2025 Utah Engineering Initiative

Overview — Since its inception, the Utah Engineering Initiative has fueled Utah's economic growth and status as one of the best state economies in the country, by addressing critical workforce shortages in engineering and computer science. With Utah's tech sector contributing 10% of the state's GDP and employing over 238,400 workers, the initiative ensures Utah's competitive edge in a rapidly evolving and growing technology sector. USHE colleges of engineering promised an additional 460 graduates in the 2022 legislative session, and have eclipsed that goal by graduating an additional 660 computing and engineering, and engineering technology students.

- Computer science and engineering graduates in Utah have nearly tripled from 1644 to 4603 per year since the inception of the Utah Engineering Initiative in 2001 but Industry is still falling short of meeting their hiring needs.
- Since inception, $29M of ongoing and $10.45M one-time funding has been invested in the initiative growing the capacity to provide additional graduates to Utah's rapidly expanding technology sector
- The **strength of the initiative** has been its focus on **increasing graduates, institutional matching requirement, accountability for results, and industry oversight**
- Every USHE institution has benefited, and the initiative has been critical for the growth of new degree programs statewide in an effort to keep industry from looking elsewhere to fill much needed high-tech positions
- We are requesting $5M in ongoing funds with a **commitment to increase graduates by 400 per year**.
- Industry oversight will be via Talent Ready Utah and its Engineering & Computer Science Talent Advisory Council.

High Tech Economic Impact: $22.5 billion of Utah's $224.6 billion GDP in 2024. The state is becoming more reliant on its high-tech innovation, and job creating industry.
Tech Growth: 10,484 tech companies in Utah— an increase of 20% from 8,500 companies in 2022.
Job Market: 238,400 current high-tech jobs and 29,990 anticipated additional postings in 2025.
Advantages to the State: Computing and Engineering jobs pay 66% and 80% higher than the average state salary.
Projected Growth in 2025: Cybersecurity: 7.4%, Software Development: 6.4%, Data Science: 5.2%

Workforce Needs: With a **33% projected tech job growth (2024-2034)**, Utah's economic future relies on a robust talent pipeline. The Engineering Initiative helps provide skilled graduates to meet demand across all sectors of computing and engineering, including: **Aerospace/Defense** (a top 5 state for growth), **AI, Data, Machine Learning, Fintech, Cybersecurity, Biomedical** (a top 5 state for growth), **Civil/Environmental** (including nuclear and renewable energy, which are top priorities of state legislative leadership)

Case for Investment

Industry Demand: Graduates remain in-state, supporting local industries and helping to attract national and international companies to move to Utah.
State Tax Base Growth: High-wage jobs boost state and local revenues.
Workforce Quality: Quality degrees propel the State to innovative and leadership roles Nationally.
Leverage: USHE institutions must match Initiative funding, doubling the state's investment and impact.
Impacting the Entire State: Students from every county in the state are represented in computing and engineering classrooms across the Utah System of Higher Education.

Conclusion

The Utah Engineering Initiative is vital for addressing workforce shortages, driving industry growth, and securing high-wage careers. Continued support ensures Utah leads in innovation, opportunity, and shared prosperity — keeping Utah's economy strong and its workforce prepared for tomorrow.