM
60	asdg	2/6/2017 1:07 PM

About 78% are located in New York.

Q3 Where are you headquartered?

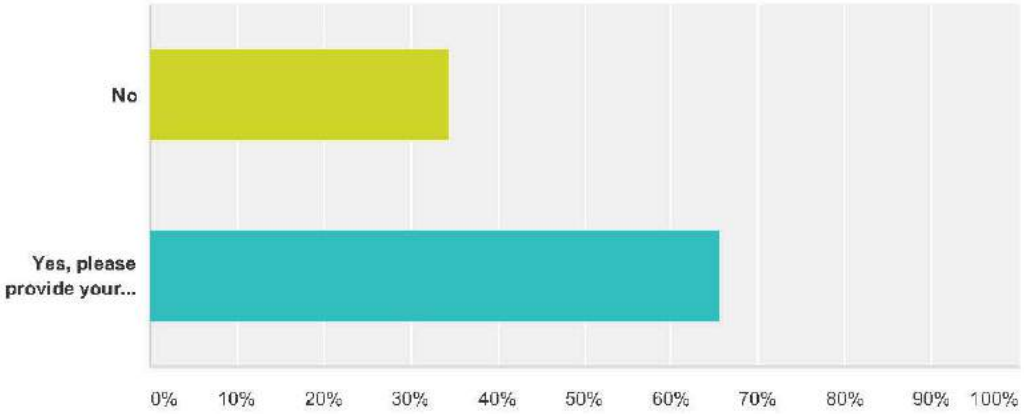
Answered: 58 Skipped: 2



Answer Choices	Responses	
U.S.	96.55%	56
Abroad	3.45%	2
Total		58

Q4 Can we follow up with you for comment?

Answered: 58 Skipped: 2

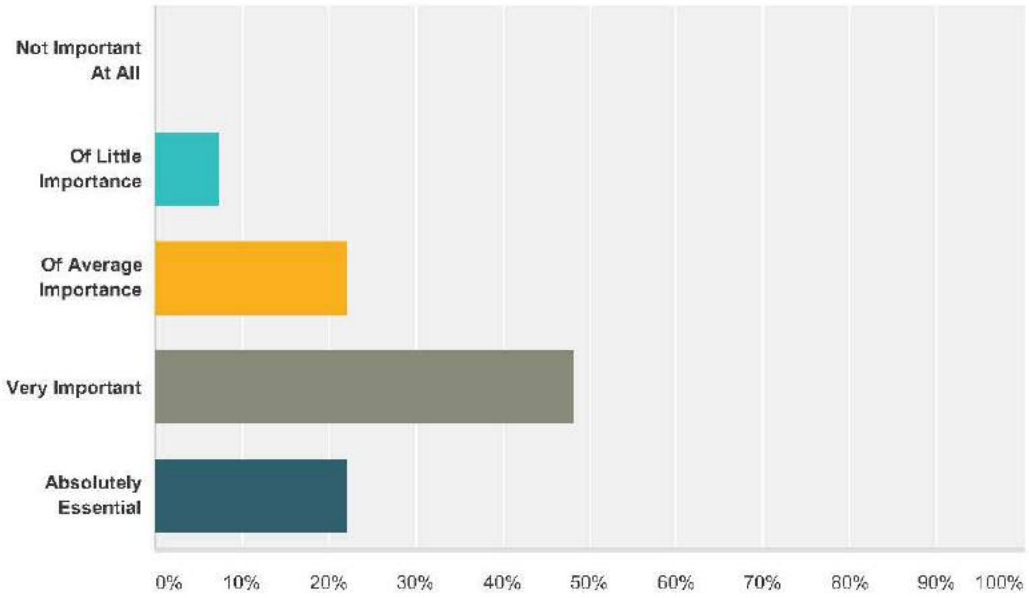


Answer Choices	Responses	
No	34.48%	20
Yes, please provide your email:	65.52%	38
Total		58

foxs@newschool.edu
jim@kule.com
colette@colettemalouf.com
mpatmos@mpatmos.com
lisa@lulufrost.com
monica@sea-ny.com
peterchan@sunrisestudiofashion.com
nicole@colovoscollection.com
jonathan_farmer@fitnyc.edu
coomi@coomi.com
stephanie@ilovelibertine.com
hannayoo7@gmail.com
sara@dezsosara.com
nrodriguez@narciscorodriguez.com
raan@apolisglobal.com
quido@cosabella.com
rsavage@nanettelepore.com
bcosgrove@svilu.com
kathryn@lizziefortunato.com
tricia@lelarose.com
Cheryl Finnegan- finn@vsadesigns.com
maria@zeromariacornejo.com
benstubbington@gmail.com
alabama@alabamachanin.com
jennifer@fleurdumal.com
selima@selimaoptique.com
weiyi@cushnieetochs.com
arbib.d@gmail.com
bbzipper@mac.com
jschlottmann@dereklam.com
cathy@cathywaterman.com
patrik@patrikervell.com
albertusstudio@me.com

Q5 How important is foreign talent to the success and growth of your business?

Answered: 27 Skipped: 33



Answer Choices	Responses	
Not Important At All	0.00%	0
Of Little Importance	7.41%	2
Of Average Importance	22.22%	6
Very Important	48.15%	13
Absolutely Essential	22.22%	6
Total		27

Q6 What is your top concern(s) with our existing immigration system as it relates to your company and industry?

