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The Economic Contribution of the University of Utah

As Utah's flagship university, the University of Utah generates one of the largest economic and societal contributions to the state through education, research, health care, and statewide engagement.

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The Economic Contribution of the University of Utah

Analysis in Brief

The University of Utah (the U) ranks among the largest and most significant drivers of economic activity in the state. The estimates presented in this analysis focus specifically on the university's direct spending on education, research, and health-related activities, and their associated ripple effects. This spending includes operations, capital and construction activity, and spending by out-of-state students and visitors.

The University of Utah's mission also creates substantial long-term value by developing human capital, strengthening the workforce, advancing innovation, and improving community well-being. These broader societal benefits are highlighted but not included in the economic contribution estimates.

Key Findings

- **Employment** – The University of Utah directly employed 44,801 individuals across its campus, health system, and component units in FY 2024, making it the second largest employer in the state. The U supports nearly 100,000 jobs in Utah, representing 4.1% of jobs statewide.
- **Economic Activity** – The U supported $7.6 billion in earnings, $10.3 billion in gross domestic product (GDP), and $18.1 billion in output (total sales) in Utah in FY 2024. This accounts for 4.9% of total state earnings, 3.7% of GDP, and 3.6% of total output statewide.
- **Education** – The U enrolled more than 35,000 students across more than 300 degree and certificate programs during the 2023-24 academic year and awarded more than 9,000 degrees and certificates. These graduates support Utah's workforce with nearly three-quarters of U graduates employed in-state five years after graduation.

University of Utah Statewide Economic Contribution, FY 2024

Note: Includes direct, indirect, and induced effects.
Source: Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute analysis of University of Utah data using IMPLAN 2023

Top 10 Employers in Utah, FY 2024

Rank	Company	Industry	Average Employment
1	Intermountain Health	Health Care and Social Assistance	40,000+
2	**University of Utah** (Including Hospital and Component Units)	**Higher Education**	**40,000+**
3	State of Utah	State Govt.	20,000-24,999
4	Walmart	Retail Trade	20,000-24,999
5	Brigham Young University	Higher Education	15,000-19,999
6	Hill Air Force Base	Federal Govt.	10,000-14,999
7	Davis County School District	Public Education	10,000-14,999
8	Utah State University	Higher Education	10,000-14,999
9	Smith's Food and Drug Centers	Retail Trade	10,000-14,999
10	Alpine School District	Public Education	7,000-9,999

Note: University of Utah employment includes campus, hospitals and clinics, and component units. Component units include University of Utah Research Foundation (UURF), ARUP Laboratories, Inc. (ARUP), University of Utah Health Insurance Plans (UUHIP), Community Nursing Services (CNS), and the George S. and Dolores Doré Eccles Endowment for Medical School Excellence (EMSE).
Source: Utah Department of Workforce Services

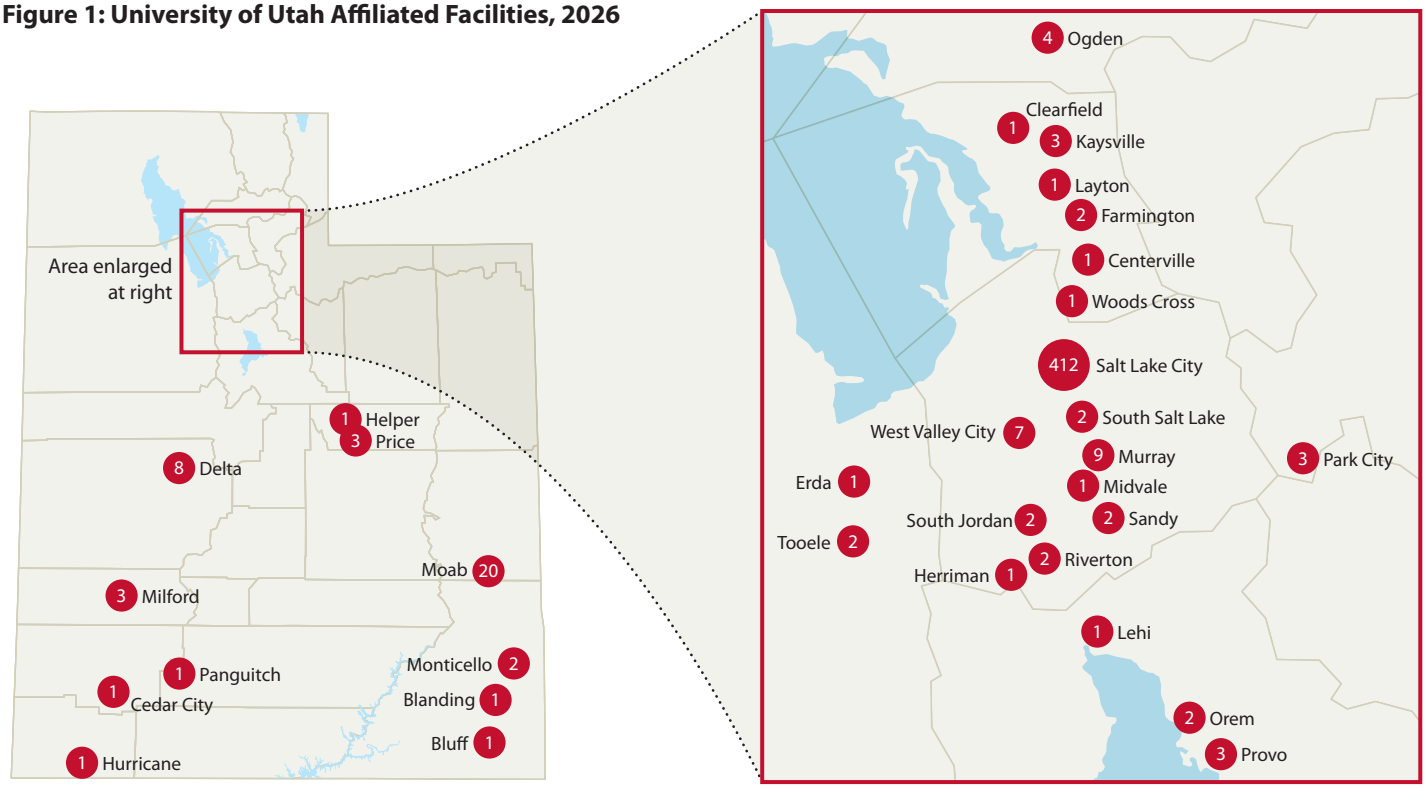
- **Research –** The University of Utah is a nationally recognized R1 university and member of the Association of American Universities (AAU). The university expended more than $700 million on research-related activities in FY 2024, with approximately two-thirds of funding from federal sources, bringing new resources into Utah while advancing innovation, workforce training, and discovery.
- **Health –** University of Utah Health (U of U Health) represents a major component of the university's economic contribution. As Utah's only academic medical center, the health system serves patients from across the state and region, supporting employment, training much of the state's health care workforce, and improving health outcomes.
- **Societal Benefits** – Beyond its economic contribution, the U's students, employees, and communities around the state benefit from four key areas: workforce quality and development, research and commercialization, student experience, and community supports and services.

Overview

Founded in 1850, the University of Utah (the U) serves as the state's flagship higher education institution. The U provides world-class research, education, clinical care, and societal impact. It offers diverse undergraduate and graduate programs across multiple disciplines, operates several hospitals and clinics, houses many research institutes and centers, and serves the state of Utah through education, research, and health care. Headquartered in Salt Lake City (the state's capital), the U's physical presence extends to 37 cities and 15 counties in Utah with additional locations around the United States and worldwide (Figure 1).

While the U's educational, research, and health missions generate long-term value by developing human capital, strengthening the workforce, and enriching the community, the economic contribution estimates presented in this report exclude these broader benefits. The estimates focus solely on the short-term, measurable effects of university-related spending. This includes activity associated with the U's academic campus, hospitals and clinics, and component units.

Figure 1: University of Utah Affiliated Facilities, 2026



Note: Data pulled January 12, 2026.
Source: University of Utah Office of Space Planning and Management

Statement of Methods

To support transparency and clarity, this report defines the scope, direct expenditures, modeling approach, and multipliers used in the analysis. The following statement summarizes these elements, with additional detail provided in Appendix B.[1]

Geographic Scope - This report covers the University of Utah's economic contribution in the state of Utah.

