

Trump's \$100,000 H-1B Visa Fee Splits Tech Industry



Published on September 25, 2025

Document Date: Tue, Mar 24 2026 04:48:32 am

Category: ,English,International - ,Snippets

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Palo Alto, September 25 (Xinhua)—U.S. President Donald Trump's abrupt decision to impose a \$100,000 fee on new H-1B visa applications has sparked sharp division across the American technology sector, particularly in Silicon Valley.

The H-1B program, one of the most widely used U.S. work visas, allows skilled foreign

professionals to work for an initial three years, extendable to six. In fiscal year 2025, major users included Amazon, Microsoft, Meta, Apple, and Google, according to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

The new rule, which came into force on Sunday, represents a dramatic jump from the previous \$1,500 application fee. The White House defended the policy as a measure to curb program abuse and ensure visas are allocated to “only the highest-value roles.”

Reactions, however, have been mixed. Industry leaders such as Netflix co-founder Reed Hastings, Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang, and OpenAI chief Sam Altman welcomed the move, saying it would streamline hiring and prioritize top global talent. Hastings called it “a great solution,” while Huang emphasized immigration’s importance to America’s future.

In contrast, startup founders and investors warned of damaging consequences. Smaller firms, with limited resources, fear being priced out of the talent market. Delve COO Selin Kocalar and Workstream CEO Desmond Lim highlighted the financial strain, warning of recruitment setbacks and the risk of relocating jobs abroad. Y Combinator partner Garry Tan labeled the policy “kneecapping startups” and “a massive gift” to foreign tech hubs like Toronto, London, and Singapore.

Beyond Silicon Valley, the impact looms large for India’s IT sector, which accounts for over 70

percent of H-1B approvals. Analysts say giants such as TCS, Infosys, and Wipro may reconsider U.S. operations or pass costs to American clients. Meanwhile, Canadian and British officials have positioned their countries as more welcoming alternatives, signaling potential shifts in global talent flows.

Observers warn that Trump's fee hike could alter the global innovation landscape, accelerating a reverse brain drain and weakening America's competitiveness in the race for top technology talent.