



Region 2 of Virginia INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM REVIEW 2024-2025



REGION 2 OF VIRGINIA:

- Cities of Covington, Lynchburg, Radford, Roanoke, Salem
- Counties of Alleghany, Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford, Botetourt, Campbell, Craig, Floyd, Franklin, Giles, Montgomery, Pulaski, Roanoke

TARGETED INDUSTRY CLUSTERS

- Manufacturing
- Life Science & Health Care
- Food & Beverage Processing
- Emerging Technology & IT



KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- GO Virginia Region 2 slightly decreased in job growth YoY, but the region's population growth slightly increased +1,372 YoY for a second consecutive year (+1,208 previously).
- Every sub-region in Region 2 decreased in the number of IT/Software employment jobs (381 cumulatively), and in overall regional employment (587 cumulatively), with the exception of Roanoke.
- Annual mean wages across all occupations increased per sub-region, with the exception of the NRV, which decreased in IT wages in 2025.
- Unemployment rate rose from 3.1% to 3.6%, which is below the national average of 4.3% (Q3 '25) & the employee turnover rate slightly declined from 8.6% to 8.5%, indicating a cooler labor market.

Total Region 2 Population =

780,987

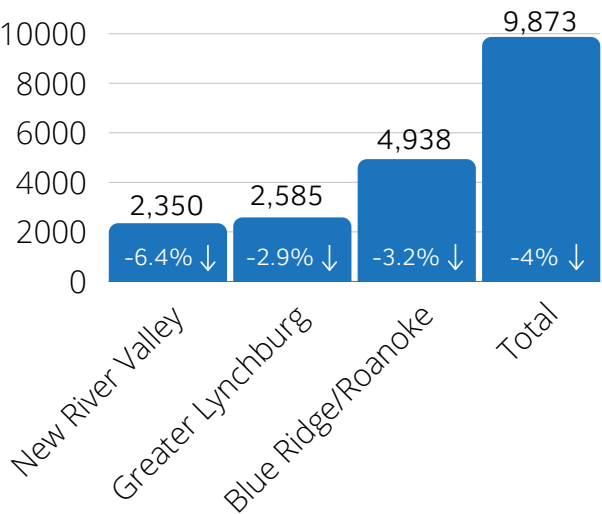
New River Valley:	181,664
Blue Ridge/Roanoke Valley:	335,525
Greater Lynchburg/Central VA:	263,798

Total population increased by 1,372 from 2024 to 2025.

Region 2 Employment and Mean Wages (2025)

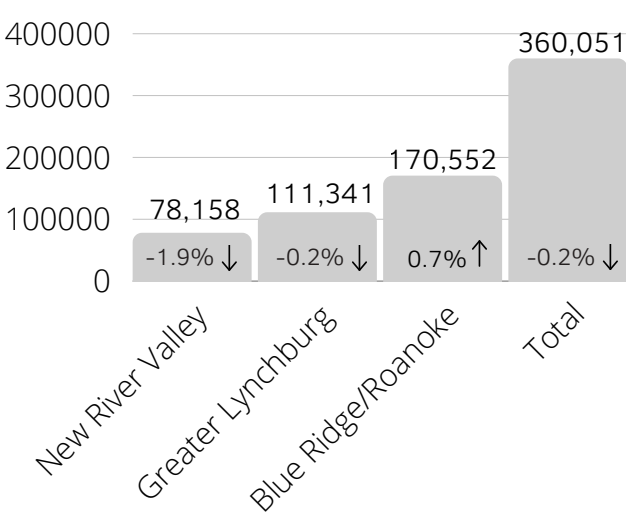
IT & Software Employment

IT/Software employment decreased by 381 from Q3 '24 to Q3 '25, with respective sub-regional declines defined below



All Regional Employment

Regional employment decreased by 587 from Q3 '24 to Q3 '25, with respective sub-regional distinctions defined below



Annual Mean Wages: IT & Software Development

New River Valley:	\$104,000 ('25) \$105,100 ('24)
Blue Ridge/Roanoke Valley:	\$106,800 ('25) \$104,800 ('24)
Greater Lynchburg:	\$112,100 ('25) \$106,800 ('24)

Annual Mean Wages: All Occupations

New River Valley:	\$63,700 ('25) \$61,000 ('24)
Blue Ridge/Roanoke Valley:	\$61,600 ('25) \$59,700 ('24)
Greater Lynchburg:	\$61,500 ('25) \$58,800 ('24)

RBIA EARLY-STAGE STARTUP SUPPORT

- **Pitch & Polish Clinics:** RAMP offered four Pitch & Polish Clinics in 2025, supporting seven startups with one-on-one presentation and business model feedback, as they pitched their businesses to a private team of regional mentors. Stay informed on [RAMP's event calendar](#) for future clinics offered free to the early-stage startup community.



Ecosystem Navigator

- **Ecosystem Navigator Program:** RBIA launched a new Ecosystem Navigator Program (ENP) in 2024, serving 20 entrepreneurs in its first year, which shares an abundance of resources for tech and life sciences entrepreneurs. Continuing its momentum in 2025, ENP served 32 new entrepreneurs. The program is free and open to the public, offering participants the chance to reach their goals through one-on-one coaching, customized assessments, introductions to entrepreneur support organizations, and connection recommendations to community events and workshops. [Book a one-one-one session today!](#)
- **On RAMP:** [On RAMP](#) is a pre-accelerator program geared towards innovators in the tech or health and life sciences spaces. While the program launched in 2024 serving five initial startup founders, RAMP provided early-stage coaching support and education to 15 entrepreneurs, representing nine startup teams through its two cohorts offered in 2025. Each cohort provides entrepreneurship and business strategy support, mentorship, external programs, and resources.