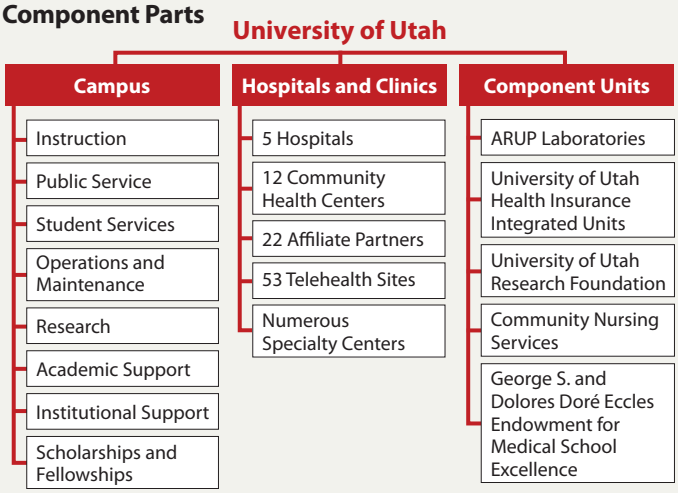
Units of Analysis - This study evaluates economic activity for four major categories:

1. ***Operations:*** Ongoing expenditures for campus, hospitals and clinics, and component units (shown separately).
2. ***Capital and Construction:*** Average annual construction and capital expenditures for campus, hospitals and clinics, and component units (shown separately).
3. ***Nonresident Student Spending:*** Off-campus spending by out-of-state students within the state, adjusted for wages earned in Utah.
4. ***Nonresident Visitor Spending***: Off-campus spending by out-of-state visitors to the University of Utah.

The report distinguishes results between campus, hospitals and clinics, and component units.

1. ***Campus:*** This category includes the operations, construction, and capital investments associated with education, research, and student services. Activities include many of the traditional functions of a public university, including instruction, student services, academic support, research, institutional support, operations and maintenance, scholarships and fellowships, and public service. Student and visitor spending is also included. The report includes the entire School of Medicine, including the School's instruction and patient services, in the campus group.
2. ***Hospitals and Clinics:*** This category includes the operations, construction, and capital investment associated with patient services at University of Utah Health. Major activities include the operation of U of U Health's hospitals, clinics, and medical group.
3. ***Component Units:*** This category includes the operations, construction, and capital investments of five component units: University of Utah Research Foundation (UURF), ARUP Laboratories, Inc. (ARUP), University of Utah Health Insurance Plans (UUHIP), Community Nursing Services (CNS), and the George S. and Dolores Doré Eccles Endowment for Medical School Excellence (EMSE).

Figure 2: University of Utah "One U" Structure and Component Parts



Source: Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute

Table 1: University of Utah Economic Analysis Direct Expenditures, FY 2024

Dollars in Millions

	Campus	Hospitals & Clinics	Component Units	Total
Operations (Personnel)	$2,341	$1,531	$483	$4,355
Operations (Non-personnel)	$774	$1,632	$1,037	$3,443
Construction & Capital	$480	$188	$79	$747
Student Spending	$172	NA	NA	$172
Visitor Spending	$4	NA	NA	$4
Total	**$3,771**	**$3,351**	**$1,599**	**$8,721**

NA: Not Applicable
Source: Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute analysis of University of Utah data

Year of Analysis - This study analyzes economic activity produced during the U's 2024 fiscal year (July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024). The report expresses amounts in 2024 dollars.

Model and Multipliers - This study uses the 2023 version of IMPLAN and its associated multipliers for the state of Utah and the Greater Salt Lake Region, the most recent model available at the time of analysis.[2]

Direct Expenditures - The U spent $7.8 billion on operations in FY 2024 with an additional $747 million on construction and capital (5-year average inflation-adjusted to 2024 dollars). This analysis estimates the contribution of this spending in-state and its subsequent effects. First-round expenditures also include an estimated $166 million in off-campus spending by out-of-state students and $4 million by out-of-state visitors.

Inflation Adjustment - The analysis inflation adjusts inputs using the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for All Urban Consumers: All Items in U.S. City Average.

Economic Analysis

The University of Utah employed 44,801 individuals across its campus, health system, and component units in FY 2024, making it the second largest employer statewide (Table 2). Four different types of spending comprise the U's economic contribution: operations (including employment and associated compensation), capital and construction expenditures, nonresident student spending, and nonresident visitor spending. Based on these spending drivers, the University of Utah's FY 2024 contributions totaled 97,191 direct and indirect jobs, $7.6 billion in earnings, $10.3 billion in gross domestic product (GDP), and $18.1 billion in output in Utah (Table 3, Figure 3).

Table 2: Top 10 Employers in Utah, FY 2024

Rank	Company	Industry	Average Employment
1	Intermountain Health	Health Care and Social Assistance	40,000+
2	**University of Utah** (Including Hospital and Component Units)	**Higher Education**	**40,000+**
3	State of Utah	State Govt.	20,000-24,999
4	Walmart	Retail Trade	20,000-24,999
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Note: University of Utah employment includes campus, hospitals and clinics, and component units. Component units include University of Utah Research Foundation (UURF), ARUP Laboratories, Inc. (ARUP), University of Utah Health Insurance Plans (UUHIP), Community Nursing Services (CNS), and the George S. and Dolores Doré Eccles Endowment for Medical School Excellence (EMSE).
Source: Utah Department of Workforce Services

Table 3: University of Utah Statewide Economic Contribution, FY 2024

Dollars in Millions

	Jobs	Earnings	GDP	Output
Campus	**45,159**	**$3,661**	**$4,849**	**$7,307**
Direct	23,347	$2,341	$2,341	$3,115
Indirect & Induced	21,811	$1,319	$2,508	$4,192
Hospitals & Clinics	**36,066**	**$2,767**	**$3,743**	**$6,993**
Direct	15,733	$1,531	$1,531	$3,163
Indirect & Induced	20,333	$1,236	$2,212	$3,830
Component Units	**15,966**	**$1,171**	**$1,756**	**$3,833**
Direct	5,720	$483	$483	$1,520
Indirect & Induced	10,246	$689	$1,273	$2,314
Total	**97,191**	**$7,599**	**$10,348**	**$18,133**
Direct	44,801	$4,355	$4,355	$7,798
Indirect & Induced	52,390	$3,244	$5,994	$10,335

Note: Jobs, earnings, and GDP associated with direct spending on construction and capital, student spending, and visitor spending are included in the indirect and induced effects.
Source: Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute analysis of University of Utah data using IMPLAN 2023

Figure 3: University of Utah Statewide Economic Contribution, FY 2024

Note: Includes direct, indirect, and induced effects.
Source: Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute analysis of University of Utah data using IMPLAN 2023

Operational Expenditures

Operational spending accounts for more than 90% of the University of Utah's statewide economic contribution. The U spent nearly $8 billion in FY 2024—approximately $4.4 billion on payroll and $3.4 billion on goods and services—to support a wide range of operational activities including instruction, research, student services, patient care, public service, athletics, arts and culture, operations and maintenance, and academic and institutional support. This spending supports 89,755 jobs, $7.1 billion in earnings, $9.4 billion in GDP, and $16.6 billion in output statewide (Table 4).

Capital and Construction Expenditures

The U's construction and capital spending also drive economic contribution. Examples of major construction projects in the last five years include several student housing projects, the Spencer Fox Eccles School of Medicine, the William Steward Building for Applied Sciences, and the Kathryn F. Kirk Center for Comprehensive Cancer Care & Women's Cancers at Huntsman Cancer Institute. The U's capital investments include vehicles, art collections, machinery, laboratory equipment, and other equipment. Because

Table 4: University of Utah Operations Spending Statewide Economic Contribution, FY 2024

Dollars in Millions

	Jobs	Earnings	GDP	Output
Campus	**39,696**	**$3,322**	**$4,194**	**$6,242**
Direct	23,347	$2,341	$2,341	$3,115
Indirect & Induced	16,349	980	1,853	3,127
Hospitals & Clinics	**34,685**	**$2,668**	**$3,563**	**$6,692**
Direct	15,733	$1,531	$1,531	$3,163
Indirect & Induced	18,952	$1,138	$2,032	$3,529
Component Units	**15,374**	**$1,127**	**$1,676**	**$3,697**
Direct	5,720	$483	$483	$1,520
Indirect & Induced	9,654	$645	$1,193	$2,178
Total	**89,755**	**$7,117**	**$9,432**	**$16,631**
Direct	44,801	$4,355	$4,355	$7,798
Indirect & Induced	44,954	$2,763	$5,078	$8,833

Source: Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute analysis of University of Utah data using IMPLAN 2023

Economic Terms

Economic contribution: Contributions capture the extent of all university spending within the study region (regardless of the origin of funds) and show its reach and magnitude in the region. This study highlights the U's economic contributions from operations, construction, and capital spending. Including all spending enables reasonable comparisons with similar studies from other higher education institutions.