Answered: 23 Skipped: 37

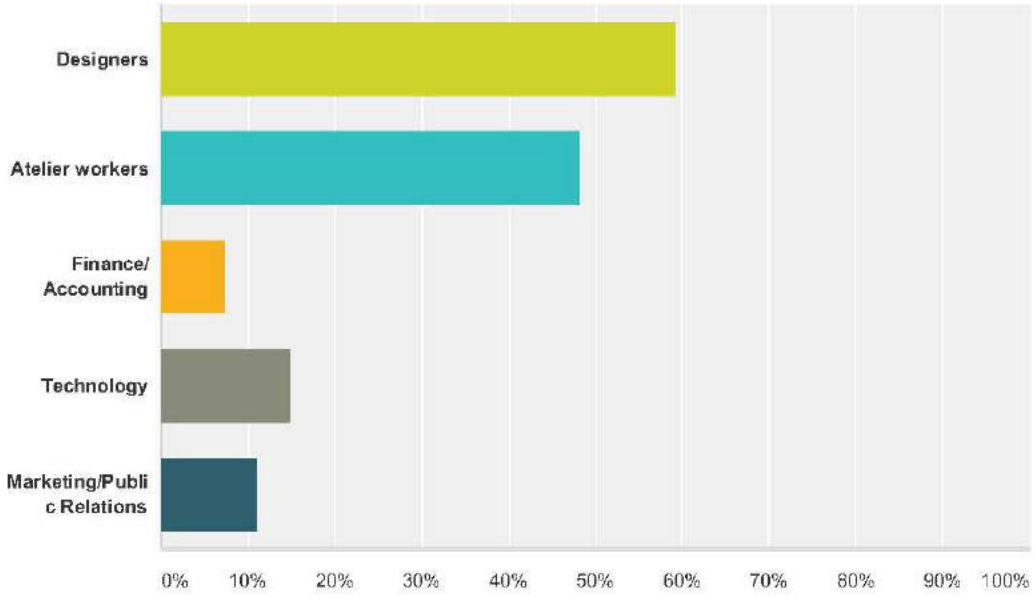
#	Responses	Date
1	being unable to hire full-time international talents	2/15/2017 3:07 PM
2	Keeping production employees	2/13/2017 12:48 PM
3	Diversity is a core value and we always hire people of different nationalities.	2/9/2017 1:33 PM
4	one of my employees is living here on an h1b visa sponsored by me	2/9/2017 11:02 AM
5	With excellent international candidates, my top concerns are difficulties processing visas, unnecessarily long wait times for people to get visa confirmation and reissuing, and unnecessary legal fees associated with visa obtaining are all a nuisance and deter from business as usual.	2/7/2017 3:15 PM
6	We produce in LA, and there are Mexican immigrants working at nearly every one of our suppliers, if not all of them.	2/7/2017 3:10 PM
7	Will be less skilled workers available.	2/7/2017 11:55 AM
8	Hard to retain people when their O1 (?) visa runs out	2/7/2017 9:47 AM
9	none. personally however the trump administration's actions are repugnant and anti-american.	2/7/2017 6:57 AM
10	Getting the best faculty and student body	2/7/2017 5:05 AM
11	how to retain good talent in the US to produce goods here and keep the cost affordable	2/6/2017 7:12 PM
12	People leaving the country for a visit and then unable to return.	2/6/2017 6:52 PM
13	-It hinders talent from abroad being integrated into USA / CA -Talent has to be more mature to reach credentials for visa and to prove they cannot be found in US / CA - Cost - Time	2/6/2017 5:46 PM
14	I have Mexicans on working visas in the US and the reverse - Americans with working visas in MX. I am also concerned about bringing product back and forth.	2/6/2017 5:44 PM
15	it is already hard to	2/6/2017 5:41 PM
16	It doesn't effect our company directly but it does effect how American companies are views in the international market and that is very upsetting.	2/6/2017 5:39 PM
17	I have two designers on a work visa and I'm a green card holder. I'm concerned about how changes will impact their ability to stay in the country, as well as being able to hire future foreign talent.	2/6/2017 5:35 PM
18	We are giving a pass to illegal immigrants while many who follow the rules and pay taxes, are paying thousands in legal fees and spending years going through the process. One employee was closing in on her green card when her sponsor went out of business. We are now starting the process over, but it is a taxing process on the employer as well. She has been here for 13 years paying taxes and is a valuable member of our team, the city and the country. I wish it wasn't so difficult.	2/6/2017 5:23 PM
19	The existing immigration system makes it financially difficult to invest in younger talent, due to salary minimums that are higher than the industry's average as well as expensive visa lawyer fees. It is easier to justify hiring a foreign worker for a more senior position.	2/6/2017 5:20 PM
20	Customs increase, bans on products from certain countries entering. Traveling back and forth to certain places, tax increases on products.	2/6/2017 5:14 PM
21	That new talent will not be allowed to enter the US	2/6/2017 5:09 PM
22	delays and unpredictability of process	2/6/2017 5:01 PM
23	Worry that visas will more difficult to obtain with the current administration	2/6/2017 4:56 PM

Top concerns:

- Access to top talent
- Inability for current employees to stay in the US

Q7 Which functional areas at your company have the highest demand for foreign workers (select all that apply)?