2026 Criteria to Apply:

- Participate in two, one-and-a-half-hour weekly sessions over four weeks virtually.
- Founders are located and operating in Virginia, with an idea that involves innovation in technology or in health and life sciences.
- Founders have identified a problem hypothesis and hypothesis solution that could be commercialized into a business (*an incorporated business is not required*).
- On RAMP & ENP are provided by a GO Virginia Strengthening Entrepreneurs' Impact and EDA Economic Adjustment Assistance Grants.

OTHER INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM SUPPORT



VIPC's Commonwealth Commercialization Fund (CCF) provided one higher education grant totaling \$96,330 to Virginia Tech in 2025, and four CCF scholarship grants to support RAMP companies, totaling \$80,000. Furthermore, four Launch Grants were awarded in 2025 to four Region 2 companies, which included awards to three RAMP alumni companies. The Launch Grant is a \$50,000 grant opportunity for the next generation of transformative companies at the earliest stage of formation that have the potential to commercialize innovation and generate strong economic impact in VA.



Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center ([VTCRC](#)), where education meets business, is helping shape the future of innovation across the Commonwealth. By connecting research, talent, entrepreneurs, industry, and strategic partners, VTCRC is accelerating the movement of ideas into real-world solutions through initiatives including the Entrepreneur Resource Center (ERC), COgro Coworking + Labs, and the Secure Energy Future Center (SEFC).



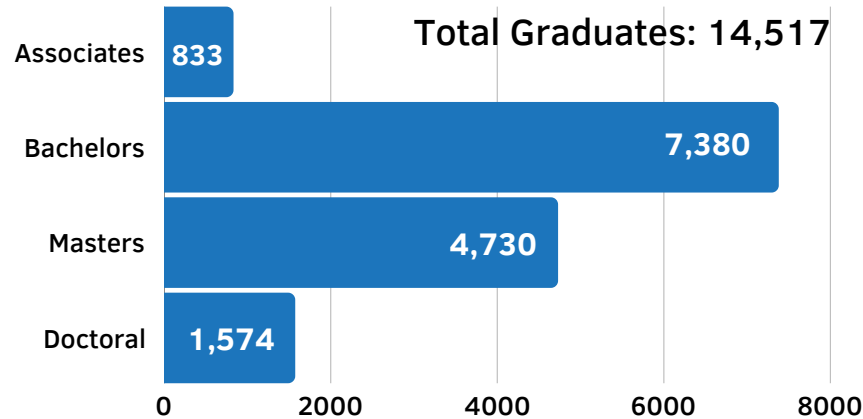
Innovation Commercialization Assistance Program ([ICAP](#)), is a program of [VASBDC](#), and a partner of RAMP. ICAP assists Virginia-based tech and innovation-driven startups from ideation to seeking a Series A level of funding and beyond. ICAP offers services confidentially and at no cost to participants, helping to build out the Virginia entrepreneurship pipeline, and support On RAMP startups.



The Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) awarded \$15.7M in funds (of a \$25M project total) to the City of Roanoke to create 40,000 square feet of shared lab space and a biotech incubator in Roanoke, with partners Carilion Clinic, VT Corporate Research Center, Fralin Biomedical Research Institute at VTC, Virginia Western Community College, and the Roanoke Blacksburg Innovation Alliance. In calendar year 2025, construction and programming are on track for the grand opening of the lab space located at 1030 S. Jefferson St., in Roanoke, by the end of Q2 2026.

REGION 2 STEM-H GRADUATES

170 More Graduates in 2024 than in 2023



Source: The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).
Data current as of Nov. 2025.

STEM-H Talent Pipeline

HEALTH
GRADUATES

4,140



+75
from 2023

SCIENCE
GRADUATES

6,089



+256
from 2023

MATHEMATICS
GRADUATES

252



+1
from 2023

COMPUTER SCIENCE
GRADUATES

1,393



-47 from 2023

ENGINEERING
GRADUATES

2,643



-115 from 2023

Region 2 Higher Education Institutions

**Doctoral-Granting Public
Institutions:** Radford
University; Virginia Tech

**Doctoral-Granting Private
Institutions:** Edward Via
School of Osteopathic
Medicine (VCOM); Liberty
University; University of
Lynchburg

4-Year Private Institutions:
Ferrum College; Hollins
University; Roanoke College;
Sweet Briar College

Community Colleges: Central
Virginia Community College;
Mountain Gateway Community
College; New River Community
College; Virginia Western
Community College

Regional Internship Programs

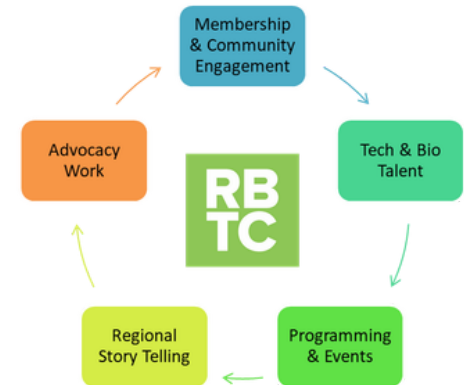
[Onboard|ROA](#) is an [8-week summer onboarding program](#) led by Get2KnowNoke, the Roanoke Regional Partnership's talent attraction brand, that helps young professionals ages 18-26 explore the region, make connections, polish their professional skills, and fall in love with the Roanoke lifestyle.

