

Increasing Post-Secondary Attainment: The Economic Upside of What Voters Want

What's the Issue?

Arizona has a major opportunity to strengthen its talent pipeline. By increasing post-secondary attainment, the state can ensure that high-value jobs are filled by Arizonans, rather than relying on importing workers from other states, unlocking billions in economic growth and new tax revenues.

By 2033, Arizona is projected to have nearly 82,000 job openings annually requiring an associate degree or higher. Yet current pathways produce only about 10,000 graduates per year, leaving 72,000 high-wage positions available for Arizonans. Filling these roles locally could generate \$20 billion in economic output, \$8 billion in wages, and \$740 million in tax revenues each year.

Voters across all demographics and party affiliations overwhelmingly support advancing and investing in post-secondary attainment. According to Center for the Future of Arizona's **2024 Arizona Voters' Agenda**: 85% of voters support increasing the number of students who complete post-secondary education or training and 79% agree public universities and community colleges are a state investment priority.

Bottom line: There is strong consensus across all political affiliations for investments in post-secondary education and increasing post-secondary attainment.

What Arizona Stands to Gain

Post-secondary education is not only a pathway to individual success but also a fundamental driver of Arizona's economic future.

- Lifetime earnings in Arizona rise from \$2.8 million with a high school diploma to \$3.3 million with an associate degree and \$4.7 million with a bachelor's degree.
- If Arizona matches national averages for post-secondary enrollment and completions, over \$5 billion in cumulative tax revenue is gained over 10 years.

The Economic Case for Action on Post-Secondary Attainment

With broad voter support and clear economic benefits, increasing postsecondary attainment is one of Arizona's most powerful tools for filling critical workforce gaps, strengthening long-term economic growth, and improving outcomes for individuals and communities.

Voter-backed priorities like post-secondary attainment offer a high return for Arizona and a strong foundation for long-term prosperity.

More at arizonafuture.org/UnlockPotential