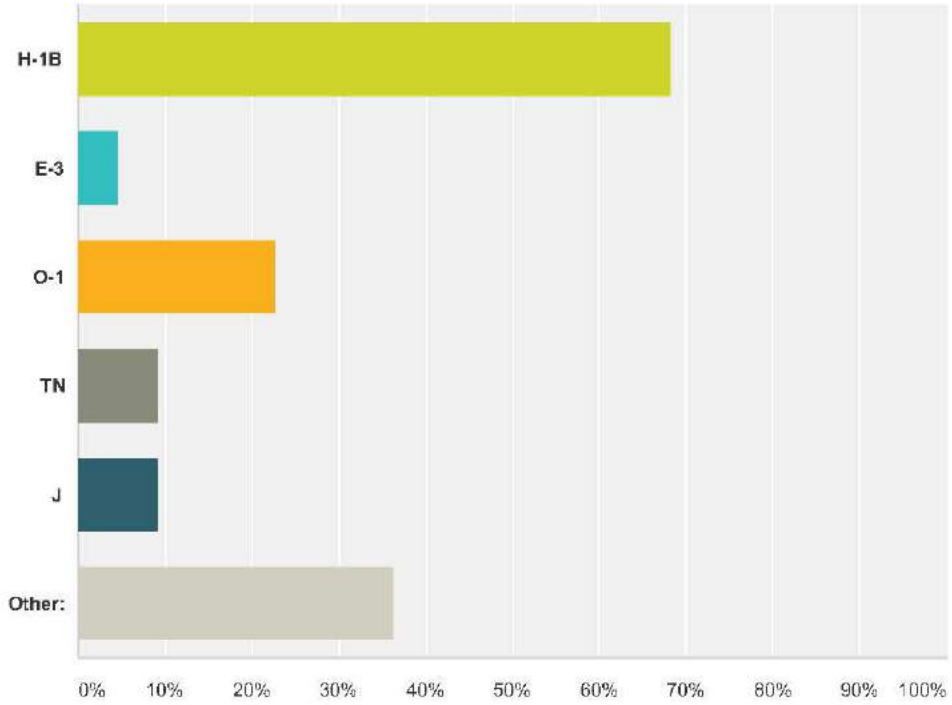
Answered: 27 Skipped: 33



Answer Choices	Responses	
Designers	59.26%	16
Atelier workers	48.15%	13
Finance/ Accounting	7.41%	2
Technology	14.81%	4
Marketing/Public Relations	11.11%	3
Total Respondents: 27		

Q8 Which of the following employment based visas do you utilize (select all that apply):

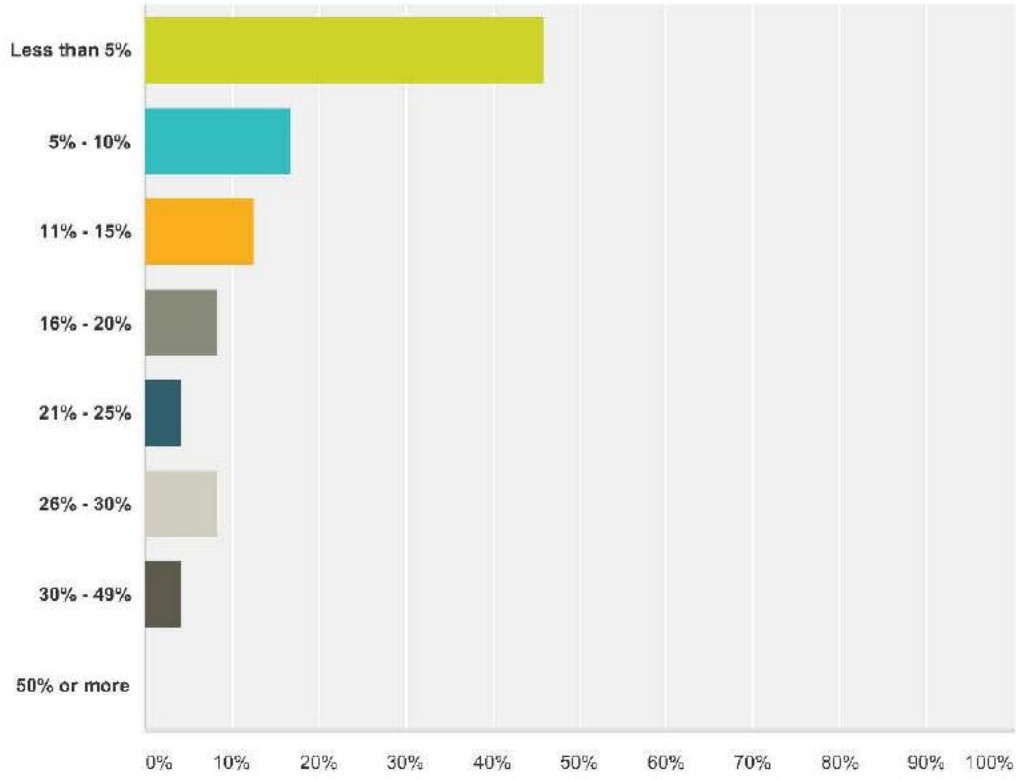
Answered: 22 Skipped: 38



Answer Choices	Responses	
H-1B	68.18%	15
E-3	4.55%	1
O-1	22.73%	5
TN	9.09%	2
J	9.09%	2
Other:	36.36%	8
Total Respondents: 22		

Q9 Which answer best describes the percentage of employees at your company currently utilizing an employment based visa?