Economic impact: Impact studies measure changes in the size and structure of a region's economy when buyers purchase goods and services within the region with out-of-region or "new" money. This includes money generated outside the region and can also result from "import substitution," where residents would have to import goods and services if an industry did not exist locally. Impact analyses attempt to measure what portion of the contribution would not exist if the institution did not exist. The analysis considers non-resident student and visitor spending as economic impacts, as these studies count only spending from students and visitors from outside the study region.

Appendix A provides an economic impact analysis of University of Utah operations, capital, and construction spending in addition to nonresident student and visitor spending. Because student and visitor spending only counts when it comes from out-of-state, the contribution and impact of this spending are equivalent.

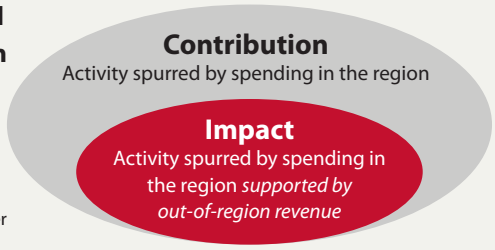
Direct spending by the university also generates economic effects that ripple through the economy, creating additional economic activity. The analysis estimates this through:

- **Direct effects:** Generated by spending on wages of University of Utah employees and direct purchases from vendors within the study region.
- **Indirect effects:** Produced when the U's local suppliers hire employees and make purchases from other local vendors.
- **Induced effects:** Occur when employees of the U and its suppliers spend their wages in the local economy.

The analysis estimates economic effects through four measures: jobs, earnings, gross domestic product (GDP), and output. These measures capture different aspects of the economy and are not summable.

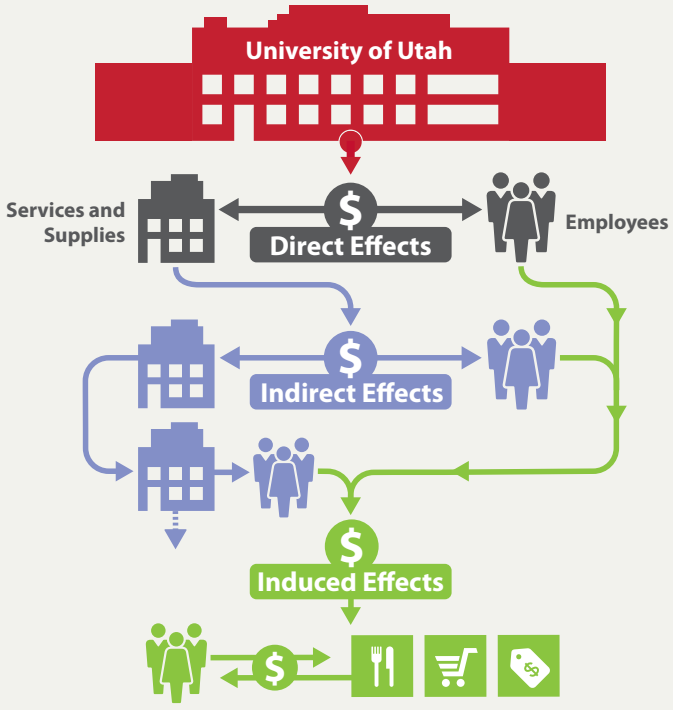
- **Jobs:** The annual average number of full-time and part-time jobs (not workers) counted equally, including wage and salary and self-employed positions.
- **Earnings:** The total of wage and salary disbursements, employer-paid benefits and payroll taxes, and self-employment income.
- **GDP:** The market value of all goods and services produced in Utah capturing only the "value added" by labor and capital, avoiding double-counting intermediate sales. GDP provides the most common measure of total economic activity in a region and equals total output less the value of intermediate inputs purchased to produce that output.
- **Output:** The gross value of all transactions in a region's economy, representing total industry sales and reflecting both final purchases and intermediate inputs resulting in double-counting of some intermediate purchases.

Figure 4: Visual Representation of Economic Contribution and Impact



Source: Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute

Figure 5: Economic Flow of Direct, Indirect, and Induced Economic Effects



Source: Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute

construction projects and capital purchases often extend over multiple years and vary annually, the analysis uses a 5-year average of annual expenditures (FY 2020 to FY 2024).

The U's average annual spending on capital and construction totaled $747 million with $116 million spent on capital investments and $631 million spent on construction. This spending supports 5,590 jobs, $406 million in earnings, $739 million in GDP, and $1,246 million in output (Table 5).

Nonresident Student Spending

While the U enrolls many local students, a portion of its student body comes from out-of-state. These students bring new money to the region as they spend money off campus on housing, food from local grocery stores and restaurants, transportation, entertainment, and recreation at local venues. In the 2023-24 academic year, more than 10,000 out-of-state students attended the U in-person, making up 30.2% of the in-person student population (Table 6).

Table 5: University of Utah Construction and Capital Spending Statewide Economic Contribution, FY 2024
Dollars in Millions

	Jobs	Earnings	GDP	Output
Campus	3,617	$264	$478	$809
Hospitals & Clinics	1,381	$98	$180	$301
Component Units	592	$44	$80	$136
Total	**5,590**	**$406**	**$739**	**$1,246**

Note: Includes direct, indirect, and induced effects stemming from $747 million of direct expenditures with an estimated $710 million occurring in-state.
Source: Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute analysis of University of Utah data using IMPLAN 2023

Table 6: University of Utah Students, Fall 2023

	Campus	Share of Total Students	Share of In-Person Students
In-Person	34,083	96.7%	100.0%
In-State	23,806	NA	69.8%
Out-of-State	10,277	NA	30.2%
Online/International Campuses	1,153	3.3%	NA
Total	**35,236**	**100.0%**	**NA**

NA: Not applicable.
Source: University of Utah

Table 7: University of Utah Out-of-State Student Spending Statewide Economic Impact, FY 2024
Dollars in Millions

	Jobs	Earnings	GDP	Output
Total	**1,800**	**$73**	**$173**	**$251**

Note: Includes direct, indirect, and induced effects stemming from $172 million of direct expenditures with an estimated $156 million occurring in-state.
Source: Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute analysis of University of Utah data using IMPLAN 2023

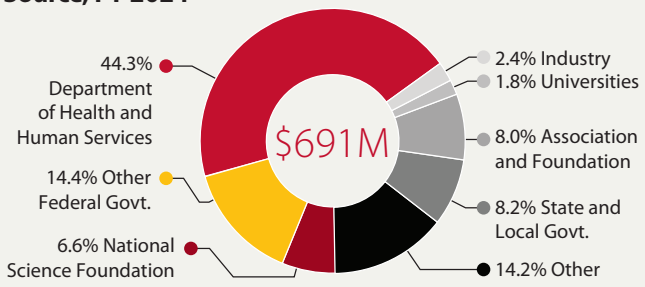
The Economic Contribution of University of Utah Research

As an R1 research university, the U attracts substantial research funding and advances innovation. The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education designates R1 status to doctoral universities engaged in the highest levels of research activity reflected in research expenditures, staffing, and number of doctoral degrees awarded. These institutions lead innovation, employ faculty at the top of their field, and provide students with access to state-of-the-art equipment and hands-on research experience.

The University of Utah secured $691 million in research funding in FY 2024, with two-thirds directly from federal sources (Figure 6). When including federal funds that flow through other entities, 77.5% of research funding originates federally. These external research dollars boost Utah's economy by driving additional economic activity statewide.

The economic contribution from the U's research activity is generated by its research spending. The U spent $703.1 million dollars on research-related expenditures in FY 2024. This spending resulted in an economic contribution of 12,572 jobs, $557 million in earnings, $768 million in GDP, and $1.5 billion in output (Table 8).

