



KC Tech Specs **V.07**

PRESENTED BY:  RSM

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Who Created **KC Tech Specs**

ABOUT THE KC TECH COUNCIL

KC Tech Council (KCTC) is an independent, not-for-profit membership organization working with industry leaders to strengthen and promote Kansas City's tech industry through policy advocacy, tech talent development, catalyzing industry knowledge and driving visibility for the region's innovation economy.



WHAT THE KC TECH COUNCIL DOES



ADVOCACY

KCTC is the leading voice that informs and bridges federal, Kansas, Missouri and municipal governments with the KC tech industry to advance, protect and maintain competitive growth.



TALENT

Through initiatives to grow, attract, retain and unlock competitive and diverse tech talent, KCTC serves at the intersection of industry and workforce development.



KNOWLEDGE

KCTC is the principal hub for KC tech industry data and insights, with resources deemed essential by members, policymakers, journalists and the community.



VISIBILITY

Targeting key audiences and stakeholders, KCTC amplifies the innovation, successes, companies and products built in the region to achieve national prominence.

Industry Leadership Council

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Director, Business Development
Tata Consulting Services

Scott Woodward

Partner
MarksNelson LLC



RSM Analysis

Technology companies are adapting to a complex period, marked by a shifting macroeconomic landscape, a tightening labor market, and the growing prominence and hype of artificial intelligence (AI). Kansas City remains well-positioned to meet these challenges, by continuing to attract a mobile workforce seeking relief from the higher cost of living in other technology hubs.

With interest rates at their highest levels in a decade, businesses face tough decisions regarding effective capital deployment. Despite these challenges, Kansas City has outperformed. According to Oxford Economics, Kansas City's gross domestic product (GDP) and job growth rates outpaced the national averages by 100 basis points each in 2023. While the growth is modest, it reflects the region's resilience in recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic and the strategic investments made to attract businesses and talent.

A key factor in the metro area's success is its attractive workforce composition. Young professionals (ages 20-34) and mid-career professionals (ages 35-54) together comprise 60-70% of the workforce. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, technology jobs in Kansas City grew by 16% from 2021 to 2023. Furthermore, the technology sector's share of the local labor market was 18% higher than the national average in 2023. However, Kansas City's rise as a burgeoning technology hub has not been without challenges; the sector saw a loss of approximately 800 jobs from May 2023 to May 2024. This downturn was not limited to the technology sector, as overall job growth in Kansas City, excluding farming, slowed from net new additions of over 46,000 jobs per month in July 2021 to 6,500 net new jobs in January 2024.

The cost of living remains a significant factor in attracting talent. Forbes estimates that Kansas City is 83% less expensive than San Francisco, the technology epicenter. Compared to other emerging technology hubs like Seattle, Denver, and Austin, Kansas City is more affordable by 55%, 18%, and 6%, respectively. This lower cost of living often offsets salary differences; in 2023, Kansas City paid between 14-21% less than the national average for programmers, software developers, and information security analysts. This wage arbitrage creates a win-win scenario where companies can retain more profits for growth investments, while employees enjoy greater disposable income relative to their local living costs.

In today's environment of heightened capital costs, the labor market has tightened. Businesses are consolidating vendors, reducing spending, and reassessing workforce composition to eliminate excess costs. The promise and hype of AI have served as potential counterbalances to these cost-cutting measures. AI adoption is expected to accelerate as companies leverage AI-powered analytics to enhance internal insights and user experiences.

As of August 2024, over \$132 billion was invested in AI and machine learning companies in the U.S., accounting for 14% of total technology investments. Kansas City once again outperformed the national average, with AI and machine learning investments totaling \$7.8 million out of the \$24.8 million invested in technology companies across the metro area.

While the possibilities of AI present long-term risks to lower-level workers, particularly in automatable tasks like simple coding, AI also offers opportunities for upskilling and productivity enhancement. Companies must be mindful of employee concerns regarding AI and potential job displacement. Providing opportunities to expand skill sets can help alleviate fears of labor replacement and foster a culture of labor enhancement and automation adoption. As companies implement AI models, they must carefully navigate the build-versus-buy decision and identify unique use cases to maximize the technology's potential.