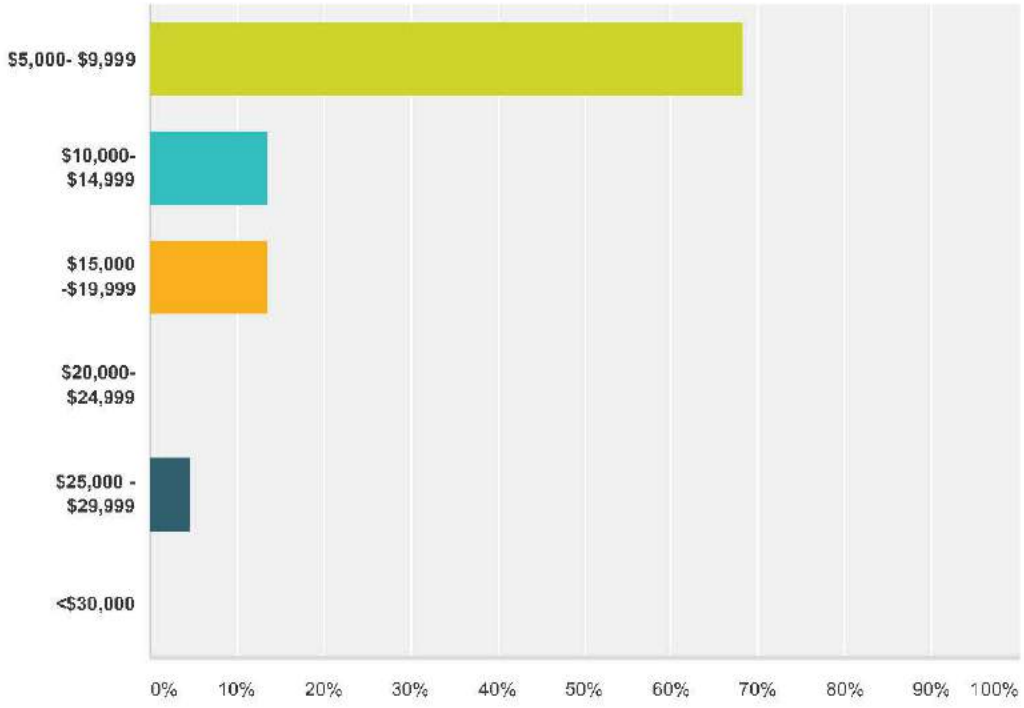
Answered: 24 Skipped: 36



Answer Choices	Responses	
Less than 5%	45.83%	11
5% - 10%	16.67%	4
11% - 15%	12.50%	3
16% - 20%	8.33%	2
21% - 25%	4.17%	1
26% - 30%	8.33%	2
30% - 49%	4.17%	1
50% or more	0.00%	0
Total		24

Q10 How much does your company typically spend on legal expenses related to the visa process and interaction with the immigration system per employee?

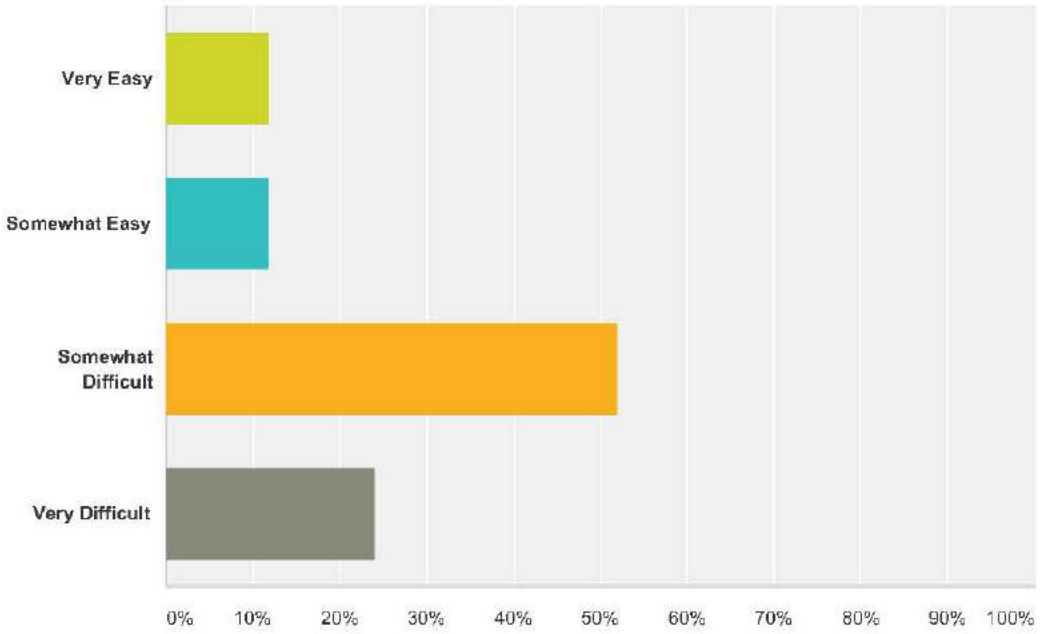
Answered: 22 Skipped: 38



Answer Choices	Responses	
$5,000- $9,999	68.18%	15
$10,000- $14,999	13.64%	3
$15,000 -$19,999	13.64%	3
$20,000- $24,999	0.00%	0
$25,000 - $29,999	4.55%	1
<$30,000	0.00%	0
Total		22

Q11 Overall, how would you rate the ease or difficulty of hiring a foreign worker?