Figure 6: University of Utah Research Funding by Source, FY 2024



Source: University of Utah Office of Sponsored Projects

Table 8: University of Utah Research Economic Contribution, FY 2024
Dollars in Millions

	Jobs	Earnings	GDP	Output
U Research Total	**12,572**	**$557**	**$768**	**$1,532**
Direct	8,318	$312	$312	$703
Indirect & Induced	4,254	$245	$457	$829

Source: Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute analysis of University of Utah data using IMPLAN 2023

Each nonresident student spent an estimated $16,000 off campus in FY 2024. This amount excludes tuition, on-campus housing, and other on-campus expenses accounted for in the university's operational expenditures. After accounting for estimated wages earned in-state, total net off-campus spending amounts to about $172 million in FY 2024. This spending supported 1,800 jobs, $73 million in earnings, $173 million in GDP, and $251 million in output statewide (Table 7).

Visitor Spending

Out-of-state visitor spending also contributes to the University of Utah's economic impact. This analysis accounts for estimated spending from visitors attending arts and athletic events, campus tours, and commencement.

- **Arts and Athletic Events** – The U issued more than 500,000 tickets for arts and athletic events in the 2023-24 academic year, drawing nearly 20,000 out-of-state visitors.
- **Campus Tours** – The U provided campus tours to 15,000 students and guests in the 2023-24 academic year. These tours drew 11,100 out-of-state visitors.
- **Commencement** – The University of Utah graduated more than 8,000 students in 2024. Based on student origin data and estimating an average of two guests per graduate, the U's commencement brought about 7,000 out-of-state visitors to campus.

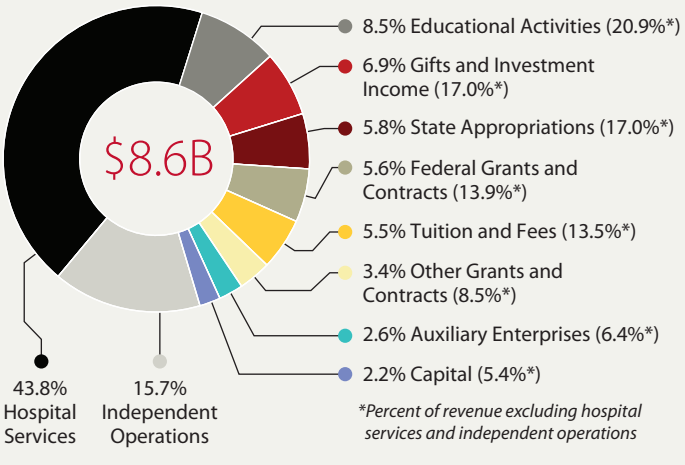
These visitors support Utah's economy through spending on lodging, food, and recreational activities. The U's out-of-state visitors spent an estimated $3.8 million in FY 2024, resulting in an economic contribution of 45 jobs, $2 million in earnings, $4 million in GDP, and $6 million in output. This visitor-spending contribution estimate very likely understates total economic effects, as some out-of-state visitors come to attend other university events or to visit a student, patient, or staff member for reasons other than those included in the analysis.

University of Utah Funding Overview

The University of Utah's FY 2024 revenue totaled $8.6 billion. Hospital services represent the largest share, accounting for 43.8% of total revenue. This reflects the scale of the university's academic medical enterprise. Independent operations (primarily component units including UURF, ARUP, UUHIP, CNS, and EMSE) contribute an additional 15.7%. Other sources of revenue are more evenly distributed across tuition and fees, state appropriations, federal and other grants and contracts, gifts and investment income, auxiliary enterprises, and educational activities (Figure 7).

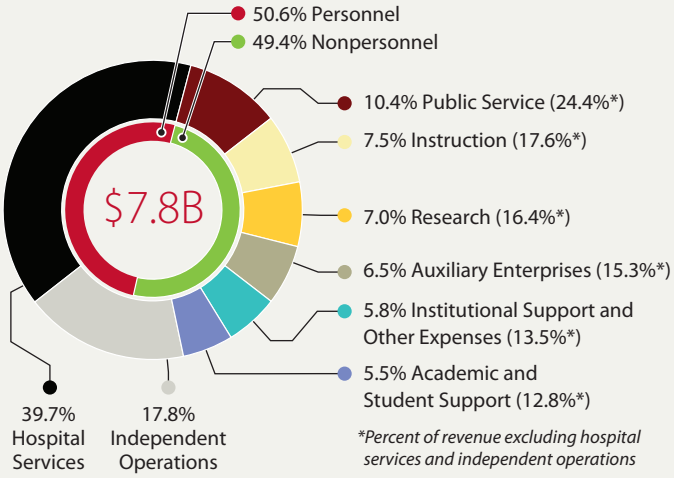
The U's FY 2024 expenditures totaled $7.8 billion. Hospital services account for the largest share of spending, at 39.7%, while independent operations make up an additional 17.8%. Excluding hospital services and independent operations, public service represents the largest share of spending (24.4%), followed by instruction (17.6%), research (16.4%), auxiliary enterprises (15.3%), institutional support and other expenses (13.5%), and academic and student support (12.8%) (Figure 8). More than half of total expenses support salaries and benefits of U employees.

Figure 7: University of Utah Revenue, FY 2024



Source: National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Integrated Postsecondary Data System (IPEDS)

Figure 8: University of Utah Expenses, FY 2024



Source: National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Integrated Postsecondary Data System (IPEDS)

Societal Benefits

The University of Utah generates societal benefits that extend beyond economic contributions. These contributions are central to the U's mission and its value to the state of Utah. While not comprehensive of all U programs and services, the programs described in this section highlight some of the societal benefits the U provides in four key areas: workforce quality and development, research and commercialization, student experience, and community supports and services.

Workforce Quality and Development

Economies grow by transforming lower-value inputs into higher-value outputs through factor accumulation (capital and labor) and productivity (the efficiency of turning inputs into outputs). Some refer to factor accumulation and productivity as the "proximate causes of growth."

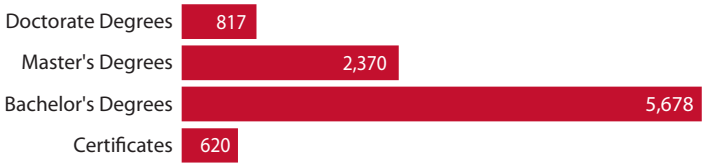
Labor, or human capital, plays a critical role in this process. While population growth determines labor *quantity*, education shapes labor *quality*. The University of Utah enhances workforce quality by preparing students for the job market through access to high-quality education, research opportunities, and hands-on learning across its statewide campus network, thereby increasing productivity and economic output. The university further strengthens human capital through its health system, as healthier individuals can work longer, more effectively, and with greater cognitive capacity.

The University of Utah educates more than 35,000 students across more than 100 undergraduate majors and more than 200 graduate programs. The U awarded more than 9,000 degrees and certificates during the 2023-24 academic year, preparing students for various careers in Utah's economy (Figure 9, Table 9). Nearly three-quarters of U graduates continue to support the Utah economy as they live and work in Utah after graduation.

University of Utah Graduates

Most U graduates live and work in Utah, continuing to contribute to the Utah economy as they enter the workforce. About two-thirds of graduates work in-state one year after graduation and this increases to nearly three-quarters of graduates working in-state five years after graduation (based on 2019 and 2023 graduating cohorts) (Table 10). This likely reflects graduates leaving Utah to complete residencies, fellowships, or early-career training outside Utah before returning to the state. These alumni provide a skilled workforce and support economic growth through spending on goods and services and increased tax contributions. On average, Utah residents with higher educational attainment earn higher wages, resulting in increased consumption and larger tax contributions than those with lower educational attainment (Figure 10). Data for U graduates also show an association between higher educational attainment and higher wages with graduate degree holders earning significantly more on average than those with a bachelor's degree (Table 11).