[Onward New River Valley's NRV Experience Internship Program](#) is an eight-week summer curriculum designed to support employer internship programs by allowing interns to see if the New River Valley (NRV) is a natural fit for them post-graduation. The primary purpose of this program is to increase the number of young professionals living and working in the NRV. In 2025, 14 companies participated, with 35 interns enrolled and 27 who successfully completed the program! The 2025 cohort represented eight different states and countries. Since 2020, we've retained 26 young professionals in the NRV!

Part of Virginia's statewide [Virginia Talent + Opportunity Partnership](#) (V-TOP), the Region 2 Institution-led Partnership strengthens how colleges and universities prepare and connect students to internships and other work-based learning opportunities across the New River Valley, Roanoke-Alleghany, and Greater Lynchburg regions. In coordination with [InternshipsVA](#), which expands employer participation and internship opportunities, the partnership helps ensure more students are ready for and able to access meaningful, paid experiences.

RBTC'S VISION ON TALENT

The Roanoke-Blacksburg Technology Council (RBTC) is committed to supporting the region in one of the most pressing areas for growth - access to talent. In today's dynamic and ever-changing market, RBTC's goal is to help stakeholders and members understand, navigate, and connect with high-quality tech and biotech talent that will drive the region's economic vitality. RBTC's 2025 talent initiatives, included:



Network Development At **RBTC PROGRAMS & EVENTS**

- [Second Annual ChangeMakerZ](#): This 10-month RBTC-program aimed to keep tech and biotech talent in the region, launched Aug. 2025, offering training on leadership, communication, problem-solving, and hard/soft skills growth for eight young professionals from six regional companies. Learn more about the [ChangeMakerZ impact from alumni](#).
- [Second Annual RBTC Emerging Tech Conference \(ETC\)](#): ETC at The Hotel Roanoke and Conference Center on Oct. 30-31, 2025, drew more than 450 participants and 80 speakers, which nearly doubled attendance from 2024. Participants could choose from 10 different tracks encompassing AI, biotech, cybersecurity, manufacturing, startups, STEM-H, and talent, including a new Radford University Cyber Track. Two dynamic breakout sessions focused on strengthening the region's tech talent pipeline and connecting job seekers with opportunity, including a Carilion Talent Session, and an Employer Roundtable with nearly 30 job seekers and seven regional employers.
- [Beer & Biotech](#): In 2025, nine Beer & Biotech events were hosted to further support post doc and grad students desiring to stay in the region.
- [New AI Decoded Series](#): A new AI workshop series was launched in May 2025 to support the regional workforce with topics and discussions surrounding AI. Seven events were hosted in 2025, with guest speakers and presenters in the field!
- [RBTC Event Calendar](#): Stay connected to the RBTC calendar with many offerings throughout the year!

Access to **REGIONAL TALENT**

- [RBTC Job Board](#): The job board attracts tech/biotech professionals to RBTC members and regional employers. In 2025, RBTC supported job seekers with custom job reports, as well as opportunities for career coaching and resources.

Connection to **RESOURCES**

- [Regional Talent Coalition](#): Formed in 2022 by the RBTC, this coalition convenes quarterly to collaborate on talent programs and grow the region, represented by Onward NRV, Virginia Tech, Radford University, Virginia Western Community College (VWCC), New River Community College, Roanoke Regional Partnership, Blue Ridge Partnership for Health & Life Science Careers, Greater Roanoke Workforce Development Board, and Mount Rogers Workforce Development.
- [Data Tools](#): RBTC secured powerful data tools to support companies in 2025 with actionable insights and key data on labor markets, industry trends, and talent. A new data-driven tech talent webinar series supported by Stuart Mease, launched in 2025, which was a four-part series hosted by the RBTC. Recordings are available by request.