Answered: 25 Skipped: 35



Answer Choices	Responses	
Very Easy	12.00%	3
Somewhat Easy	12.00%	3
Somewhat Difficult	52.00%	13
Very Difficult	24.00%	6
Total		25

Q12 What is the total annual percentage of time spent by your human resources department and related employees on the visa process?

Answered: 18 Skipped: 42

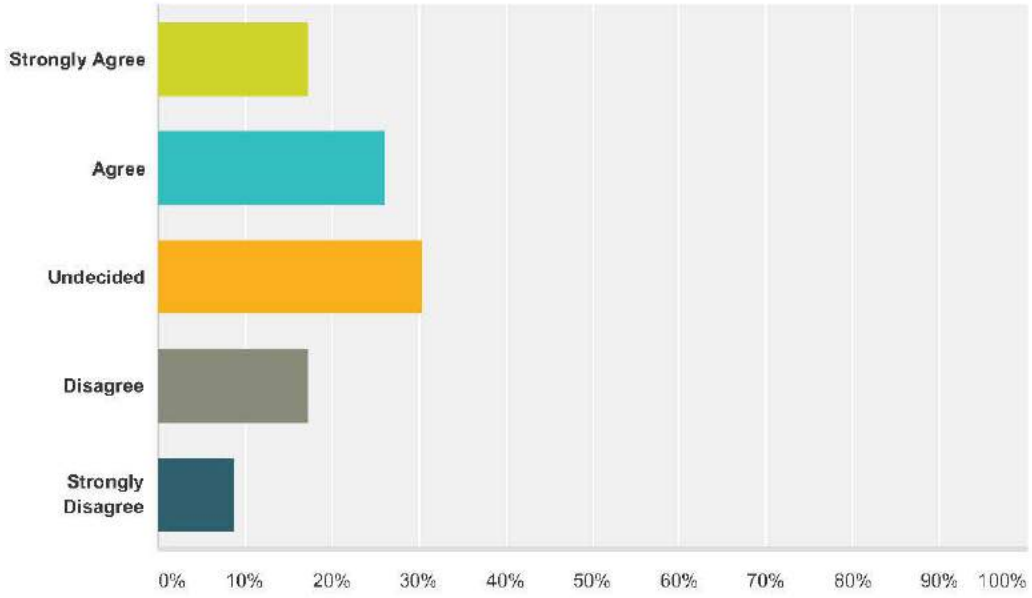
#	Responses	Date
1	15%	2/15/2017 3:07 PM
2	5%	2/9/2017 1:33 PM
3	20%	2/9/2017 11:02 AM
4	15% of time annually	2/7/2017 3:15 PM
5	N/A	2/7/2017 11:55 AM
6	$0	2/7/2017 6:57 AM
7	2%	2/6/2017 6:52 PM
8	Tbd	2/6/2017 5:46 PM
9	10-20 hours	2/6/2017 5:44 PM
10	Less than 10 hours	2/6/2017 5:39 PM
11	5%?	2/6/2017 5:35 PM
12	Negligible!	2/6/2017 5:20 PM
13	20%	2/6/2017 5:18 PM
14	I do not have employees on visas	2/6/2017 5:14 PM
15	very little	2/6/2017 5:09 PM
16	2%	2/6/2017 5:09 PM
17	5%	2/6/2017 5:01 PM
18	Not much	2/6/2017 4:56 PM

Overall consensus:

- Not much time is spent on the visa process.

Q13 I have been unable to hire the best candidate for a job because of complications with the visa system.

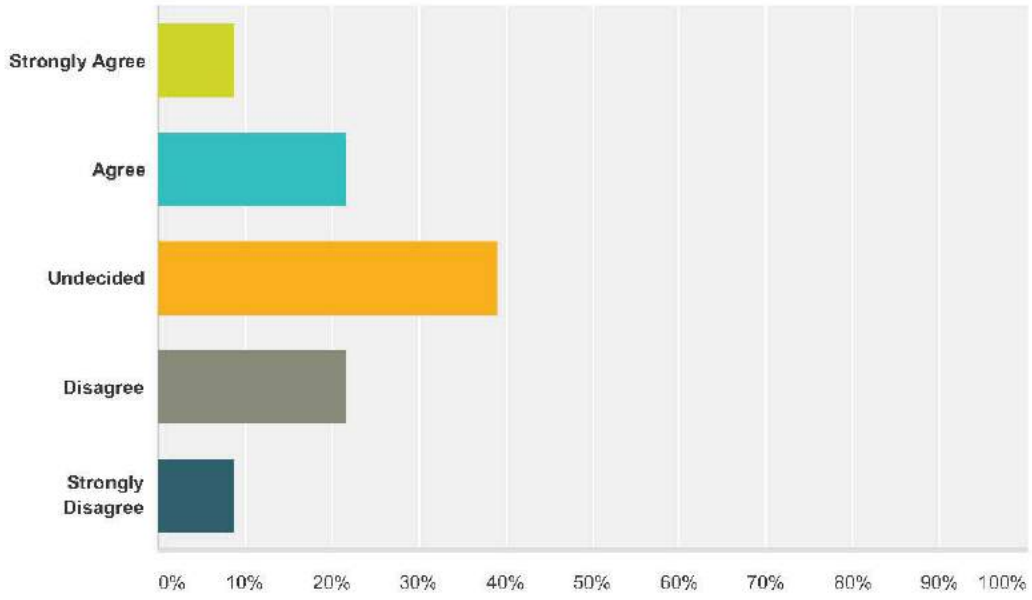
Answered: 23 Skipped: 37



Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	17.39%	4
Agree	26.09%	6
Undecided	30.43%	7
Disagree	17.39%	4
Strongly Disagree	8.70%	2
Total		23

Q14 Not being able to hire a foreign worker has hurt my business financially.