Beyond AI, businesses must remain focused on cybersecurity. Recent global attacks have highlighted vulnerabilities, placing cybersecurity at the forefront of corporate priorities. The cost of a cybersecurity breach can be catastrophic, with the erosion of customer trust being equally damaging. Companies must invest in robust cybersecurity protocols and personnel to mitigate risks. Notably, the cybersecurity labor market in the Kansas City metro area increased by 85% from 2021 to 2023.

Kansas City's continued success in the technology sector, despite economic challenges, is a testament to its strategic investments in talent, innovation, and infrastructure. The region's affordability, coupled with a strong workforce, positions Kansas City as a competitive hub for technology growth. As businesses navigate the evolving landscape, Kansas City's ability to adapt and innovate will be crucial in maintaining its upward trajectory and fostering a resilient, forward-looking economy.

RSM US LLP is proud to be a Cornerstone Sponsor of the KC Tech Council and grateful for the opportunity to be a part of this year's KC Tech Specs report. RSM is the leading U.S. provider of audit, tax, and consulting services to the middle market. We understand the importance of communicating industry-specific trends to Kansas City and are grateful for the opportunity to promote the technology ecosystem in this great city.



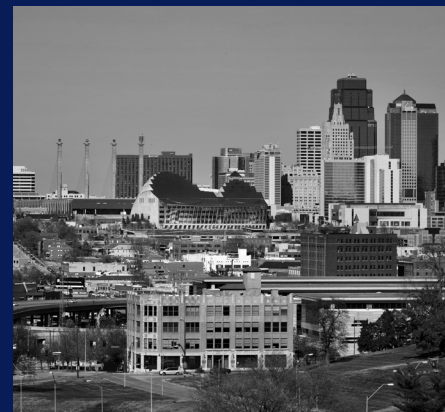
ANDREW FEDELE

*Senior Analyst Technology, Media & Telecommunications Senior Analyst & Director
Transaction Advisory Services*



Current State

Tech is a driving force of Kansas City's regional economy, boasting over 5,223 existing tech businesses and employing more than one out of every 10 workers. The demand for an ever-growing tech workforce continued across 2023, with more than 17,000 tech job postings throughout the year in the Kansas City region. However, the current supply of tech talent isn't broad enough to meet that ever-growing demand. It is imperative to continue developing a robust pipeline to sustain the sector's growth.