Figure 9: University of Utah Degrees and Certificates Awarded by Award Level, 2023-24



Source: National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Integrated Postsecondary Data System (IPEDS)

Table 9: University of Utah Degrees and Certificates Awarded by Area of Study, 2023-24

Area of Study	Awards
Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services	1,381
Health Professions and Related Programs	1,124
Computer and Information Sciences and Support Services	1,007
Social Sciences	900
Engineering	822
Biological and Biomedical Sciences	667
Psychology	621
Visual and Performing Arts	469
Public Administration and Social Service Professions	417
Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies	301
Communication, Journalism, and Related Programs	275
Mathematics and Statistics	218
Education	212
Physical Sciences	200
Legal Professions and Studies	164
Family and Consumer Sciences/Human Sciences	155
English Language and Literature/Letters	116
Foreign Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics	94
History	79
Area, Ethnic, Cultural, Gender, and Group Studies	78
Architecture and Related Services	66
Natural Resources and Conservation	46
Parks, Recreation, Leisure, Fitness, and Kinesiology	36
Philosophy and Religious Studies	27
Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies, and Humanities	8
Homeland Security, Law Enforcement, Firefighting, and Related Protective Services	2
Total	**9,485**

Source: National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Integrated Postsecondary Data System (IPEDS)

University of Utah Vision, Mission, and Values

Vision: To improve the life and health of every Utahn and advance a new national higher education model for delivering societal impact.

Mission: The University of Utah drives unsurpassed societal impact by preparing students from diverse backgrounds to be leaders and global citizens who strengthen our society and democracy; generating and sharing new knowledge, discoveries and innovations that supercharge our economy and improve lives locally, nationally and globally; and engaging local, national and global communities to promote education, health and quality of life.

Values:

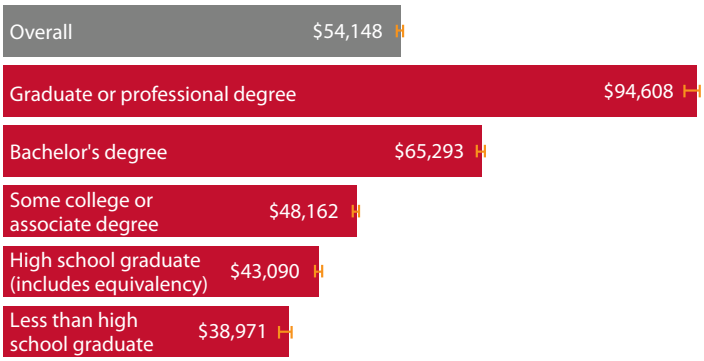
- ***Inspire Students:*** We awaken curiosity and fortify students as they explore their potential, pursue their dreams, and achieve success.
- ***Accelerate Discovery:*** We deliver transformative research and practical solutions that impact lives and improve the world.
- ***Serve Communities:*** We care deeply for our students, patients, society and world, and recognize the inherent dignity of all people.
- ***Promote Wellbeing:*** We cultivate wellbeing, resilience, safety and thriving through clinical care, research, community engagement, and collaboration across differences.
- ***Be Entrepreneurial:*** We encourage hard work and grit, using our resources to empower brilliant minds and bold ideas that drive progress and deliver results.
- ***Amplify Place:*** We honor our unique history and treasure the majesty of our surroundings—urban, rural, and unmatched in outdoor opportunities.

Table 10: University of Utah Graduates Employment Status

	2019 Cohort					2023 Cohort		
	Total Graduates	Employed in Utah One Year After Graduation		Employed in Utah Five Years After Graduation		Total Graduates	Employed in Utah One Year After Graduation	
		Number	Share	Number	Share		Number	Share
Resident	5,954	4,702	79.0%	5,032	84.5%	6,419	5,178	80.7%
Nonresident	2,784	1,292	46.4%	1,405	50.5%	3,068	1,251	40.8%
Total	**8,738**	**5,994**	**68.6%**	**6,437**	**73.7%**	**9,487**	**6,429**	**67.8%**

Note: These data capture employment in firms that report to the unemployment insurance program, which includes most Utah employees. Data does not include self-employed individuals, federal employees, or military personnel. Nonresident means a person ever listed as an out-of-state student prior to graduation.
Source: Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute analysis of Utah Data Research Center data

Figure 10: Utah Median Earnings by Educational Attainment, 2024



Note: Data for the population age 25+. Earnings include wages or salary from a job, or income from self-employment. These survey-based estimates remain subject to sample variation. Each estimate shows its 90% confidence interval. This interval represents a plausible range of population values in light of information in the sample, with a 90% degree of confidence. Reported values for groups with nonoverlapping error bars are statistically different to the same degree of confidence.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2024 5-Year American Community Survey estimates

Table 11: Average Annual Wages of University of Utah Graduates

FY 2024 Dollars

	2019 Cohort		2023 Cohort
Award Level	One Year Post-graduation	Five Years Post-graduation	One Year Post-graduation
Bachelor's	$50,153	$58,790	$55,233
Graduate	$92,431	$100,525	$83,213

Note: These data capture the wages of employees in firms that report to the unemployment insurance program, which includes most Utah firms. Data does not include self-employed individuals, federal employees, or military personnel. The 5-year post graduation wages for the 2019 cohort excludes students who reenrolled.
Source: Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute analysis of Utah Data Research Center data

Clinical and Health Workforce Training

As the state's only academic medical system, the University of Utah plays a central role in preparing Utah's health care workforce. University of Utah Health includes five schools and colleges—the College of Health, College of Nursing, College of Pharmacy, Spencer Fox Eccles School of Medicine, and School of Dentistry—and is home to the Spencer S. Eccles Health Sciences Library. The university enrolled 6,360 students in health-related degree and certificate programs in 2023-24, and graduated 1,376 health professionals, helping meet statewide demand for skilled clinicians.[3]

Clinical education at the University of Utah closely aligns with workforce needs and includes supervised training in hospitals, clinics, and community-based settings throughout the state. These experiences prepare graduates to enter practice with job-ready skills and support the delivery of care in both urban and rural communities. The university trains approximately two-thirds of Utah's physicians and many of the state's other health care professionals. Health care is the fastest-growing industry in both Utah and the nation, with demand expected to increase as the population ages. As a result, the University of Utah's role in preparing the health care workforce will remain critical.

Advanced Degree Production

The University of Utah plays a central role in producing advanced degrees in Utah, supplying the state with highly skilled workers across a wide range of fields. The university awarded 3,187 graduate degrees in 2023-24, accounting for 42.8% of all graduate degrees awarded statewide. Its contribution is especially pronounced at the doctoral level, where the University of Utah awarded 817 doctorates, representing 65.9% of all doctoral degrees awarded in Utah. The university also awarded 2,370 master's degrees (38.2% of all master's degrees statewide), underscoring its role as the state's primary provider of advanced workforce training (Figure 11).

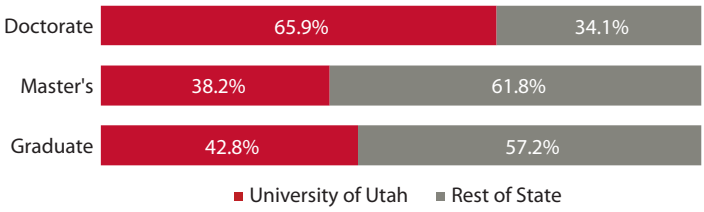
Statewide Reach

The University of Utah serves students from all 29 counties in Utah, drawing learners from urban, suburban, and rural communities. As Utah's flagship public research university, the University of Utah serves the entire state and supports statewide workforce development as many graduates return to their home communities or enter high-need fields across the state.

Research and Commercialization

As a nationally recognized R1 university and member of the Association of American Universities (AAU), the U supports a high level of research activity. More than 960,000 square feet of campus space is dedicated to research, which spans basic and applied science, engineering, health and medicine, business, social sciences, and the humanities. Through this research, the university advances discovery, attracts significant external funding, and translates knowledge into real-world applications that benefit Utah's economy, health, and communities.

Figure 11: Advanced Degrees Awarded in Utah, 2023–24



Note: Western Governors University excluded due to its fully online, national student population. When including only Utah System of Higher Education institutions, the U awards more than half of all graduate degrees and nearly 84% of doctoral degrees.
Source: National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Integrated Postsecondary Data System (IPEDS)

Research Addressing Utah's Challenges

Many University of Utah researchers focus on current and future challenges facing Utah such as the Great Salt Lake, water scarcity and climate resilience, air quality along the Wasatch Front, population growth and housing, mental health and substance use, chronic disease, and workforce and economic change. University researchers produce evidence-based insights that inform public decision-making, support community resilience, and improve life quality for Utahns statewide.