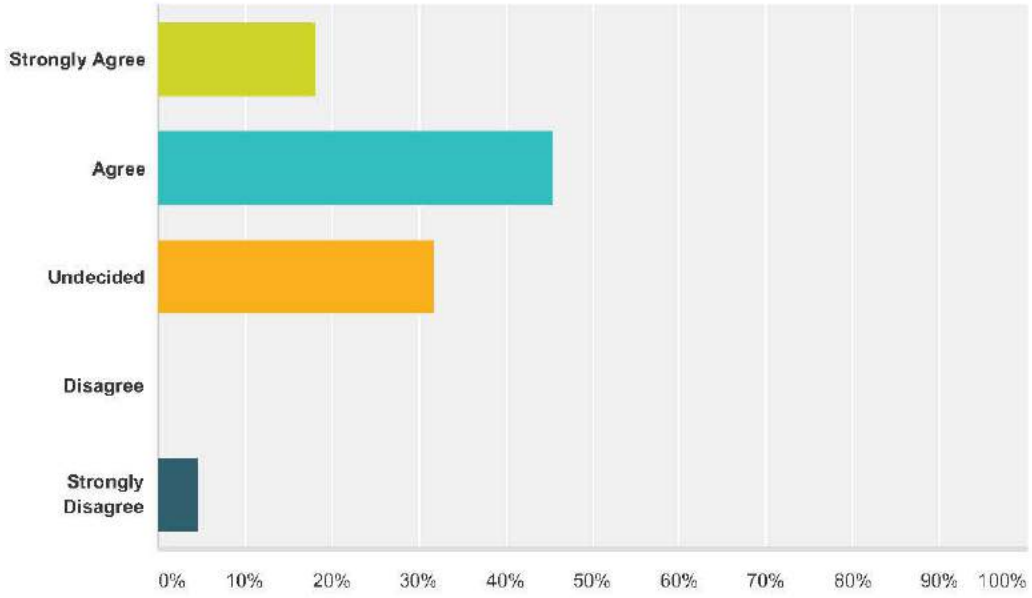
Answered: 23 Skipped: 37



Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	8.70%	2
Agree	21.74%	5
Undecided	39.13%	9
Disagree	21.74%	5
Strongly Disagree	8.70%	2
Total		23

Q15 Uncertainty with the immigration system has impacted my ability to recruit foreign talent and/or foreign students.

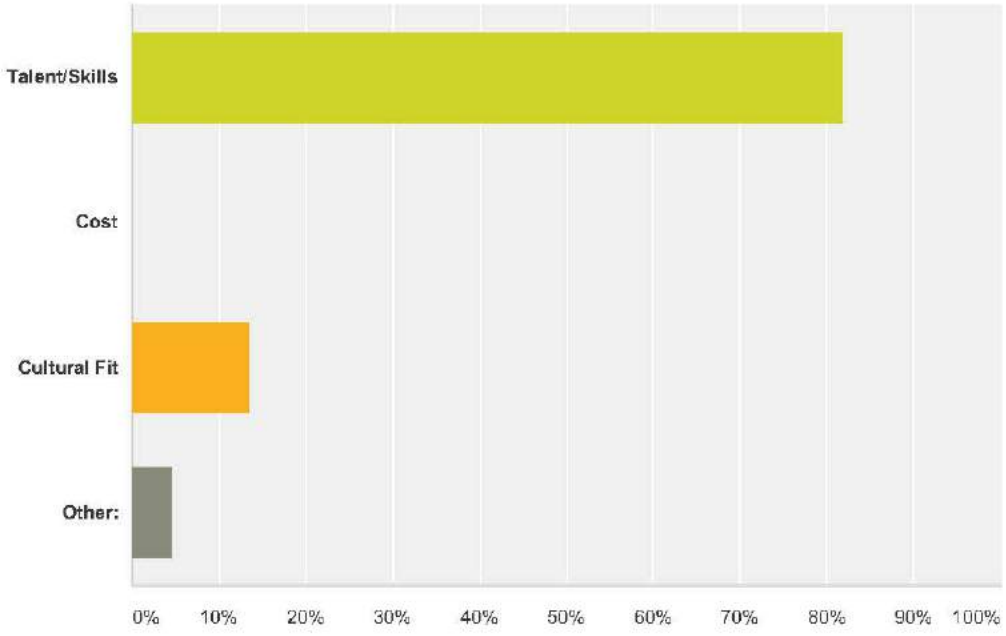
Answered: 22 Skipped: 38



Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	18.18%	4
Agree	45.45%	10
Undecided	31.82%	7
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly Disagree	4.55%	1
Total		22

Q16 What is the main factor that you consider when deciding to hire a foreign worker?