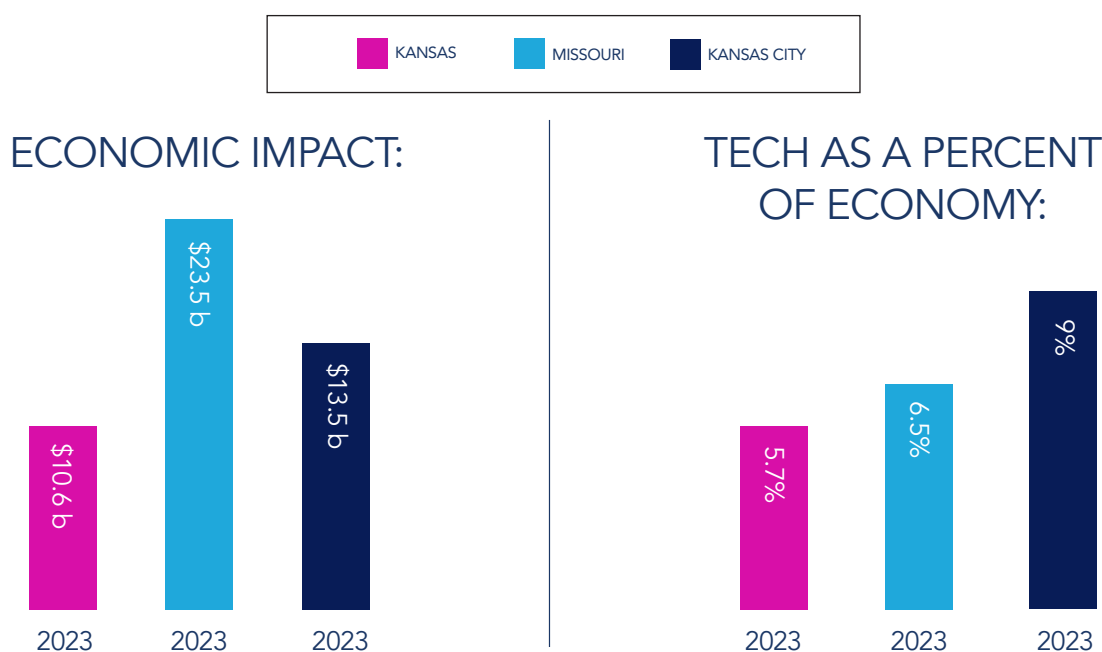


Economic Impact

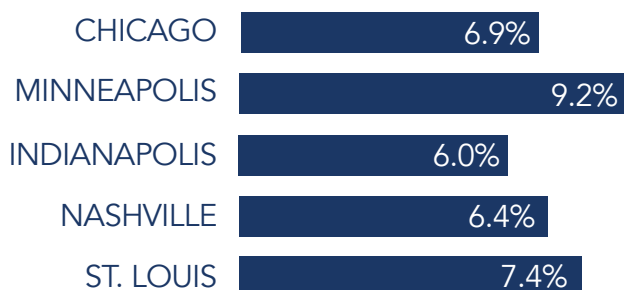
Kansas City stands out as a leader in economic impact, boasting a higher economic impact as a percentage of the local economy compared to larger markets such as St. Louis, Chicago, and Houston.

KC Tech Specs v.07 leverages data from KCTC's trusted partners at CompTIA. Notably, CompTIA has updated the definitions of 'technology' along with the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) and Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) codes utilized in its report. Due to these revisions, certain components of Tech Specs v.07 are not directly comparable to previous editions. However, this report offers valuable benchmarking insights by aligning Kansas City's tech market with peers.

For a comprehensive list of the NAICS and SOC codes referenced in Tech Specs v.07, please refer to the appendix at the end of the report.



COMPARATIVE TECH ECONOMIC IMPACT 2023:



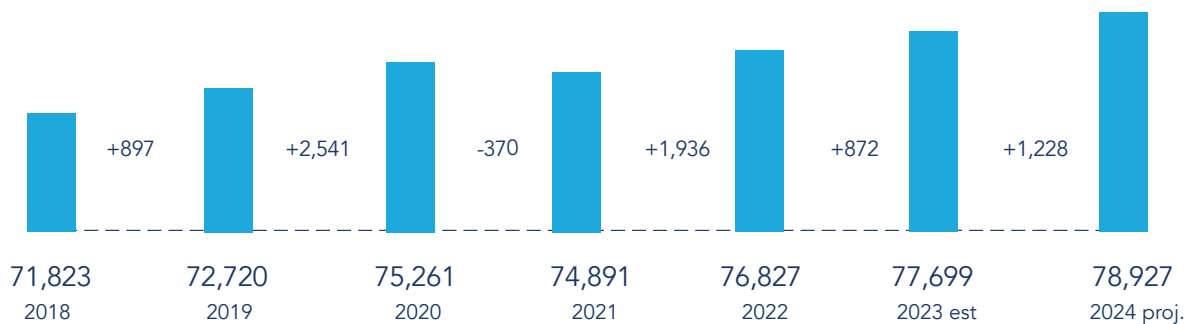
Kansas City **Tech Workforce** at a Glance

Nationally, tech job postings surged to record levels in 2022; partly due to post-pandemic recovery in resuming business operations. 2023 experienced more normalization in tech job postings which is reflected in a dip for both Kansas City and across the country. However, with tech hiring experiencing net growth in Q4 of 2023, it is a positive signal for the outlook of 2024.