Undergraduate Research

The Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR) supports student engagement in research and creative activity. Through faculty-mentored projects, research scholarships, and campus-wide showcases, undergraduate research provides students with hands-on experience that strengthens analytical, technical, and problem-solving skills. OUR funded 686 students, engaged 474 research mentors, and supported 1,060 student presentations and publications in the 2023-24 academic year. These experiences prepare students for graduate study and research-intensive careers while contributing to the university's broader research mission.[4]

University of Utah Health Research

Research at University of Utah Health integrates scientific discovery with clinical care to improve health outcomes and advance medical knowledge. Faculty and researchers conduct translational and clinical research in areas such as cancer, genetics, neuroscience, cardiovascular disease, population health, and precision medicine. U of U Health also supports more than 25 institutes and centers, such as Huntsman Cancer Institute and the Huntsman Mental Health Institute, that drive innovation in patient care, inform public health practice, and strengthen Utah's position as a leader in medical research and health sciences.[5]

Huntsman Cancer Institute serves as Utah's official cancer center and is the only National Cancer Institute–designated Comprehensive Cancer Center in the Mountain West. It leads

the nation in inherited cancer gene discovery and supports more than 300 active clinical trials. The institute also manages the Utah Population Database, a globally unique resource linking multi-generational demographic and health data from more than 11 million individuals to advance cancer, genetic, and population health research.[6]

Lassonde Entrepreneur Institute

The Lassonde Entrepreneur Institute fosters innovation and entrepreneurship by supporting students as they develop and launch new ideas, companies, and initiatives. The institute provides programs, seed funding, mentorship, and workspace to support student success, including overseeing the Lassonde Studios, a residential and innovation hub housing more than 400 students and a 20,000-square-foot startup workspace. The University of Utah's entrepreneurship program ranks in the top five among public universities nationally. Lassonde engaged 6,800 students and supported 508 student startup teams in 2024.[7]

Technology Transfer and Commercialization

The University of Utah's Technology Licensing Office supports the transformation of research into real-world impact by guiding faculty, staff, and students through the commercialization process—from protecting intellectual property to launching successful startups. The University of Utah ranks among the top 10 public universities for issued patents and licensing revenue. The university generated $31.3 million in licensing revenue in FY 2024, executed 25 licenses, issued 24 patents, filed 87 patent applications, received 327 invention disclosures, and launched four startup companies.

Student Experience

The University of Utah provides a supportive, engaging, and connected experience for its students. Through a combination of campus life, residential education, mentorship and advising, experiential learning, global engagement, and career preparation, the university offers multiple pathways for students to build community, access resources, and apply learning beyond the classroom. These experiences support student retention and completion by helping students form meaningful connections, navigate academic pathways, and remain engaged.

Student Involvement and Traditions

Student involvement and campus traditions play an important role in University of Utah student experiences. The university supports more than 600 student organizations, offering students a wide range of opportunities to engage with peers, develop leadership skills, and build community outside the classroom. Signature events like Crimson Nights, Welcome Week, Homecoming, Redfest, and seasonal festivals also support campus life. One of the most visible traditions is the Mighty Utah Student Section (MUSS), the university's official student fan organization for athletics, known for its spirited support at football, basketball, and other games. Collectively, these organizations and traditions help foster connection, pride, and shared experiences among U students.[8,9]

Living-Learning Communities

The University of Utah expanded on-campus housing and residential programming in recent years to strengthen student experiences. Approximately 5,000 undergraduate students live in university residence halls, and the university guarantees housing for all first-year students. The University of Utah also offers about 20 Living-Learning Communities (LLCs) and themed housing options that bring together students with shared academic, extracurricular, or community interests. These residences often pair residential life with coursework or coordinated programming. Examples include Outdoor Adventure in Kahlert Village, Innovators at Lassonde Studios, and the Bennion Service House at Officers Circle.[10]

Mentorship and Student Support

The University of Utah supports student success through integrated mentorship, advising, and career preparation services that help students navigate their academic pathways and transition into the workforce. Faculty, staff, and peer mentors provide guidance on academic planning, research opportunities, and career exploration, supported by tools such as Navigate U that connect students with campus resources and coordinated outreach. U Career Success offers students and recent graduates resume and interview support, internships, employer connections, and career coaching.[11,12]

Experiential Learning and Civic Engagement

The University of Utah provides students with a wide range of experiential learning opportunities that connect classroom learning with real-world application. The Hinckley Institute of Politics, for example, offers students from all majors internships and other learning opportunities with government, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and policy organizations at the local, national, and international levels. These experiences help students develop skills in critical thinking, communication, leadership, and civic awareness. The institute also hosts public forums and discussions on civic and policy issues, fostering informed engagement and community discussions.[13]

Global Engagement

The University of Utah offers students a range of global engagement opportunities that foster cross-cultural learning and prepare graduates for careers in an increasingly interconnected world. Through study abroad programs, international coursework, and academic experiences at locations such as the University of Utah Asia Campus in Incheon, South Korea and the U's Center for Business, Health, and Prosperity in Kpong Ghana,

students can gain international exposure while earning their degrees. The Office of Global Engagement supports these efforts by coordinating international programs, partnerships, and services.

The University of Utah serves more than 3,000 international students annually. These students help contribute to a student experience that emphasizes global awareness and cultural competency.[14]

Community Supports and Services

The University of Utah advances its public mission by providing programs, services, and partnerships that connect the campus with the broader community. Through community-based engagement, educational outreach, health services, and public access to campus resources, the university works to address local challenges, reduce barriers to opportunity, and improve life quality. The U also invites the public to participate in community lectures, athletic events, performances, exhibitions, and volunteer opportunities. These efforts reflect the university's commitment to "unsurpassed societal impact."

University Neighborhood Partners

University Neighborhood Partners (UNP) works with local schools, community centers, and nonprofits to address educational barriers in underserved communities in and around Salt Lake City. UNP operates the Hartland Partnership Center, where residents can access free resources such as English classes, computer labs, afterschool and summer programs, mental health support, and health clinics, many of which are staffed by U faculty and student volunteers. In FY 2024, UNP worked with 172 organizations, 619 people participated in leadership programs, and 1,376 people received free health services. UNP also facilitates community-based research, where university researchers work with residents to study and solve local issues.[15]

Bennion Center

The Bennion Center connects students to community engagement and volunteer opportunities. Each year, the center coordinates dozens of student-led service teams and one-day volunteer projects that address a broad range of issues such as homelessness, environmental conservation, youth mentoring, and public health. The Legacy of Lowell Day, for example, mobilizes hundreds of volunteers on projects across the Salt Lake valley. The Bennion Center also supports Community Engaged Learning (CEL) courses, where students earn credit while working on community-identified projects, as well as alternative spring break trips that send students to serve in various communities. The Bennion Center engaged 2,749 students in 42,368 community hours in FY 2024, serving 150 community partners.[16]

Continuing Education

The University of Utah extends its educational mission beyond traditional degree programs through Continuing Education, which provides learning opportunities for individuals at all stages of life including K–12 students, current and prospective undergraduates, international students, and adult learners. Programs include academic and noncredit coursework, English language instruction, youth education, professional training and certification, and personal enrichment offerings designed to build skills, support workforce development, and promote lifelong learning. About 30,000 people attend Continuing Education's 2,700 classes annually through flexible delivery formats, community partnerships, and programs offered both on and off campus.[17]

Community Health and Well-Being

University of Utah Health supports community health and well-being across Utah by expanding access to health care, serving underserved populations, and investing in public health initiatives. This includes providing charitable care, community clinics, health outreach programs, and partnering with local and state organizations to address pressing needs such as mental health, substance use, and access to timely care. For example, University of Utah Health provided approximately $118 million in uncompensated care in FY 2024 and the Huntsman Mental Health Institute leads several community-based mental health and crisis response initiatives. The university is also constructing a new hospital and health campus in West Valley City, expanding access to comprehensive health services in one of Utah's most diverse and underserved communities.[18]

Arts & Culture

The University of Utah serves as a cultural and civic resource by providing public access to a wide range of museums, gardens, libraries, performance venues, and shared spaces. Red Butte Garden, the official State Arboretum of Utah, spans 100 acres, features more than 3,000 plant species, and hosts education and public events. The Utah Museum of Fine Arts hosts rotating exhibitions and maintains a collection of nearly 20,000 works of art representing diverse cultures and historical periods, while the Natural History Museum of Utah highlights the state's natural and cultural heritage through extensive collections in areas such as paleontology, ecology, and Indigenous history. The university also regularly holds athletic events, music and theater performances, lectures, exhibitions, and other campus gatherings, creating experiences that connect the campus and the broader community. These spaces and events attract thousands of visitors each year.[19]

Appendix A: Impact Analysis

Many university "economic impact studies" capture activity beyond a true economic impact, incorrectly labelling economic contributions as "impacts."[20] Because of this, the results of the economic contribution analysis presented in the main body of the report is likely best suited for comparison with other studies. The economic impact analysis results presented here in Appendix A illustrate the net-new economic activity attributable to the University of Utah.