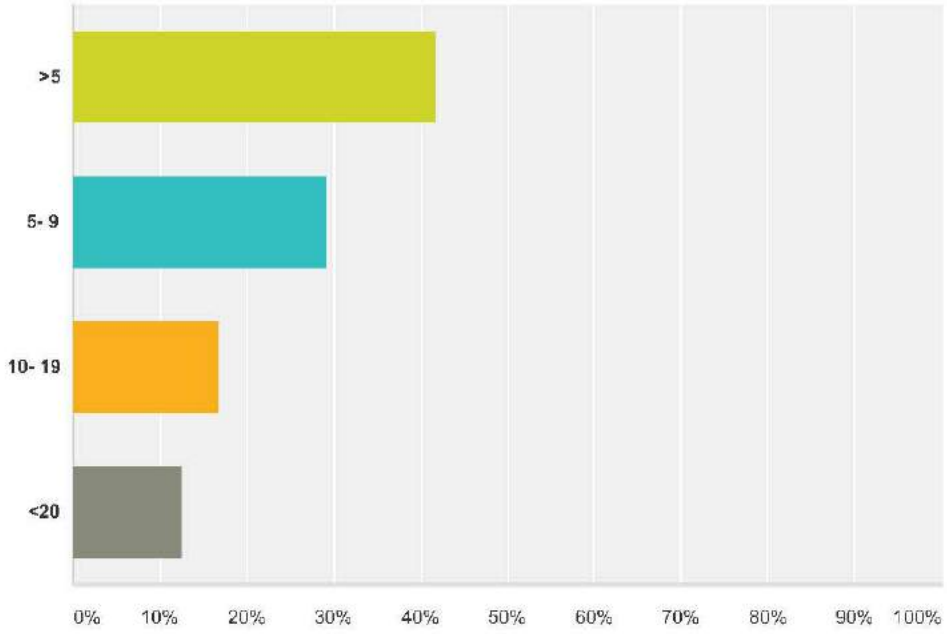
Answered: 22 Skipped: 38



Answer Choices	Responses	
Talent/Skills	81.82%	18
Cost	0.00%	0
Cultural Fit	13.64%	3
Other:	4.55%	1
Total		22

Q17 How many jobs are created around one domestic photo shoot? (i.e. a foreign or domestic model in a U.S. photo shoot or ad campaign requires hiring: photographer, makeup artist, set designer, digital team, marketing team, public relations team. etc. Please define "jobs created" as someone hired for the shoot outside of your company.)

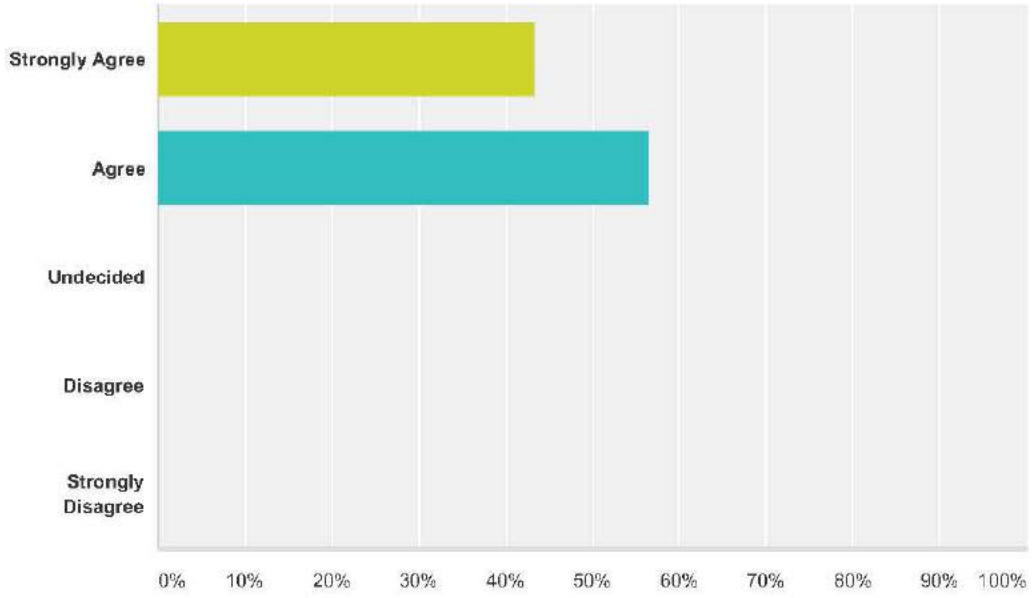
Answered: 24 Skipped: 36



Answer Choices	Responses	
>5	41.67%	10
5- 9	29.17%	7
10- 19	16.67%	4
<20	12.50%	3
Total		24

Q18 Additional resources are needed to help educate employers about how to navigate the current immigration system.

