



Jun 27, 2023 - Technology

Exclusive: Immigrants play outsized role in the AI game



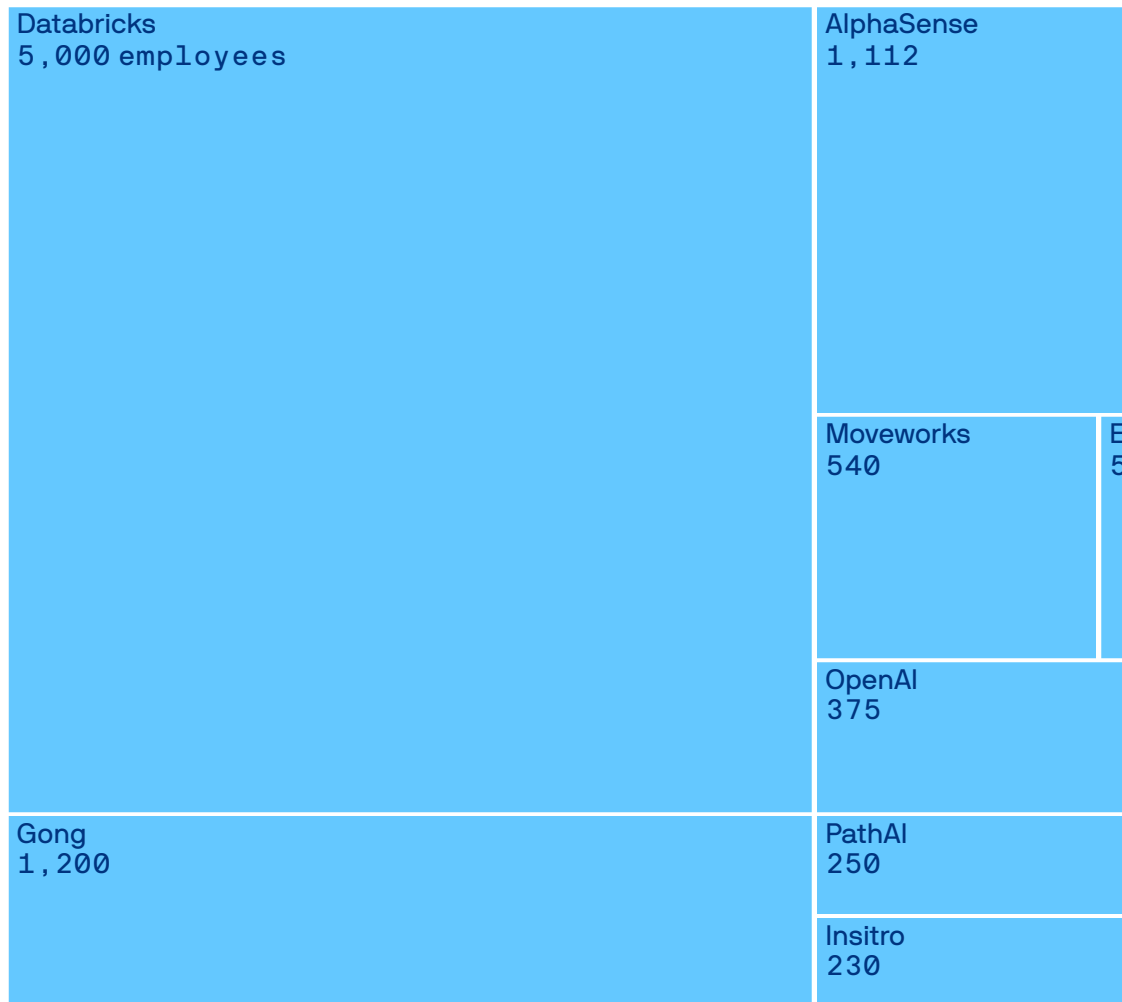
Ashley Gold



Top U.S. AI companies

Includes the 43 2023 Forbes AI 50 companies headquartered in the U.S.

65%: Companies where at least one founder/cofounder is an immigrant



35%: Other companies



Data: NFAP analysis, Forbes; Note: Number of employees as of April 2023; Chart: Axios Visuals

Immigrants to the United States have played a large part in founding AI companies and studying in AI fields, per [a new study](#) from the

National Foundation for American Policy shared exclusively with Axios.

Why it matters: As the generative AI boom reshapes the U.S.'s tech job market, the industry is already strapped for talent and constantly pushing for immigration policies that bring in more workers from abroad.