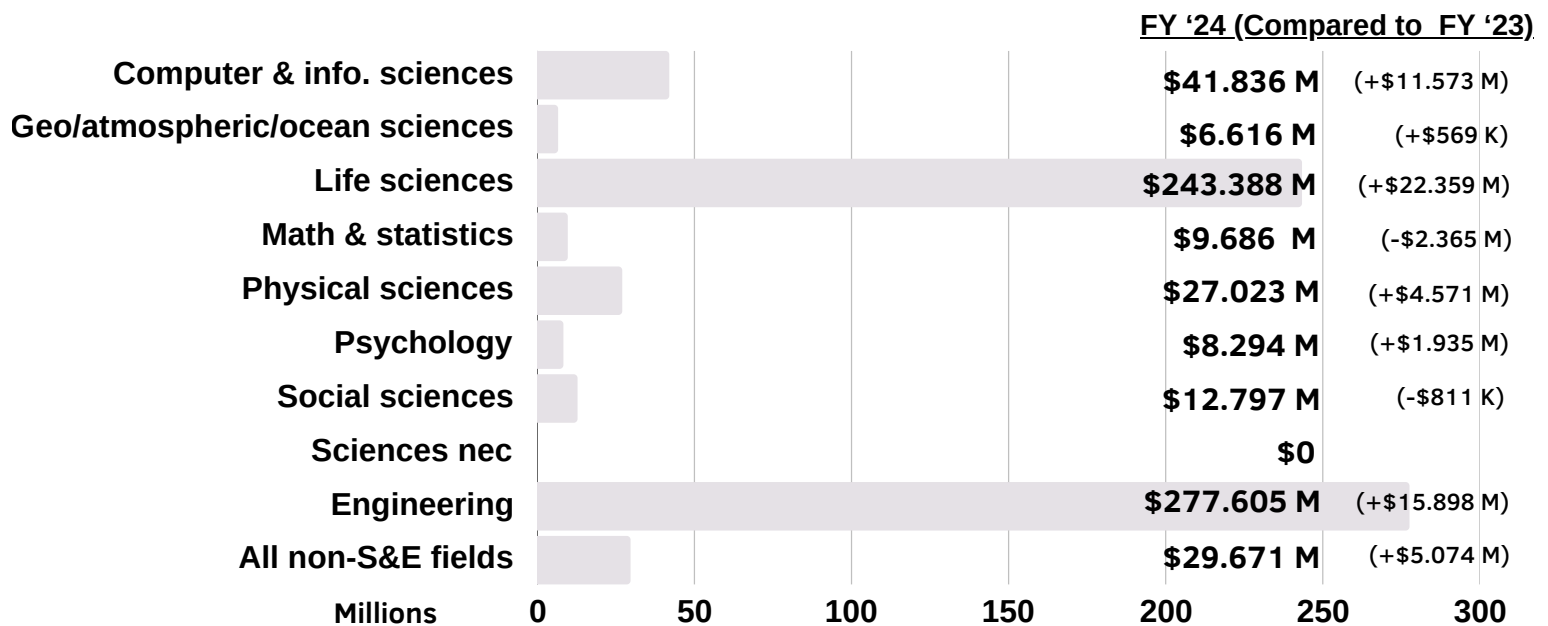
INNOVATION PIPELINE

R&D expenditures and patents filed are assets to be leveraged and commercialized in a region's innovation pipeline. Virginia Tech's research & development expenditures in FY 2024 was roughly \$656.9M. It ranked second only to the University of Virginia (at about \$813.8M), among universities and institutions in the Commonwealth of Virginia. For a more in-depth exploration of the data on this page tracked over the past five years plus, please visit <https://rbia.tech/innovation-dashboard>.

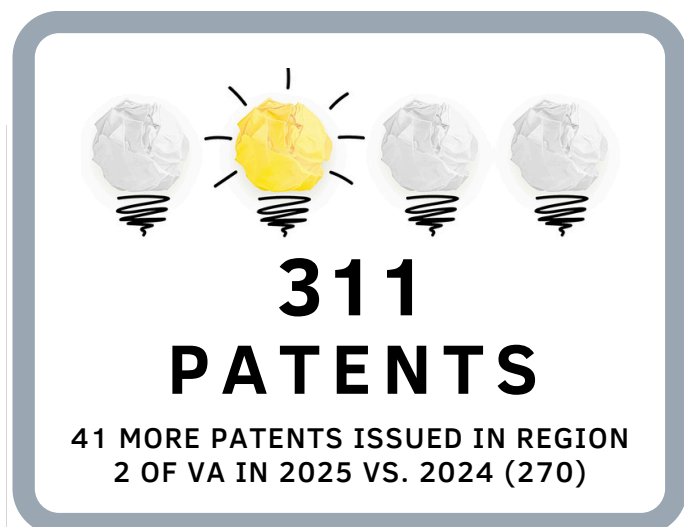
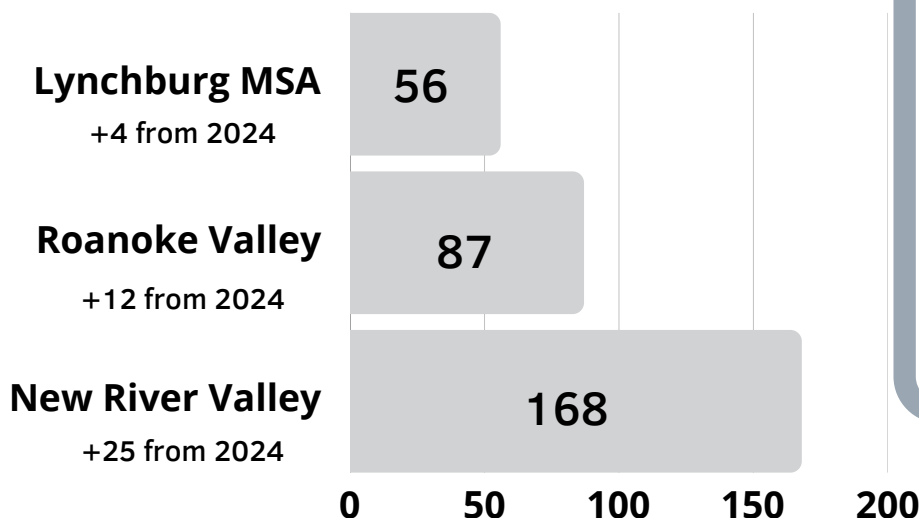
VIRGINIA TECH TOTAL R&D EXPENDITURES PER FIELD (FY 2024) = \$656,916,000

Cumulative total R&D expenditures increased in FY 2024 from FY 2023 by \$58.8M. View the chart below to observe the comparative data on FY 2024 R&D expenditures per field from FY 2023.

Source: National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, Higher Education Research and Development Survey, FY 2024 (released 02/26)



Patents by Region (2025)



Source: U.S Patent and Trademark Office
(Data current through year end 2025)

CAPITAL ECOSYSTEM



RBIA and [Common Wealth Angels \(CWA\)](#) announced the relaunch of a private capital investment organization in Dec. 2024. In 2025, 20 companies applied, 12 companies were vetted for investment, 7 companies pitched to CWA, and due diligence was provided to 5 companies, just to name a few impact outcomes. CWA funds innovation in the Roanoke and New River Valleys and beyond through investment in high-growth startups alongside venture capital funds and other angel investment organizations. [Learn more about how to join CWA](#) as an investor or to apply for investment as a startup in 2026.



[Carilion Clinic Innovation \(CCI\)](#) is dedicated to translating novel healthcare ideas into transformative solutions. In 2025, they engaged 150+ inventors, evaluated 28 new disclosures, and advanced 12 active projects. CCI filed 9 new patents, contributing to a growing portfolio that spans wearable therapeutics, implantable monitoring solutions, and hospital operations innovations. By bridging clinical insight with disciplined development, CCI continues to accelerate innovation that enhances patient care and healthcare efficiency.