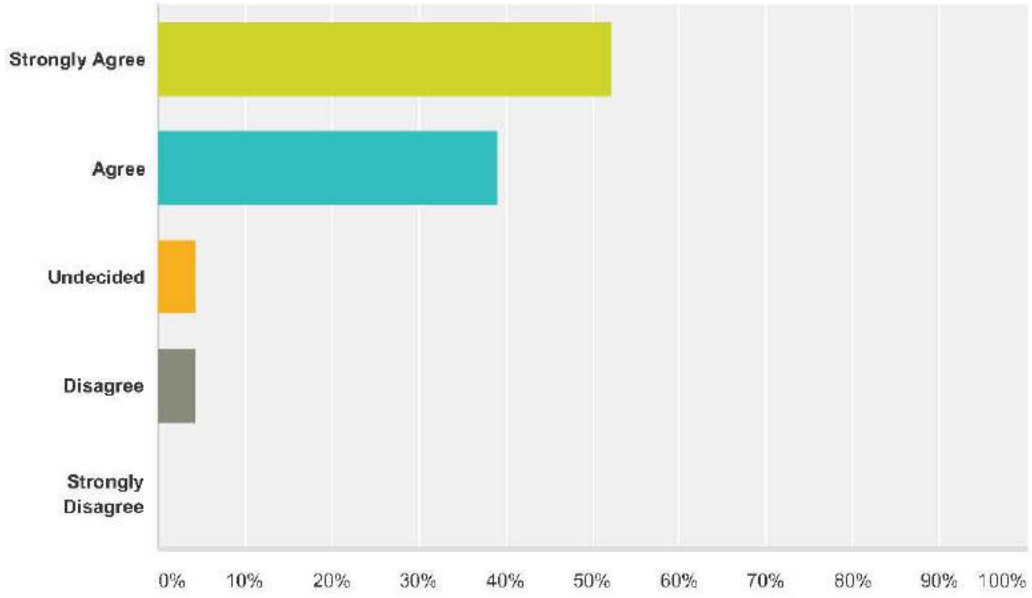
Answered: 23 Skipped: 37



Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	43.48%	10
Agree	56.52%	13
Undecided	0.00%	0
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	0
Total		23

Q19 Additional resources are needed to help advise foreign graduating students who wish to work in the United States.

Answered: 23 Skipped: 37



Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	52.17%	12
Agree	39.13%	9
Undecided	4.35%	1
Disagree	4.35%	1
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	0
Total		23

Q20 What are the top two changes or reforms to the immigration system you would most like to see? Please specifically include reforms to H-1B visas, if applicable.

Answered: 14 Skipped: 46

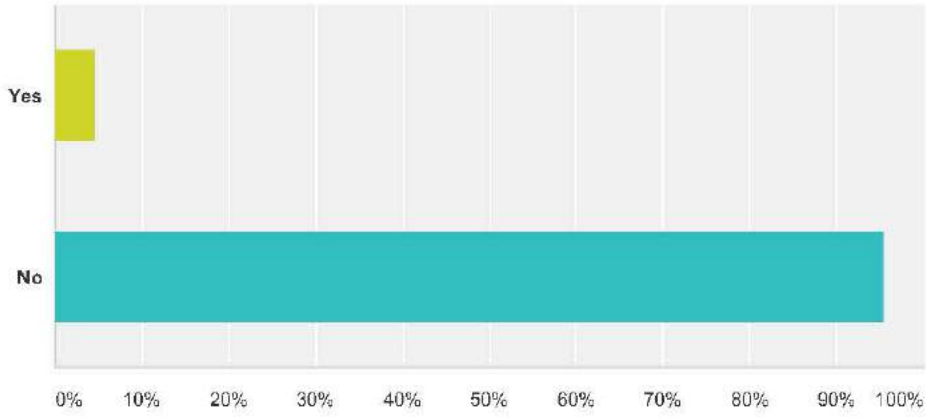
#	Responses	Date
1	An higher number of H-1B visas available	2/15/2017 3:07 PM
2	Easier H-1B visas	2/13/2017 12:48 PM
3	it would be great if there was something a bit cheaper for employers - especially for kids right out of school. there are tons of great parsons and fit students who are here on opt status for 6-12 months after graduation, but it is very unclear what is the right thing to do in terms of how to pay them, etc. and then costly to sponsor them.	2/9/2017 11:02 AM
4	Greater timeliness in processing applications, lower fee requirements, change the need for applicants to have to leave the US to renew or apply for a visa. Let them do it while in the US.	2/7/2017 3:15 PM
5	N/A	2/7/2017 11:55 AM
6	O1B experts in Fashion are the kind of individual I would like teaching on my program however they are unable to unless they are O1B experts in teaching.	2/7/2017 5:05 AM
7	- speed - flexibility	2/6/2017 5:46 PM
8	The uncertainty of going into a pool thousands when only a few hundred will be selected.	2/6/2017 5:44 PM
9	If H1-B changes to have a very high salary requirement, it will inhibit younger designers and talent to be hired in the US. Only very senior roles would be filled.	2/6/2017 5:35 PM
10	The top two changes or reforms to the immigration system we would most like to see are: 1. Faster visa processing times. 2. The elimination of the need for the employee to travel out of the country to obtain their visa at a Consulate abroad.	2/6/2017 5:20 PM
11	I have never hired a foreigner looking for a visa in the US. we do however employ people in other countries worldwide. I would say the biggest problem with students is they have no idea about the H1B process and the fact there is deadline and a cap put on the number that are given each year.	2/6/2017 5:14 PM
12	Delete quotas Avoid the necessity of using law firms	2/6/2017 5:01 PM
13	Cost of employer to sponsor employee Qualities to obtain visa	2/6/2017 4:56 PM
14	This is a hard question to answe	2/6/2017 1:13 PM

Top changes:

- Cost
- Ease of process

Q21 Have you, or someone you know in your industry, applied for OPT (Optional Practical Training) under the "STEM exception" (Science Technology Engineering Mathematics) as a designer?

Answered: 22 Skipped: 38



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	4.55%	1
No	95.45%	21
Total		22

IMG Models. Courtesy of CFDA.