

# Oregon

## The Silicon Forest looks to education to keep pace with job boom

Sandwiched between Silicon Valley and Seattle, Oregon is on track to continue its technology job boom, and state leaders are scrambling to ensure that most of the positions are filled by Oregonians. Currently about 25 percent of all jobs in the tech industry are filled by an out-of-state hire.

Governor Kate Brown addressed the issue in her 2018 State of the State speech, announcing a \$300 million program to fund technical education classes. Future Oregon Ready will add hands-on learning opportunities to public school districts and foster apprenticeships in high-demand industries such as technology. “It is clear there is a gap between the skills Oregon’s workers have and the skills that our growing businesses need,” Gov. Brown said.

Other agencies are helping to fill the gap. A partnership between the Technology Association of Oregon and a handful of state Workforce Development Boards aims to create a Talent Strategy Plan that will lead to a steady pipeline of tech talent. The plan will build on buy-in from leaders in tech and non-tech industries looking to fill high-tech jobs. “What’s encouraging is that it’s the companies themselves that are wanting to lean in and move faster and harder to create a more inclusive tech ecosystem,” said Reese Lord, tech sector lead for the Columbia-Willamette Workforce Collaborative.

Sources: (Portland Tribune) (Portland Business Journal)

### WHAT DID WE DO RIGHT?

From Q2/2011 to Q4/2016, Oregon added more than 340,000 jobs at small firms.

### WHAT CAN WE DO BETTER NEXT YEAR?

Oregon can change a 2017 law on drones that “annoys,” which creates confusion about safe drone operation.

### WHERE HAVE WE MOST IMPROVED?

Oregon bumped up its grade in Innovation-Friendly Sustainable Policies from a ‘C’ last year by setting achievable e-waste targets.

Best & Brightest	C
Fast Internet	B+
Grants Advanced Degrees	B
Tech Workforce	B
Tax Friendly	B+
Attracts Investment	B
Entrepreneurial Activity	A-
Ridesharing	C
Short-Term Rentals	B
Sustainable Policies	C+
Self-Driving Vehicles	A
Drones	D-



### Best & Brightest

A state law protects workers from discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, but the state lacks a Right-to-Work law.



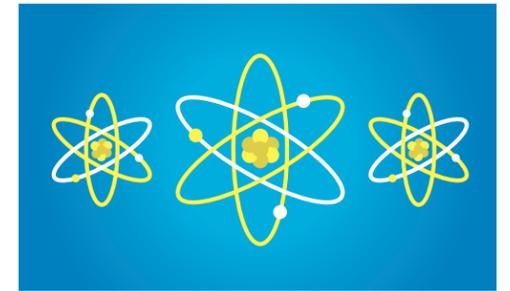
### Fast Internet

In Oregon, 63 percent of households have access to internet speeds of at least 10 mbps and 56 percent have access to broadband that meets the FCC standard of 25 mbps.



### Tech Workforce

Oregon has more than 152,000 tech jobs among its workforce, a rate of about 37.23 per 1,000 people.



## Grants Advanced Degrees

Nearly 12 percent of residents over the age of 24 have an advanced degree.

## In the Pacific Northwest, a Global Tech Boom Makes a Big Impact on Local Communities

Central Oregon is the fastest growing region in the state, thanks to some of the largest tech companies in the world.

In late 2017, Facebook announced plans to expand its Prineville data center by more than 80 percent. The project will add nearly 1 million square feet to the campus and enlarge its 200-person tech workforce.

Meanwhile in Bend, Oregon State University is spending \$39 million to expand its campus. OSU’s new “STEAM building” will include classrooms, labs and maker space for a number of programs, including kinesiology and outdoor products. The new building will also allow the university to launch an engineering program with tracks for students to become mechanical, electrical and industrial engineers.

“The tech, brewing and aviation sectors are all in need of highly skilled workers in the region,” says Kelly Sparks, associate vice president of finance and strategic planning at the campus. “We want to help ensure that the region has a balanced economy that’s not just based on timber and tourism.”

PHOTO CREDIT: Facebook | Sources: (Portland Business Journal) (Portland Business Journal)