[Virginia Tech's \(VT\) LAUNCH Center for New Ventures](#) and [LICENSE Center for Technology Commercialization](#) support the commercialization efforts of new technologies emerging from VT research. LAUNCH's entrepreneurial support programs, mentoring, & funding encompass a wide range of engagement with the VT research community. LAUNCH's Startup Labs, a series of 8 topical entrepreneurship training modules that also provide professional development credits to VT faculty and graduate students, served 50+ researchers in 2025. VT LAUNCH also provides NSF I-Corps programming & engaged with 50 people in 2025 with information sessions & online training through the I-Corps Mid-Atlantic Regional Hub. Through the Commonwealth Cyber Initiative (CCI), LAUNCH engaged with dozens of CCI researchers, including funding & advising to two fellows in 2025 in VT's Presidential Postdoc Program Innovation Fellowship Track, a highly competitive fellowship program supporting postdoc candidates with commercialization efforts. LAUNCH engaged with 100+ researchers through the LAUNCH Proof-of-Concept Program, a competitive non-dilutive grant program, providing support to 10 teams. The LICENSE team engaged with 150+ researchers in 2025, as well as numerous external parties about licensing opportunities, and dozens of companies in market assessment activities.

 SBIR-STTR America's Seed Fund™ POWERED BY SBA	2024	2025
Region 2 SBIR/STTR Deals	37	32
Region 2 Companies Awarded	19	15
Region 2 Total Value (\$)	~\$19.35 M	~\$24.42 M
Region 2 SBIR/STTR Grants Captured in Virginia (%)	10%	9%

2025 Capital Invested
\$4.55 M VC Investments for Five Region 2 Companies (\$12 M reported in 2024)
\$7.86 M Angel/Seed Investments for Six Region 2 Companies (\$160k reported in 2024)
3 Mergers/Acquisitions
Source: 2026 PitchBook data & other data sources; comparative data YoY: rbia.tech/innovation-dashboard

REGIONAL SPOTLIGHTS



In 2025, Google announced their intention to build a data center campus in the Greenfield Industrial Park in [Botetourt County](#). The data center campus will bring a minimum investment of \$1B to an entirely new sector to the county. The project will be a massive boon for local revenues to support schools, public safety, and the local economy. In 2025, there was significant expansion of Munters, a leading company in the community manufacturing cooling systems, as they purchased an additional 29-acre parcel within Greenfield, built a second manufacturing facility, with an accompanying investment of \$30M and over 200 jobs. Botetourt was able to award \$74K in grants (doubling investments from the previous year) to 20 small businesses from the Botetourt Small Business Grant Program. Also, \$12M in funding was awarded to Comcast to bring Fiber internet to the last remaining unserved area of the County.



[Virginia Western](#) (VW) became the first Virginia institution to offer skills-based microcredentials through Bioscience



Core Skills Institute (BCSI), and Biotechnology Aptitude and Competency Exam (BACE), awarding 50+ micro-credentials. They also partnered with Radford University to [redesign AI-focused transfer pathways](#). Through a National Science Foundation grant, VW expanded agriculture technology education by introducing hydroponics and real-time data analysis to local K-12 students, promoting early pathways in the Ag sector.

In 2025, the City of Salem continued its partnership with Roanoke College's (RC) Center for Leadership and Entrepreneurial Innovation as the financial partner for the RC Civic Challenge. The contest awards student cash prizes who propose innovative economic development ideas for City of Salem. The collaboration has sparked discussions about expanding programming, services, and space to support the growth of budding entrepreneurs. The City of Salem also appropriated funds to support the modification of a classroom at Salem High School, further committing to grow and support the School's CTE programming.



In 2025, four GO Virginia Region 2 projects advanced innovation and entrepreneurship across the region by strengthening key industry clusters and expanding support for startups and growing businesses. Project VITAL and Strengthening Entrepreneurs' Impact, both led by RBIA; the Center of Entrepreneurship at the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance; and cs/Root, led by Virginia Tech's College of Computer Science, collectively delivered high-impact programming and support to entrepreneurs. Across all active GO Virginia funded projects, partners engaged 87 entrepreneurs and 53 mentors, created 41 new jobs, and supported the launch of 8 new businesses and the expansion of 12 existing firms. Businesses and entrepreneurs served through these projects also raised \$13.7M+, reflecting the strong economic momentum generated by the region's innovation ecosystem.



Montgomery County has completed site improvements in 2025 to a new 20-acre pre-graded pad in Phase II of Falling Branch Corporate Park, in Christiansburg. Grading the pad and extending both utilities to the site and Parkway Drive to serve the new site, was supported by GO Virginia and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) grants. Following the construction of a sewer pump station later in 2026, the site will be considered a fully shovel-ready Tier 5 site by the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP). Work also continues to bring high speed fiber internet to rural areas through two Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VAIT) grants totaling over \$28 M. Phase I was completed in 2025, connecting over 1,300 homes and businesses in the eastern portion of the county. Phase II is now well underway, as project partners Appalachian Power and GigaBeam Networks are working towards over 10,000 rural homes and businesses the opportunity to connect to high-speed fiber internet.



In 2025, Radford University strengthened the local innovation ecosystem through expanded CoWorks@The HUB programming, active engagement with partners like the Radford Chamber of Commerce, and continued growth in CoWorks membership. Key events - including a Business Over Breakfast, Social Media Doing with AI and a Holiday Open House - connected CoWorks members with area businesses and the Radford University community, supporting entrepreneur growth and success stories such as Sarah Pullman's Millennial Fabrics, which graduated from the incubator into a stand-alone location. The Vinod Chachra IMPACT Lab hosted a cybersecurity track at the RBTC Emerging Tech Summit leveraging the programs from the HUB at Radford University.