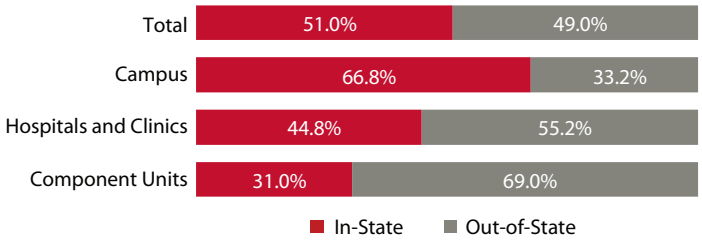
Economic impact refers to the portion of the economic contribution financed by out-of-region revenue. In other words, economic impacts occur when purchasers spend "new money" from outside the regional economy within the region. In other words, the U's economic impact represents the piece of the Utah economy that would not exist without the U. It assumes that without the U, the revenue it currently brings in from outside Utah would not be a part of the state's economy.

Nearly half of all University of Utah revenue represents new money to Utah's economy. This includes about a third of campus revenue, 55.2% of hospitals and clinics' revenue, and 69.0% of component unit revenue (Figure 12). Hospitals and clinics account for nearly half of the university's total out-of-state revenue driven primarily by out-of-state patient care, Medicare, and the federally funded portion of Medicaid. More than a quarter of the U's external revenue comes from component units, largely ARUP Laboratories. The largest out-of-state revenue sources for campus-related activities come from federal grants and contracts and tuition and fees from out-of-state students and in-state students receiving federal aid (Figure 13).

Similar to the economic contribution analysis, the U's total economic impact derives from four different types of spending: its out-of-state financed operations, construction and capital spending, and nonresident student and visitor spending. This economic impact totals 47,438 jobs, $3.6 billion in earnings, $5.0 billion in GDP, and $9.0 billion in output (Table 12).

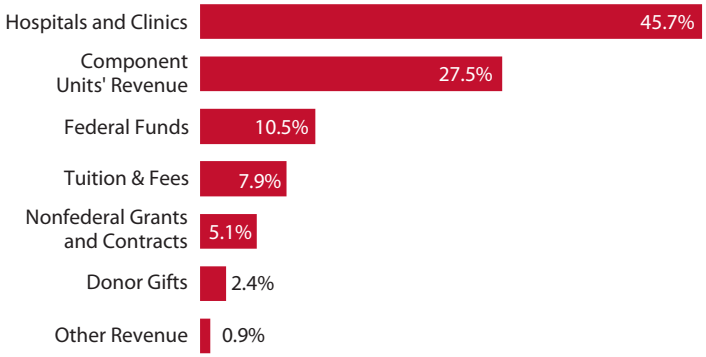
Additional fiscal impacts associated with higher education in general are not captured in this report. These range from narrower estimates tied to university-related tax revenues and public service costs, to broader long-term effects associated with a more highly educated population. Future research will explore these broader fiscal impacts.

Figure 12: University of Utah Revenue by Origin, FY 2024



Source: Kem C. Gardner Institute analysis of University of Utah data

Figure 13: University of Utah Out-of-State Revenue by Source, FY 2024



Source: Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute analysis of University of Utah Data

Table 12: University of Utah Statewide Economic Impact, FY 2024

Dollars in Millions

	Jobs	Earnings	GDP	Output
Campus	**16,158**	**$1,251**	**$1,711**	**$2,578**
Direct	7,727	$766	$766	$1,023
Indirect & Induced	8,431	$486	$945	$1,555
Hospitals & Clinics	**19,898**	**$1,526**	**$2,065**	**$3,858**
Direct	8,680	$844	$844	$1,745
Indirect & Induced	11,218	$682	$1,221	$2,113
Component Units	**11,382**	**$840**	**$1,227**	**$2,568**
Direct	4,529	$383	$383	$1,049
Indirect & Induced	6,853	$456	$844	$1,519
Total	**47,438**	**$3,617**	**$5,003**	**$9,004**
Direct	20,937	$1,993	$1,993	$3,817
Indirect & Induced	26,501	$1,624	$3,010	$5,187

Source: Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute analysis of University of Utah data using IMPLAN 2023

Appendix B: Methods

Model Construction

The economic contribution and impact analyses use a custom, multi-regional, 528-sector economic model for Utah. Built using IMPLAN's 2023 database, the model uses input-output (I-O) and social account matrix (SAM) frameworks to estimate how activity in one industry affects the entire economy. While analysts widely use IMPLAN, REMI PI+, and RIMS II for economic impact and contribution analyses, they most commonly utilize IMPLAN to estimate university contributions and impacts. As with any economic model, the accuracy of IMPLAN results depends on the fidelity of model assumptions and the quality of input data.

IMPLAN operates under key I-O model assumptions:

1. *Constant returns to scale* – Inputs per unit of output remain constant.
2. *Fixed input and technology structure* – The mix of inputs and technology necessary to produce a unit of output does not vary.
3. *Zero supply constraints* – Access to in-region and out-of-region raw materials and labor is unlimited.
4. *Fixed output mix* – An industry will produce the same mix of outputs at any level of production.
5. *Static model* – Prices and industry relationships do not change.

Input Data and Geographic Scope

The report's economic contribution and impact analyses use University of Utah FY 2024 revenue and expenditure data, adjusted to prevent double counting. For example, this report excludes student spending on tuition, fees, and on-campus housing, which serves as revenue for the institution, from the student spending analysis and captures it only in university operational spending. This study measures the U's contribution and impact to the state of Utah.

Measuring Economic Effects

The study utilizes multi-regional input-output (MRIO) analysis, inputting direct spending in Utah's Greater Salt Lake Region (Box Elder, Cache, Davis, Juab, Morgan, Rich, Salt Lake, Summit, Tooele, Utah, Wasatch, and Weber counties) measuring regional effects and effects on the rest of the state. Summing these produces the total effects on Utah as reported.

Operations

The study employs an industry impact analysis technique to measure the economic contribution of university operations broken out by campus, hospitals and clinics, and component units. The operations analysis includes:

- *Direct jobs* – average annual jobs.
- *Direct earnings* – Total payroll expenditures (wages, salaries, benefits, and payroll taxes).
- *Intermediate inputs* – Non-payroll operational spending (excluding capital, construction, scholarship spending, out-of-state travel expenses, and debt payments).
- *Output* – The sum of total labor income, intermediate inputs, taxes on production and imports (TOPI), and other property income (OPI). Given the U's status as a state entity, the analysis sets TOPI and OPI at zero. This results in direct earnings equaling direct GDP.

Direct payroll models labor income that results in induced effects while intermediate inputs model intermediate demand changes that spur additional induced and indirect effects. The analysis models the U's campus spending with a custom spending pattern aligned to actual expenditures (Table 13). The analysis includes all in-state travel expenses, with 50% allocated to hotels, 25% to ground transportation, and 25% to restaurants. For out-of-state travel and unknown travel, the analysis allocates 40% of total expenses to air transportation (80%) and ground transportation (20%) assuming the hotel and restaurant spending occurred primarily out-of-state.

The report models hospital and clinic spending using IMPLAN Industry 472 (Hospitals), and component units in their applicable industries: ARUP Laboratories in Industry 469 (Medical and Diagnostic Laboratories); Community Nursing Services (CNS) in Industry 470 (Home Health Care Services); University of Utah Research Foundation (UURF) and the Dolores Doré Eccles Endowment for Medical School Excellence (EMSE) in Industry 504 (Grantmaking, Giving, and Social Advocacy Organizations); and University of Utah Health Insurance Plans (UUHIP) in Industry 426 (Insurance Carriers).