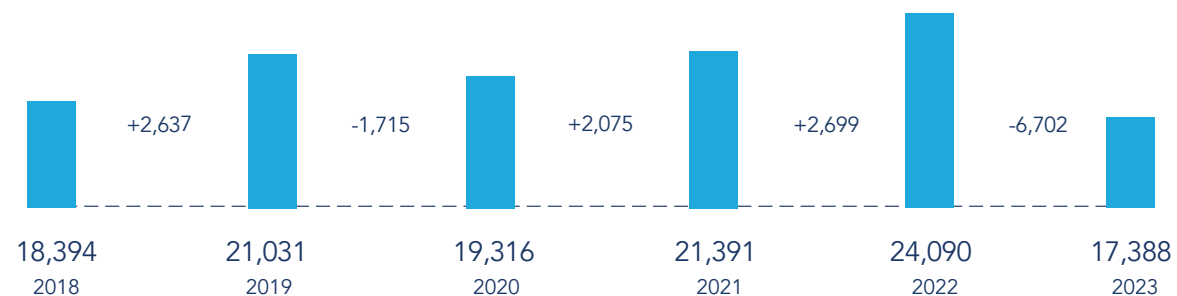
It's important to note that the figures presented below reflect a narrow definition of tech workers, excluding many roles like project management, business analysis, and other roles that may be classified as "tech jobs" elsewhere.

This precise categorization ensures clarity and accuracy in understanding the scope of our tech workforce data.

KC NET TECH EMPLOYMENT YEAR OVER YEAR



KC OVERALL TECH JOB POSTINGS YEAR OVER YEAR



UNITED STATES TECH JOB POSTINGS YEAR OVER YEAR



The **2024 Outlook** for Tech Occupations

TOP PROJECTED GROWTH TECH OCCUPATIONS FOR 2023 BY EMPLOYMENT:

- 5.5%** Data Scientists and Data Analysts
- 5.1%** Cybersecurity Analysts and Engineers
- 4.8%** Software Developers and Engineers
- 4.3%** Software QA and Testers
- 4.3%** Computer and Information Research Scientists
- 3.6%** CIOs and IT Directors
- 3.6%** Web Developers
- 3.6%** Web and Digital Interface Designers

** Growth indicates net new jobs being added and does not include jobs being replaced.*

10 YEAR TOP PROJECTED GROWTH TECH OCCUPATIONS BY EMPLOYMENT:

- 304%** Data Scientists and Data Analysts
- 267%** Cybersecurity Analysts and Engineers
- 225%** Software Developers and Engineers
- 177%** Software QA and Testers
- 134%** Web Designers and UI/UX
- 134%** CIOs and IT Directors
- 125%** Web Developers
- 86%** Database Architects
- 82%** Emerging Tech, IT Project Mgt., Other
- 73%** Systems Analysts and Engineers
- 47%** Network, Cloud Admin and Engineers
- 38%** IT Support Specialists
- 17%** Network/Cloud Architects

** Growth indicates net new jobs being added and does not include jobs being replaced.*

Local vs. National Salary Averages

As remote work continues to redefine the tech industry, it's important to assess how tech salaries in Kansas City and the states of Kansas and Missouri compare with national figures. This evaluation goes beyond mere numbers, it provides insights into the region's ability to attract and retain top talent in an increasingly borderless job market.

	US	KC	MO	KS
90 TH PERCENTILE	\$177,700	\$149,900	\$147,500	\$145,700
75 TH PERCENTILE	\$141,700	\$122,500	\$120,900	\$116,600
MEDIAN SALARY	\$105,200	\$92,700	\$90,800	\$87,000
25 TH PERCENTILE	\$73,600	\$65,500	\$63,600	\$63,200
10 TH PERCENTILE	\$52,200	\$50,100	\$47,000	\$47,800
% HIGHER THAN MEDIAN AREA WAGE	+115.57%	+89.57%	+100%	+90.37%
AVERAGE HIGHEST PAYING ROLE: Database Architect	Median Salary: \$141,800	Median Salary: \$146,800	Median Salary: \$125,300	Median Salary: \$130,000
AVERAGE LOWEST PAYING ROLE: Computer User Support Specialist	Median Salary: \$61,800	Median Salary: \$58,800	Median Salary: \$59,000	Median Salary: \$56,600

Analysis from Tech Checkpoint



Scan this QR code to
download the KC Tech
Checkpoint app!

In response to a competitive hiring landscape and rising wages, tech companies in Kansas City are now offering salaries that surpass the national median for three of the top five open tech jobs in the region.