In 2025, Roanoke College's Center for Leadership and Entrepreneurial Innovation (CLEI) strengthened its commitment to innovation by advancing the College's strategic focus on entrepreneurship, expanding workforce and industry partnerships, and investing in curricular innovation. CLEI also continued to equip students with hands-on entrepreneurial experiences through programs like The Pitch, the Salem Civic Challenge, and entrepreneur mentoring.



Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge ([Visit VBR](#)) celebrated record-breaking wins for tourism in 2025, in lodging demand, revenue, and digital engagement, which significantly outpaced state and national trends. Visitor spending continued to make a measurable difference for local residents, saving the average household \$347.38 in local taxes in 2024. Visit VBR's 2025 spring marketing campaign generated 27,000+ visits, and \$18 million+ in visitor spending, which was a 28:1 return on investment.



INDUSTRY HIGHLIGHTS



JANUARY: Torc Robotics (Blacksburg) and Aeva expanded their collaboration to develop a new safety architecture for autonomous trucking, sharing 4D LiDAR sensing data and a Freightliner Cascadia vehicle platform to advance Torc's Virtual Driver software. Source: [Aeva press release](#), Jan. 2, 2025.



FEBRUARY: Roanoke received an additional \$4 million in the state budget from the Virginia General Assembly to build out wet and dry lab space at its Jefferson Street biotech facility, aimed at attracting a cell and gene therapy company to the city's growing biotech corridor. Source: [WDBJ7](#), Feb. 27, 2025.



MARCH: Governor Youngkin announced Munters Corporation would invest \$29.95 million to build a 200,000-sq.-ft. expansion of its Botetourt County HVAC manufacturing facility, creating 270 jobs. Sources: [Virginia Economic Development Partnership](#); [Cardinal News](#); [WDBJ7](#); [WFXR](#), March 25, 2025.



APRIL: Novonesis announced a \$5 million expansion across three of its five Salem, VA facilities to enhance spore production capabilities, creating five new jobs over 18 months, supported by a \$50,000 Machine & Tool Tax Grant from the City of Salem. Sources: [City of Salem](#), Apr. 22, 2025; [WSLS 10](#), Apr. 23, 2025.



MAY: RBTC's TechNite marked its 25th anniversary at Virginia Tech's Beamer-Lawson Indoor Practice Facility, drawing nearly 500 attendees to celebrate the region's technology and life sciences community. The evening's honors included the induction of Carilion Clinic CEO Emerita Nancy Howell Agee into the RBTC Hall of Fame and recognition of Novonesis as Large Leading Tech Company of the Year. Sources: [Salem Times-Register](#), June 11, 2025; [Cardinal News](#), June 2, 2025 (event held May 29, 2025).



JUNE: RAMP's Spring 2025 Demo Day (June 5, One City Plaza Events) capped its 12-week accelerator program, with six cohort companies — Helix Acoustics, Huginn Sonography, Modern Reproduction, NebulaNeuro, Pod Farms, and QlutchQMS — pitching to the community. Source: [RAMP](#), June 5, 2025.



JULY: Optical Cable Corporation (Roanoke) and Lightera, LLC entered a strategic collaboration to expand fiber optic product offerings for the data center and enterprise markets. Source: [PR Newswire](#), July 7, 2025.



AUGUST: MELD Manufacturing (Christiansburg), a global leader in solid-state metal additive manufacturing, saw its patented technology adopted by the University of Sydney, which installed its first MELD machine at the Sydney Manufacturing Hub's Metallurgical Facility. Source: [MELD Manufacturing](#), Aug. 25, 2025.



SEPTEMBER: Researchers at The Tiny Cargo Company (Roanoke) discovered a way to extend the shelf life of their milk-exosome therapeutic delivery system, a step toward treating radiation-therapy and cardiac damage. Source: [Cardinal News](#), Sept. 18, 2025.



OCTOBER: Qentoros (Blacksburg), the equine orthobiologics startup founded by Jessica Gilbertie, was profiled for having secured over \$1.2 million in funding and its selection for Johnson & Johnson's JLABS Virtual Residency program. Source: [Virginia Tech News](#), Oct. 28, 2025.



NOVEMBER: Milkmade (RAMP Fall 2025 cohort), developing a smart device that measures breast milk output in real time, was invited to pitch at the Accelerate Investor Conference, validating its growing traction and investor visibility. Source: [RAMP Fall 2025 Recap](#), Dec. 1, 2025.



DECEMBER: Back to Eden (RAMP Fall 2025 cohort), developing a whole-food-based infant formula customized to individual infant needs, pitched at RAMP's Demo Day & Tech the Halls event. Source: [RAMP](#) — Demo Day held Dec. 3, 2025.

2025 RAMP IMPACT



The Roanoke Blacksburg Innovation Alliance (RBIA) received a \$577,800 GO Virginia Strengthening Entrepreneurs' Impact (SEI) grant, starting Dec. 2023, as part of a \$866,700 two-year+ project, to expand the Regional Accelerator & Mentoring Program (RAMP) with On RAMP & Exit RAMP. These expanded programs and services support early-stage startups & established, post-accelerated RAMP alumni companies, which were further supplemented by a Virginia Innovation Partnership Corporation Regional Innovation Fund (RIF) & a two-year U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) Economic Adjustment Assistance Grant (awarded in Q3 of 2024). Financial match partners & contributors of On RAMP & Exit RAMP-affiliated projects, include the City of Roanoke, Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center, Virginia Tech Foundation, Carilion Clinic Innovation, Montgomery County, Roanoke County, Botetourt County, Pulaski County, Giles County & City of Salem.