The U provided the revenue data used to estimate the economic impact (Appendix A). Economic impacts measure the economic activity of spending supported by out-of-region revenue. For statewide impacts, this analysis adjusts all inputs based on the share of out-of-state revenue.

Construction and Capital

Due to the multi-year and variable nature of construction projects and capital purchases, the analysis models these purchases using a 5-year average of expenditures, adjusted to FY 2024 dollars. This analysis models construction expenditures for buildings as industry output in IMPLAN 48: construction of new educational and vocational structures. It models construction expenditures related to structure improvements as IMPLAN 55: maintenance and repair construction.

The analysis models capital expenditures as commodity output events. While the U provided total capital expenditures, detailed capital expenditure data were not available. The analysis estimates capital expenditure categories using IMPLAN Furniture,

Table 13: University of Utah Campus Spending Pattern, FY 2024

IMPLAN Commodity Code	IMPLAN Commodity Category	Share of Spending
3034	Electricity	2.9%
3043	Natural gas distribution	1.1%
3044	Water, sewage and other systems	1.4%
3055	Maintained and repaired nonresidential structures	5.9%
3145	Printing support services	0.5%
3287	Electronic computers	1.0%
3306	Analytical laboratory instruments	7.0%
3324	Automobiles and light duty motor vehicles	0.4%
3367	Office supplies (except paper)	0.8%
3374	All other miscellaneous manufactured products	7.2%
3396	Air transportation services	1.8%
3399	Truck transportation services	0.1%
3400	Transit and ground passenger transportation services	0.5%
3407	Books	1.9%
3410	Software publishers	2.7%
3415	Wired telecommunications	3.7%
3426	Other insurance	2.4%
3430	Tenant-occupied real estate services	0.9%
3432	Automotive equipment rental and leasing services	0.1%
3435	Commercial and industrial machinery and equipment rental and leasing services	1.1%
3436	Leasing of nonfinancial intangible assets	0.02%
3443	Other computer related services, including facilities management services	2.4%
3444	Management consulting services	0.1%
3446	Scientific research and development services	10.5%
3447	Advertising, public relations, and related services	2.3%
3450	All other miscellaneous professional, scientific, and technical services	1.4%
3458	Services to buildings	0.2%
3460	Other support services	20.1%
3464	Other educational services	16.3%
3489	Hotels and motel services, including casino hotels	0.2%
3493	All other food and drinking place services	2.1%
3505	Business and professional services	0.8%
3508	U.S. Postal delivery services	0.1%

Source: Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute analysis of University of Utah data using IMPLAN 2023

Fixtures, and Equipment (FF&E) investment patterns adjusted where specific information was known. Campus capital spending was modeled using Industry 6100 (Educational Services); hospital and clinic spending using Industry 622H (Hospitals); ARUP Laboratories using Industry 5412 (Miscellaneous Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services); Community Nursing Services (CNS) using Industry 6210 (Ambulatory Health Care Services); and University of Utah Health Insurance Plans (UUHIP) using Industry 524A (Insurance Carriers). The analysis then adjusted inputs based on the university's out-of-state revenue shares to estimate statewide economic impacts.

Nonresident Students

The U provided student headcount data with the number of students attending from in-state and out-of-state (Table 6). The analysis excludes online and international campus students and assumes that living expenses (e.g., food) do not differ between full-time and part-time students. The U also provided cost of attendance estimates for the 2023-24 academic year.

The analysis assumes each student attended two semesters and excludes spending on tuition/fees, books/supplies, and on-campus housing given these are included in the university's operational expenditures. To finalize nonresident student spending estimates, the analysis adjusted expenditures to account for student earnings in Utah for consistency with the exclusion of off-campus spending of resident students from the analysis. Because only out-of-state student spending is included, less wages earned in-state, the economic contribution of nonresident students equals the economic impact.

The Gardner Institute obtained wage data from the Utah Data Research Center (UDRC) for all U students for FY 2024. Based on these data, approximately 47.8% of out-of-state students earned wages in state with average annual earnings of $11,000 (FY 2024 dollars).

To refine the estimate, the analysis used two-thirds of these wages to account for two semesters of attendance and then applied a spending share for off-campus housing, food, transportation, and personal expenses, adjusting for excluded costs (tuition/fees and books/supplies). The analysis then multiplied these adjusted average wages by the number of students working out-of-state and subtracted this amount from total spending.

After calculating direct spending, the Gardner Institute used IMPLAN to estimate indirect and induced contributions. The analysis modeled spending as industry output events across eight IMPLAN industries using the following assumptions:

- Off-campus housing estimates in IMPLAN 430: Tenant-occupied housing.
- Food spending estimates in IMPLAN 493: All other food and drinking places.
- Transportation expenses split among IMPLAN 391: Retail – Gasoline Stores, 426: Insurance carriers, except direct life, and 594: Automotive repair and maintenance, except car washes.
- Personal expenses under 395: Retail – Miscellaneous store retailers, 486: Other amusement and recreation, and 499: Personal Care Services.

The analysis based the share of spending in each category on spending data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Expenditure Survey for the under 30 population.

The analysis likely reflects conservative estimates for several reasons:

1. Some students attend three semesters or live in-region year-round leading to higher spending than accounted for in the estimates.
2. The analysis excludes all spending on books and supplies since the share spent off-campus could not be determined.
3. Cost of attendance data likely underestimates spending. While these estimates provide something close to a minimum cost of living for students, some students likely exceed these estimates while living in-region.

Nonresident Visitors

To estimate the economic effects of nonresident visitor spending, the analysis estimates both total visitors and average spending per visitor. Visitor spending estimates include three University of Utah event types: athletic & arts events, campus tours, and commencement. The analysis conservatively assumes nonresident visitors spend one day in-region for these events.

After estimating the total number of visitors, the analysis applies total spending assumptions and expenditure patterns to estimate total visitor spending. The analysis uses Omnitrak's general leisure visitor profile data for Salt Lake City for the three most recent years (2022-2024) to derive total spending and expenditure pattern assumptions. The analysis applies the spending patterns and amount spent per day by Salt Lake City visitors to the estimated number of U visitors. Based on these data, an average visitor spends a total of $90 per day. The analysis models this spending as industry output across eight IMPLAN categories (Table 14). The analysis multiplies average spending in each category by the estimated number of visitors from out of state before modeling.

Table 14: University of Utah Estimated Visitor Spending, FY 2024

IMPLAN Industry Code	IMPLAN Industry Description	Average Spending (Per Person Per Day)
400	Transit & Ground Transportation	$1
432	Automotive Equipment Rental & Leasing	$6
391	Retail - Gasoline Store	$6
489	Hotels/motels	$28
493	All other food and drinking places	$23
389	Food and beverage stores	$7
486	Other amusement & recreation services	$11
395	Miscellaneous retail	$6
502	Other Personal Services	$2
Total		**$90**

Note: Based on the Omnitrak general leisure profile for Salt Lake City from 2022 to 2024, inflation-adjusted to 2024 dollars.
Source: Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute analysis of Omnitrak data using IMPLAN 2023

Research

The study employs an industry impact analysis technique to estimate the economic contribution of U research activities. This estimate uses the U's FY 2024 total research expenditures ($703 million) along with research-related jobs (8,318) and earnings ($311 million). The analysis models inputs across two industry codes: 463: Junior colleges, colleges, universities, and professional schools; and 446: Scientific research and development services. The contribution estimate provided in the report averages these two sets of results. This approach offers a high-level estimate of economic activity tied to research operations.

Graduate Analysis

The Utah Data Research Center (UDRC) provided data on U graduates from 2019 and 2023. These data include the degree/award, residency status, whether the individual was working in-state (based on uninsurance claims from DWS), and their wages for one- and five-years post-graduation (if working). These data come from educational records (Utah System of Higher Education) and workforce records (Utah Department of Workforce Services). The Gardner Institute then calculated the share of graduates working in-state and average wages one- and five-years post-graduation by residency status and degree type.

Utah Data Research Center Disclaimer

Some of the data for this research was accessible through Utah's state longitudinal data system database administered by the Utah Data Research Center, which includes data supplied by UDRC members. This research, including the methods, results, and conclusions neither necessarily reflect the views of, nor are endorsed by, the UDRC members. All errors are the responsibility of the author.

Endnotes

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