

Orr Fellowship Study Depicts Significant Impact of Program Alumni Network on Indiana

Early career development program bolsters state in numerous areas including talent retention, entrepreneurship and community and civic investment

INDIANAPOLIS (Jan. 8, 2025) – [Orr Fellowship](#), an early career development program for versatile high-achievers and future-focused businesses in Indiana, announced today the release of the “Orr Fellowship Economic Impact Study” in partnership with [TPMA](#), an organization focused on creating action-orientated economic development and workforce strategies.

Orr Fellowship recruits, assesses and matches university graduates with high-agency roles in growing Indiana businesses. Together, Orr Fellowship and partner companies give graduates the professional development resources and support network they need to accelerate their careers.

The new study is an economic analysis that assesses the long-term impact of Orr Fellow participants on the state of Indiana, particularly in the areas of talent retention and entrepreneurship, as well as community and civic investment.

“This study does a phenomenal job of showcasing the superior retention rates of Orr Fellowship alumni in the state of Indiana, the economic prowess of Orr alumni and the positive economic impact of program participants,” said Steven Emch, President of Orr Fellowship. “Beyond that, the sense of community engendered by the program is also invaluable. Orr alumni actively participate in their communities as volunteers, board members and civic leaders. They are key contributors to the communities in which they work and live.”

Key findings from the study include:

Talent Retention

Upon completing the program, Orr Fellows remain in Indiana at a rate higher than graduates of Indiana higher education institutions as a whole. Approximately 60% of all Orr alumni remain in Indiana after completing the program, compared to 43% of all Indiana institution graduates across comparable fields of study. In addition, 86% of participants remained in Indiana for at least six months after completing the Fellowship.

Entrepreneurialism

The entrepreneurial rate of Orr Fellowship alumni (those who start businesses and create new jobs for Indiana citizens) far exceeds the Hoosier state average. Based on survey results and a review of job titles and descriptions supplied by Orr Fellowship, 21% of Orr Fellow respondents indicated they started a business after completing the program. This is compared to the statewide average entrepreneurial rate of .23% and .36% nationally. Three out of every four (76%) Orr Fellows who started their own business were under age 30 when they started their company.

In addition:

- 81% identify Indiana as the state in which their business is/was headquartered.
- 92% of participants have not sold their business.
- 32% of all Fellows have created at least one full-time equivalent (FTE) job in addition to their role as founder.

Civic Participation

After program completion, 44% of respondents report volunteering with a nonprofit or civic organization. Of this group, 23% have served as members of community service-based organizations. A large percentage indicated they serve as a board member, and a smaller, but not insignificant, segment indicated they have been elected by their peers to leadership positions within volunteer organizations.

Economic Output

There are 243 confirmed Orr alumni living and working in Indiana. They contribute to the state's economic output with nearly \$38 million in annual earnings and add nearly \$59 million annually to its gross domestic product (GDP). Their presence in the workforce generates an additional 482 FTE jobs in the supply chain and induced industries across the state that produce an additional \$30 million in labor income and \$49 million in gross regional product (GRP). Collectively, Fellows and the individuals dependent on their presence in the workforce generate an additional \$4.4 million annually in tax revenue for state, local and federal governments.

"Orr Fellowship's overall value to the state of Indiana is striking, and the program is a bolster to the small business backbone of Indiana's economy," said David Watkins, Senior Vice President, Entrepreneurship and Small Business at Indiana Economic Development Corporation. "With an active network of engaged alumni contributing to the state's economy long after graduation and a positive, significant uptick in talent retention for the state, Orr Fellowship significantly impacts the Hoosier state."

The "Orr Fellowship Economic Impact Study" was conducted using the following source material:

- Internal, de-identified data from Orr Fellowship
- A unique survey developed in concert with program officials
- External data from the U.S. Census Bureau Post-Secondary Employment Outcomes (PSEO) program
- External data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis and proprietary wage and benefit modeling data from LightCast™
- Economic modeling data generated by IMPLAN™, an economic impact analysis tool

To learn more about Orr Fellowship and the economic impact study, visit orrfellowship.org.

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About Orr Fellowship

Founded in 2001, [Orr Fellowship](http://orrfellowship.org) is an early career development program for versatile high-achievers and future-focused businesses in Indiana. The organization recruits, assesses and matches university graduates with high-agency roles in growing Indiana businesses. Together, Orr Fellowship and partner companies give graduates the professional development resources and support network they need to accelerate their careers in business and positively impact Indiana. Learn more about Orr Fellowship [here](http://orrfellowship.org).

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