

NCTECH  
Association

North Carolina

# STATE OF TECHNOLOGY

2026 Industry Report + State Rankings



## 2026 RESEARCH UNDERWRITERS

PREMIER



LEAD



ASSOCIATE



CONTRIBUTING



# Key Findings

## North Carolina State of Technology 2026 Industry Report + State Rankings



### WOMEN IN TECH

NC remains the **#1** state in the percentage of women who make up the Tech Industry workforce with **37.4%**.

### TECH SERVICES OUTPUT

Tech services represent high-tech core services like social media, data storage, telecommunications, and software companies. From 2019-2024 NC ranked **#6** in Tech Services Job Change at **25.3%** & Expected Tech Services Job Change at **10.7%**.

### ENERGY TECH INDUSTRY

The state has remained a top growth state for energy tech and is projected to add jobs in this industry group at the **#6** highest rate over the next five years.

### IT INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT GROWTH

NC's IT industry is projected to grow by **11%** in the next five years. The state remains ranked above the national average and moved up in the rankings from **#14** to **#9** this year.

### START-UPS FROM UNIVERSITIES

NC had the **#7** highest number of start-ups spun off from its universities in 2024, with **37** new companies established.

### VETERANS IN THE NC TECH SECTOR

Veterans make up **7.2%** of the state's population, this group accounts for an even larger share of the state's total workforce at **9.2%**. 2024 veterans accounted for **9.7%** and **10.4%** of the tech industry and tech occupations workforce, respectively. There were **8,870** workers in the military performing tech jobs.



### NC STRENGTHS

- **#1** state for Women in Tech with **37.4%** of workforce
- **#1** lowest effective business tax rate at **3.4%**
- **#1** in Tech Occupations Job Change at **33.4%**
- **#3** in average in-state tuition costs averaging **\$7,541**
- **#4** in business friendliness which is crucial in tech sector prominent state
- **#5** state in Net Migration Rate at **1.38%**
- **#5** in Higher Ed R&D in Science & Engineering with **0.52%**
- **#6** in Tech Service Job Change at **25.3%** and Expected Tech Services Job Change at **10.7%**
- **#6** state in Expected Energy Tech Job Change at **10.3%**
- **#7** in Start-Ups from Universities with **37** new companies

### TECH INDUSTRY OVERVIEW

In 2024, the Tech Industry employed **328,414** people and workers earned about **\$45 billion** in income in the state of North Carolina. The Tech Industry accounted directly for **7%** of the total jobs in the state but **12%** of the state's total earnings and more than **11%** in sales. In 2024, there were over **35,170** technology establishments operating in North Carolina, an increase of **830** from the previous report.

### ECONOMIC IMPACT

The Tech Industry in North Carolina has an employment multiplier of **3.24** meaning that for every one job in the Tech Industry more than two other jobs are created or supported elsewhere in the economy. The tech industry accounts for about **10%** of taxes paid within the state. In 2024, the tech industry contributed more than **12%** (**\$99 billion**) to GDP.





## TECH OCCUPATIONS

There are **467,170** workers in tech occupations in NC. This is higher than the **328,410** workers employed by the Tech Industry. This means there is a significant portion of tech occupations outside the traditional tech companies in the state. **34%** of tech occupations are located at tech companies, the rest are employed in other industries.

## TECH INDUSTRY JOB GROWTH

One of the strongest performance indicators for the state's tech industry is its recent growth and future growth potential. In the past five years, jobs in this industry have grown by more than **19%**. That is the **#7** highest growth rate in the country, and nearly six percentage points higher than the national average.

## ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

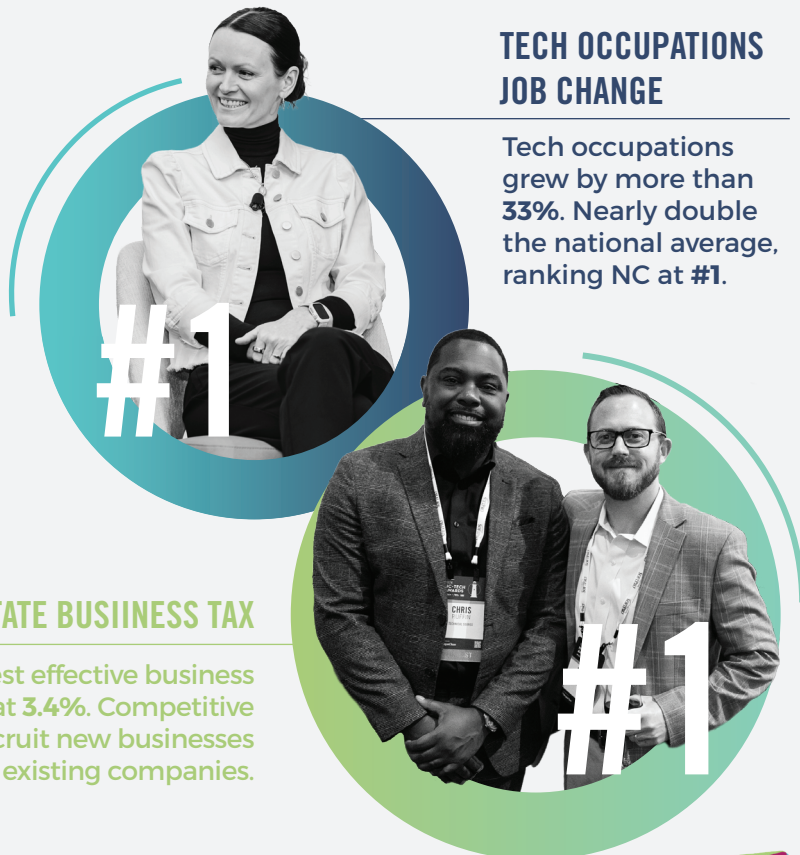
Computer and mathematics workers in North Carolina use AI for approximately **18%** of their tasks. Despite the state's higher concentration of knowledge work, NC had a lower than predicted usage score and ranked only **#21** in usage across all states.

## LIFE SCIENCES INDUSTRY

Life Sciences was the fastest-growing tech subcategory in the state from 2019 to 2024. In 2024, North Carolina had an employment concentration in Life Sciences of **1.12**. This was the **13th** most concentrated Life Sciences economy in the nation. The subcategory has expanded jobs at a rate of **25%** over the last five years. That growth ranked **12th** in the nation—an impressive feat considering Life Sciences jobs were already concentrated in the state. Job growth in this sector has primarily been in the research and development industries, which have added about **8,280** net new jobs in the last five years.

## TECH OCCUPATIONS JOB CHANGE

Tech occupations grew by more than **33%**. Nearly double the national average, ranking NC at **#1**.



## TOTAL EFFECTIVE STATE BUSINESS TAX

NC is tied for the lowest effective business tax rate in the nation at **3.4%**. Competitive tax rates can help recruit new businesses and retain existing companies.

**#3** North Carolina holds its rank at third in Average In-State 4-Year University Tuition Cost at **\$7,541**.



## TOP TIER NC ranks among Top 15 states in:

- Tech Occupations Job Change
- % of Women in the Total Tech Industry
- Expected Tech Services Job Change
- Tech Services Job Change
- Expected Energy Tech Job Change
- Total Tech Industry Job Change
- Energy Tech Job Change
- Tech Occupations Earnings
- Expected IT Job Change
- Expected Total Tech Industry Job Change
- Tech Manufacturing Earnings
- Expected Environmental Tech Job Change
- IT Job Change
- Tech Manufacturing Employment Concentration
- Tech Occupations Employment Concentration
- Life Sciences Job Change
- Expected Tech Occupations Job Change
- IT Employment Concentration
- Life Sciences Employment Concentration
- Effective Business Tax Rate
- University Tuition Cost
- Business Friendliness
- Net Migration Rate
- Higher Education R&D in Science & Engineering
- Tech Licenses & Options from Universities
- FDI Employment
- Projected Working Age Population Change
- State Spending for Higher Education
- Work From Home
- STEM Education Programs
- Venture Capital Invested
- Cost of Living
- Business Dynamism
- Start-Ups From Universities
- Total R&D
- SBIR and STTR Funding
- Business Performed R&D

## ABOUT THE REPORT

In January 2015, the North Carolina Technology Association (NC TECH) released its first State of Technology Industry Report, and annually thereafter. The full report is housed online at **NCSTIR.com** and this Key Findings summary features some of the highlights from the research.

The valuable information in the report has a variety of uses:

- ▶ Repository of facts, statistics, trends, narratives + insights into NC's tech sector
- ▶ Guide for companies considering headquarters relocation or operations establishment
- ▶ Source of data + trends for policy makers
- ▶ Collection of stories that highlight the vibrancy of the state's tech sector
- ▶ Resource for innovation sector organizations, economic development community, + media

For more information about NC TECH and the State of Technology Industry Report, visit **[nctech.org](http://nctech.org)**.

## ABOUT THE RESEARCHER

Ted Abernathy is the managing partner at Economic Leadership LLC, an information curation consultancy firm that provides leadership to various organizations including local and state governments, chambers of commerce and private organizations. Prior to starting Economic Leadership, Ted had 30 years of experience as an economic development director for city, county and regional economic development programs. More information at **[econleadership.com](http://econleadership.com)**.



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