

# JobsOhio offers \$15K incentive for companies to lure out-of-state STEM workers

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GROVEPORT, Ohio – JobsOhio on Thursday [rolled out](#) a new workforce development initiative designed to attract fresh talent to the state by offering companies \$15,000 for every out-of-state worker they bring to Ohio.

The Jobs Ohio Relocation Incentive (JORI) program, which launches in July, targets companies operating within “priority industries,” such as those in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics fields.

The program comes as states across the country are [competing for skilled workers](#), particularly in technology and advanced manufacturing sectors.

Kristi Clouse, JobsOhio senior managing director of talent, explained during JobsOhio’s second-quarter public meeting that the demand for STEM jobs is expected to grow “at three times the rate of non-STEM jobs” over the next 10 years.

To keep up with the demands, Ohio will need 540,000 STEM and technically skilled workers through 2032.

“In short, JORI lets us reframe national interests into Ohio,” Clouse said.

JobsOhio, the state’s economic development nonprofit, is funded by a lease of state liquor profits that earlier this year was [extended for 15 more years, through 2053](#). It uses that money to help attract and subsidize economic-development projects.

Under the incentive program announced Thursday, eligible companies can receive \$15,000 per qualifying hire, with incentives capped at \$225,000 per company or a maximum of 15 employees. Companies must successfully recruit and relocate employees from out of state to Ohio.

The program includes a total investment of \$50 million and is available to companies of all sizes, “whether it’s a two-person biotech startup or a Fortune 100

manufacturer,” according to Clouse. The incentives are paid after the out-of-state new hire is on payroll and has established residency in Ohio.

The goal of the program is to attract 3,000 new workers to Ohio. In addition to attracting STEM talent to the state, the incentive program also aims to discourage companies from poaching talent in-state by making out-of-state recruitment as cost-effective as local hiring. The program allows companies to use the funds however they see fit – from signing bonuses, relocation packages, or out-of-state recruiting campaigns, “so long as the result is a net new Ohioan in a priority occupation.”

Clouse said that the full JobsOhio board approved the plans on Wednesday. Between now and the summer launch, JobsOhio plans to integrate the incentive program with its existing services like Find Your Ohio, and their talent acquisition programs to create “a seamless front door for employers.”

“It stakes out a clear call to action for the engineers, data scientists, and advanced technicians everywhere that the fastest path to the future runs through Ohio,” Clouse said.

“And JobsOhio is willing to help them get here, so they can have it all in the heart of it all.”

Organizations such as the Ohio Chamber of Commerce and Ohio Business Roundtable lauded JobsOhio for the new initiative.

“Across the state, businesses of all sizes in virtually every industry are facing real challenges in attracting and retaining workforce talent. With tens of thousands of jobs already in the pipeline over the next 3-5 years, the need for a qualified workforce has never been more urgent,” Ohio Chamber of Commerce President & CEO Steve Stivers said in a statement.

Ohio Business Roundtable CEO Pat Tiberi said in a statement that the incentives will help businesses grow and innovate.

“Employers across the state are actively seeking top-tier talent in fields like engineering and science. This program will be a catalyst for helping Ohio companies attract that talent from outside of our state, rather than competing against each other,” he continued.