In addition to the annual KC Tech Specs report, the KC Tech Council emphasizes the need for ongoing access to the most up-to-date data year-round. To meet this demand, KCTC collaborated with Kansas City-based global consulting firm Pomerol Partners to develop a dynamic and interactive data dashboard. This tool enables stakeholders to explore the latest workforce data and trends within Kansas City's tech industry. Accessible via a free mobile app, this resource is available anytime and anywhere through the KC Tech Council website.



Source: JobsEQ (2023 Data)

According to the KC Tech Checkpoint, the following are occupations, certifications and skills in highest demand in our region.

TOP 10 OCCUPATIONS BY JOB POSTINGS

- 1** **2023:** Computer User Support Specialist (4,498)
2022: Software Developer (8,462)
- 2** **2023:** Software Developer (4,275)
2022: Computer User Support Specialist (6,134)
- 3** **2023:** Network & Computer Systems Administrator (2,287)
2022: Network & Computer Systems Administrator (3,353)
- 4** **2023:** Computer Systems Engineer/Architect (1,381)
2022: Computer Systems Engineer/Architect (2,615)
- 5** **2023:** Information Technology Project Manager (1,271)
2022: Information Technology Project Manager (2,080)
- 6** **2023:** Information Security Analyst (934)
2022: Information Security Analyst (1,569)
- 7** **2023:** Computer Systems Analyst (855)
2022: Computer Systems Analyst (1,207)
- 8** **2023:** Software Quality Assurance Analyst and Tester (486)
2022: Software Quality Assurance Analyst and Tester (890)
- 9** **2023:** Web Developer (274)
2022: Web Developer (500)
- 10** **2023:** Database Administrator (238)
2022: Database Administrator (358)

TOP 5 CERTIFICATIONS BY JOB POSTINGS

- 1** **2023:** Secret Clearance (297)
2022: Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP) (457)
- 2** **2023:** Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP) (264)
2022: Secret Clearance (411)
- 3** **2023:** Project Management Professional (PMP) (233)
2022: Project Management Professional (PMP) (371)
- 4** **2023:** Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA) (209)
2022: Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA) (30)
- 5** **2023:** Cisco Certified Network Professional (CCNP) (148)
2022: Cisco Certified Network Professional (CCNP) (233)

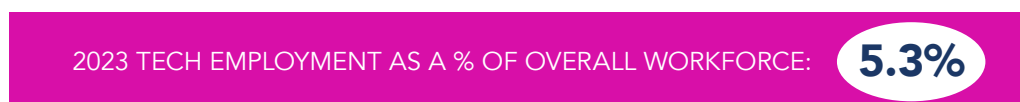
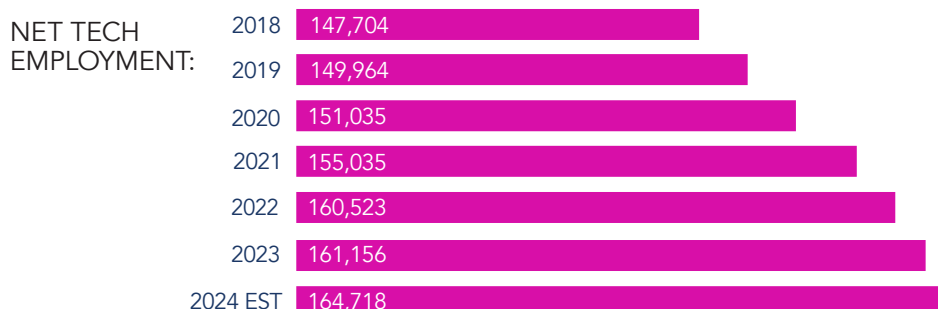
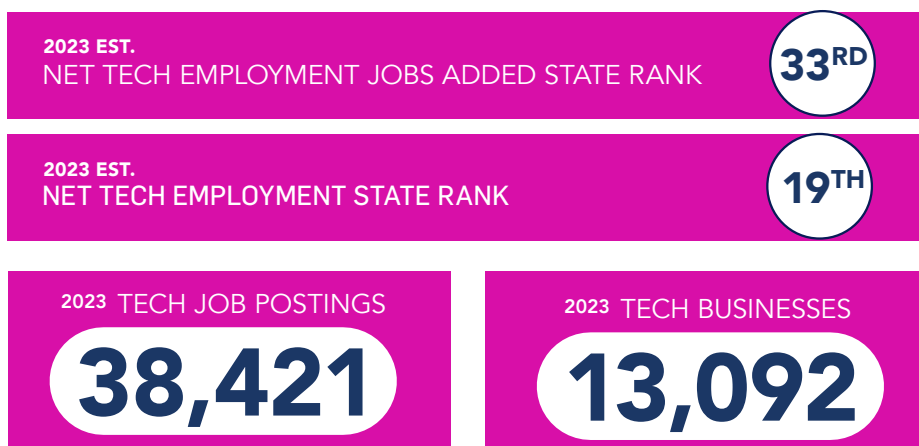
TOP 5 SKILLS BY JOB POSTINGS