- [Some have warned](#) that the U.S. risks its AI leadership if it doesn't increase the number of high-skilled immigrants allotted per year and offer other incentives for students to stay in the U.S. after graduation.
- At the same time, American lawmakers are advocating for better training programs to advance homegrown AI and tech talent, but getting Congress to allocate money is a slow process.

What they're saying: "Foreign-born individuals play a crucial role in AI as researchers and experts consider retaining international students after graduation vital to America's leadership in artificial intelligence," the study's author, Stuart Anderson, writes.

- "The variety of AI-focused businesses founded by immigrants shows how artificial intelligence will likely benefit many Americans... Immigrants provide America with an edge in the global battle over technology and artificial intelligence."

By the numbers: Per the report:

- 28 of 43 (65%) of the top AI companies in the U.S. were founded or co-founded by immigrants;
- 70% of full-time graduate students in fields related to AI are international students;
- 18 of 43 (42%) of top U.S. based-AI companies have a founder who studied in the U.S. as an international student.

Details: The study bases its top 50 U.S. AI companies on the [Forbes AI 50](#). The founders of OpenAI, which has arguably caused the most buzz for generative AI, include immigrant founders from South Africa, Canada and Poland.

- The study also highlights the India-born founders of AI startup Adept, Niki Parmar and Ashish Vaswani.
- Other countries where notable AI founders or co-founders are from include Israel, Argentina, Syria, Lebanon, the U.K., Taiwan, France, Iran, Brazil, Mexico and Colombia.
- Those founders studied at universities including, among others, Carnegie Mellon, Stanford, the University of Pennsylvania, Stanford, Yale, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Brown.

The big picture: Both Microsoft and Google — the two tech giants most involved in pushing generative AI, ChatGPT and large language models into the mainstream — are led today by immigrants from India.

- U.S. tech firms have long supported programs that provide visas for skilled workers from overseas. Those programs became more controversial and hit delays under the Trump administration, but have returned to [smoother functioning](#) under President Biden.



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Ashley Gold
Dec 4, 2023

U.S. needs more scientists from abroad to compete with China, study says



Illustration: Eniola Odetunde/Axios

The United States will need to boost immigration and incentivize engineers and scientists to stay in the U.S. in order to compete with China, per a study first shared with Axios.

Why it matters: As the U.S. looks to be the global leader on AI and other emerging high-tech fields, it will need to attract and maintain the world's best talent.

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Alison Snyder
Mar 13, 2024 - Science

Foreign-born STEM talent remains key to U.S. research

Foreign-born share of workers by highest degree level and occupation group, 2021

Occupation group	Bachelor's	Master's	Doctorate
All science and engineering (S&E) occupations	18.7%	37.2%	42.8%
Biological, agricultural, and other life scientists	14.4	26.9	46.6
Computer and mathematical scientists	22.3	46.8	57.6
Physical and related scientists	10.3	24.9	40.8
Social and related scientists	12.3	16.7	18.2
Engineers	14.2	31.9	55.5
S&E-related occupations	17.9	17.7	33.3
Non-S&E occupations	12.7	14.5	25.4

Data: The State of U.S. Science and Engineering 2024 report from the National Science Board. Table: Axios Visuals

Advances in [critical areas](#) of science and tech in the U.S. hinge on foreign-born scientists and engineers, according to a [key report](#) on science and engineering competitiveness published today.

Why it matters: The U.S. isn't the only option for the world's top scientists and engineers. [Global competition](#) around AI, computing, biotech and materials science is intensifying as other countries invest heavily in science and engineering research, infrastructure and talent.

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Alison Snyder
May 3, 2024 - Technology

Exclusive: Inside the AI research boom

Top AI research areas

By number of research articles as of May 1, 2024

Large language models



Distributed machine learning



Point clouds, neural scene representation



Plant disease detection, leaf disease images



Self-supervised learning, vision transformers



Visual commonsense reasoning



Physics-informed neural networks



Diffusion models, image generation



Object detection, autonomous driving



Incremental learning methods



Data: Emerging Technology Observatory Map of Science; Chart: Axios Visuals

[China](#) leads the U.S. as a top producer of research in more than half of [AI's](#) hottest fields, according to [new data](#) from Georgetown University's Center for Security and Emerging Technology (CSET) shared first with Axios.

Why it matters: The findings reveal important nuances about the global race between the U.S. and [China](#) to lead AI advances and set crucial standards for the technology and how it is used around the world.

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