On & Exit RAMP Impact	Businesses Served	Mentors Engaged	Entrepreneurs Engaged	Jobs Created	Capital Raised	Businesses Expanded
New in 2025	30	26	67	45	\$18.61M	10
Since 2024	70	67	129	111	\$20.48M	31

*** Jobs created & capital raised numbers listed above are also inclusive of GO Virginia VITAL, a multiregional initiative of GO Virginia Regions 2, 4 & 9 to advance biotechnology across the Commonwealth of Virginia.

On RAMP

On RAMP supports early-stage companies in the technology and health & life science industries with a pre-accelerator program that launched in Q3 2024. On RAMP also provides continuous entrepreneurship support by means of Pitch & Polish Clinics & an Ecosystem Navigator Program (ENP), connecting entrepreneurs & early-stage startups to regional resources to launch & grow their businesses.

- 2025 ENP Sessions Offered **20**
 - Entrepreneurs Engaged **32**
- Pitch & Polish (P&P) Clinics Hosted **4**
 - Startups Served **7**
 - Mentor Panelists Involved **9**
- Total On RAMP Early-Stage Coaching Hours **73**
- On RAMP Cohorts Offered **2**
 - Startup Teams Served **9**
 - Entrepreneurs Engaged **15**
 - Mentors Involved **11**
 - Sessions Hosted (7 per cohort) **14**
 - Intro to Problem Discovery
 - Startup Testimonial
 - Market Segmentation & Customer Discovery
 - Local & State Resources
 - The Business Case
 - Social Capital & Pitch Prep
 - Elevator Pitch Presentations

Exit RAMP

Post-accelerator programming was provided to RAMP alumni through education, trainings, mentorship & events.

- Exit RAMP Cohort Provided (6-Part Series) **1**
 - Startups Served **3**
 - RAMP Alumni Founders Supported **5**
- Additional Exit RAMP Workshops Offered **3**
 - Total Alumni Attendees @ Workshops **23**
 - Feb. Sales Training **7**
 - Jun. Core Legal Concepts Workshop **6**
 - Oct. VIPC Launch Grant Session **10**
- 2nd Annual Investor Roadshow Attendees **48**
 - RAMP Alumni Businesses Served **3**
 - Investor Firms Present **11**

Business Growth

There were 20 RAMP alumni companies that expanded their businesses in 2025, based on these cumulative outcomes.

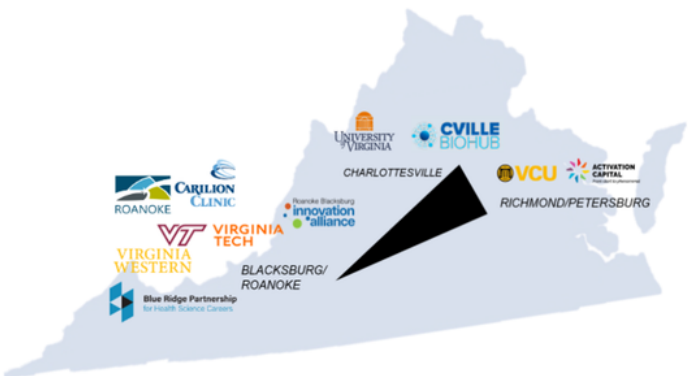
- Products Launched **5**
- Patents Filed **18**
- SBIR/STTR Applications Submitted **23**
- SBIR/STTR Awards Reported **7**
- Full Time Jobs Created (including VITAL) **8**
- Part Time Jobs Created (including VITAL) **37**
- Capital Raised (including GOVA VITAL grants, loans, private investment) **\$18.61M**

GO Virginia (GOVA) Project VITAL ([Virginia Innovations and Technology Advancements in Life Sciences](#)) accelerates bioscience innovation, job creation & economic growth, through a statewide partnership of GOVA Regions 2, 4 & 9, including Activation Capital & CvilleBioHub. This multiregional, three-year initiative is a \$14.4M grant investment to establish new research cores, expand workforce development programs & create a collaborative network connecting academic institutions with industry partners across the Commonwealth’s biotechnology corridor. Region 2 partners include RBIA, Carilion Clinic, Virginia Tech, Virginia Western Community College & Blue Ridge Partnership for Health Science Careers, along with 38 additional regional partners. RBIA serves as the fiscal agent to collectively secure significant funding that individual organizations could not pursue independently.

Region 2 Biotech Companies Impacted	Businesses Served	Employees Upskilled	Entrepreneurs Engaged	Jobs Created	Capital Raised
Year 1 Impact (2025)	48	14	10	61	\$14.2M
Project Completion (%)	48%	33%	18%	3%	28%

Project VITAL Beginnings

Governor Glenn Youngkin announced in December 2023, a \$90M investment to Virginia, among research institutions at UVA, Virginia Tech (VT) & VCU, to collaboratively build “Virginia’s research triangle” & launch a biotech, life sciences & pharmaceutical manufacturing network. Funds were allocated to UVA’s Manning Institute for Biotechnology (\$50M), VT’s Fralin Biomedical Research Institute at VTC (\$27M) & VCU’s Medicines for All Institute (\$13M), as these institutions partner with the Virginia Innovation Partnership Authority (VIPA) to collaborate on commercialization & startup support. Following this investment, a statewide partnership was formed in 2024, for GO Virginia Project VITAL, with the grant awarded & started in January 2025.



Key Partner Highlights

- 2025 Project Sustainability Revenue Raised **\$507,067**
 - 2025 New Donors Secured **12**
 - 3-Year Funding Pipeline (cash+pledges) **\$3.11M**
- Total Jobs Created **61**
 - Full Time Jobs **14**
 - Part Time Jobs **47**
- RBTC’s 2nd Annual Emerging Tech Conference
 - Total Attendees (doubling in size since ‘24) **500+**
- Virginia Tech LAUNCH Proof of Concept Program
 - Grants Awarded (2) **\$100k**
- Carilion Clinic’s Center for Human Factors Lab
 - Medtech Clients Served **16**
- Virginia Western Microcredential Exams Completed **149**
 - Biotech Credentials Earned **108**
 - Individuals Engaged **17**
- Blue Ridge Partnership for Health Science Careers
 - STEM Outreach Provided to K-8 Students **585**
 - Additional Classroom Visits Hosted **15**

New Program Launches

- FBRI Health Sciences & Technology Commercialization Fellows Inaugural Cohort (5 Graduates)
- Carilion Clinic Innovation’s (CCI) ISO Resource Program (in collaboration with Qlutch)
- VT LICENSE’s Virginia Fast Track License Initiative

The Roanoke Blacksburg Innovation Alliance (RBIA) is the catalyst that fuels the future with diverse economic impact, attracting world class talent and critical funding to the region, which includes alliance partners, the Regional Accelerator and Mentoring Program (RAMP), Roanoke Blacksburg Technology Council (RBTC) & Common Wealth Angels (CWA). RBIA provides vision, strategy, and development resources to advance the tech and biotech region forward.

Building Regional Coalitions

Coalitions: RBIA advances & supports regional priorities, entrepreneurship & innovation initiatives by working with ecosystem building coalitions, including the: Roanoke Biotech Project (\$25M), GO Virginia Project VITAL (\$14.4M statewide), Regional Talent Coalition, as well as convening various regional, state, federal, & capital groups.

Additional Regional Partnership Opportunities: Tech Hub AM2 Grant (\$1+M) GOVA/EDA, Tech Hub Pharmaceutical Grant (\$550K)

Common Wealth Angels (CWA): CWA is a Roanoke-based investment network that connects certified investors with high-growth startups, specifically in tech & life sciences. In 2025, 20 applied, 12 were vetted for investment & 7 pitched to the angels, with 3 companies receiving investment.



Expanding Accelerator Services



REGIONAL ACCELERATOR
AND MENTORING PROGRAM

Grant Support: RBIA/RAMP is supported by a federal EDA Economic Adjustment Assistance Grant (\$338,086) & state grants like a GO Virginia Strengthening Entrepreneurs' Impact Grant (\$577,800) & VIPC's Regional Innovation Fund (\$200k) to expand programming & services for On RAMP (pre-accelerator), Exit RAMP (alumni companies) & the In Residence Program, respectively. 2025 highlights, include:

On RAMP Cohorts (7 sessions each):	2
• Startup Teams Served	9
• Entrepreneurs Engaged	15
• Pitch & Polish (P&P) Clinics Hosted	4
◦ P&P Startups Served	7
• Fralin Fellows Supported at FBRI	5
• Ecosystem Navigator Consultations	20
• New Businesses Created	5
In Residence Cohorts (6 sessions each):	2
• Tech Startups Accelerated	1
• H&LS Startups Accelerated	10
• Founders Supported	16
• Total Non-Equity Funding Support	\$170k
◦ VIPC CCF Scholarships Offered	\$80k
Exit RAMP Alumni Companies Served:	38
• Business Growth in Alumni Companies	20
• Jobs Created (Full & Part Time)	45
• Total Capital Raised	\$18.61M
• Cumulative RAMP Mentors Involved	42

Advancing Biotech

Roanoke Biotech Project: Virginia Department of Housing & Community Development awarded \$15.7M to the City of Roanoke (2022), which RBIA received \$2.2M to support an innovation studio & programming, new labs & workspace for biotech companies. Construction & programming efforts are on track for the lab space to open by the end of Q2 2026!

Ecosystem Navigator Program (ENP): ENP has served 32 entrepreneurs & 13 businesses through 20 ENP sessions in 2025, supporting early-stage startups reduce their barriers to entry & connecting them to resources & introductions. Initially launched in 2024, ENP has cumulatively provided 40 consultations total.

Leading Ecosystem Building Activities



RBTC TechNite 25th Anniversary: On May 29, 400+ attendees celebrated & honored 12 innovation recipients, including the induction of Nancy Agee into the RBTC Hall of Fame, Ruby Award winner Marc Nelson & Hart of the Entrepreneur Impact Award given to Qentoros, which included a \$10k endowment prize. RBTC has 228 members & host events all year long.

Second Annual Emerging Technology Conference (ETC): On Oct. 30-31, 450 participants & 80 speakers gathered at The Hotel Roanoke to share global knowledge & resources with the ecosystem on emerging technologies, trends, social impact, best practices, and more. Participants could choose from 10 different tracks that customized their experience to their needs and interests that encompassed AI, biotech, cybersecurity, manufacturing, startups, STEM-H, and talent.

Tech Talent Initiatives: RBTC elevated regional tech talent by supporting career fairs, professional networking events & the second annual ChangeMakerZ tech talent cohort, a 10-month program that supported 8 young professionals from 6 companies.

RAMP Events: RAMP spring & fall 2025 In Residence Cohorts provided "Meet the Cohort" & "Demo Day" events for the 11 accelerated companies in 2025 to pitch before a live audience.

Developing Resources Thanks to Our Sponsors

EDA Economic Adjustment Assistance Grant & RBIA Board Support