- 1** **2023:** Computer Programming/Coding (3,005)
2022: Computer Programming/Coding (5,591)
- 2** **2023:** Structured Query Language (SQL) (2,984)
2022: Structured Query Language (SQL) (5,098)
- 3** **2023:** Agile (2,744)
2022: Agile (5,037)
- 4** **2023:** Microsoft Azure (2,315)
2022: Java (3,736)
- 5** **2023:** Python (2,017)
2022: Microsoft Azure (3,732)



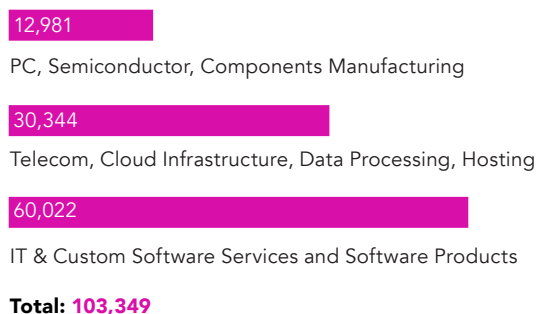
The State of Our States

Tech is at its most concentrated in either Kansas or Missouri in the Kansas City metropolitan area. The following statistics show the broader portrait of tech in each of the states within our bistate region.

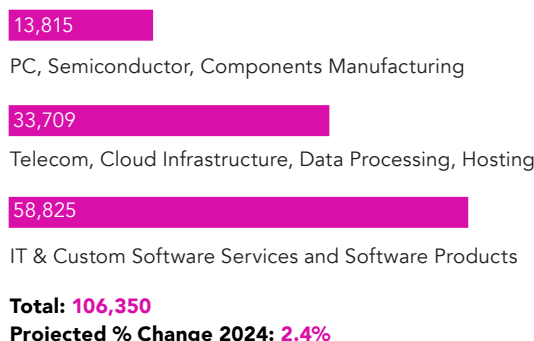


TECH INDUSTRY SECTOR SUMMARY

2022



2023



The State of Our States

Tech is at its most concentrated in either Kansas or Missouri in the Kansas City metropolitan area. The following statistics show the broader portrait of tech in each of the states within our bistate region.

2023 EST.
NET TECH EMPLOYMENT JOBS ADDED STATE RANK

22ND

2023 EST.
NET TECH EMPLOYMENT STATE RANK

29TH

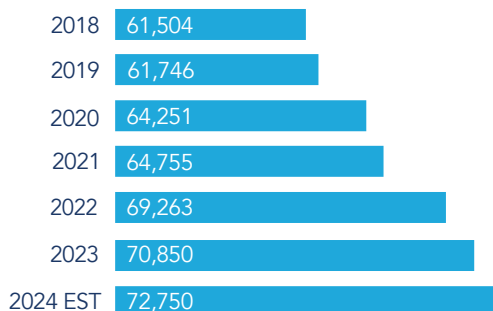
2023 TECH JOB POSTINGS

20,134

2023 TECH BUSINESSES

6,632

NET TECH
EMPLOYMENT:



2023 TECH EMPLOYMENT AS A % OF OVERALL WORKFORCE:

4.7%

TECH INDUSTRY SECTOR SUMMARY

2022

7,703

PC, Semiconductor, Components Manufacturing

10,749

Telecom, Cloud Infrastructure, Data Processing, Hosting

21,254

IT & Custom Software Services and Software Products

Total: 39,706

2023

8,123

PC, Semiconductor, Components Manufacturing

10,489

Telecom, Cloud Infrastructure, Data Processing, Hosting

23,628

IT & Custom Software Services and Software Products

Total: 42,239

Projected % Change 2024: 3.2%

Representation in Tech

The demographic composition of Kansas City's tech workforce has shown minimal change in recent years, mirroring national trends. To tackle this challenge, the KC Tech Council launched a tech apprenticeship program in 2021, opening the door to opportunities for tech workers of all backgrounds. Building on this commitment, in 2024, KCTC introduced LEGiT KC, a program strategically crafted to empower and equip female-identifying students entering their junior and senior years of high school with tech exposure, career guidance, leadership opportunities and invaluable mentorship.

DEMOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN IN TECH MARKET



Source: CompTIA State of the Tech Workforce 2024

TECH OCCUPATIONS BY GENERATIONS

The data below illustrates the distribution of the U.S. tech workforce across different age groups: Gen Z (born 1996-2015), Millennials (born 1977-1995), Gen X (born 1965-1976), and Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964).

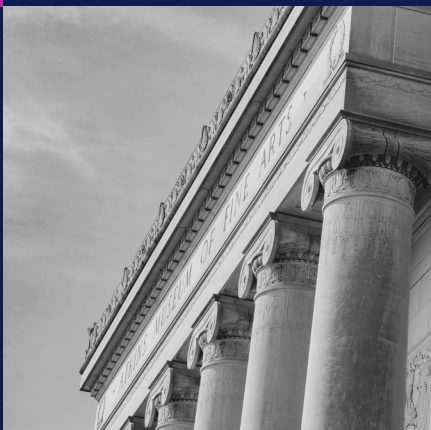
	GEN Z		MILLENNIAL		GEN X		BABY BOOMER	
	Count	% of Occ	Count	% of Occ	Count	% of Occ	Count	% of Occ
CIOs and IT Managers	7,294	1%	266,586	48%	165,545	30%	114,577	21%
Systems Analysts/Engineers	24,144	5%	271,747	52%	121,808	23%	108,802	21%
Cybersecurity	9,148	5%	93,268	54%	38,876	28%	31,740	18%
Information Research Scientists	3,039	8%	20,276	54%	6,554	17%	7,826	21%
Network Support Specialists	13,639	8%	91,177	53%	36,796	21%	30,062	18%
IT Support Specialists	57,819	8%	386,312	54%	149,663	21%	123,163	17%
Network Architects	5,805	3%	98,209	56%	44,792	25%	27,627	16%
Database Administrators	2,897	4%	40,145	50%	20,448	25%	17,218	21%
Database Architects	2,217	3%	33,144	52%	15,897	25%	12,870	20%
Computer Programmers	8,555	6%	71,499	49%	33,707	23%	31,147	21%
Software Developers	81,776	5%	1,013,616	62%	319,419	20%	222,868	14%
Software QA	8,830	4%	122,901	60%	40,866	20%	30,809	15%
Web Developers	8,968	9%	67,906	67%	15,817	16%	8,921	9%
Web & Digital Interface Designers	9,872	9%	76,429	68%	17,184	15%	9,359	8%
IT Proj. Mgt., Emerging Tech, Other	31,602	7%	231,493	51%	104,656	23%	84,964	19%
Data Scientists	12,332	7%	107,324	63%	27,358	16%	23,418	14%
Computer Hardware Engineers	3,239	4%	44,514	55%	18,759	23%	14,067	17%
Computer, ATM, and Related Repairers	10,381	11%	46,574	50%	18,612	20%	17,443	19%
TOTAL:	315,121	5%	3,268,326	56%	1,273,193	22%	969,561	17%

Source: CompTIA State of the Tech Workforce 2024



City & State Comparisons

This section explores the current state of Kansas City's tech talent supply in addition to those of its two home states and similar markets. With a continuously increasing demand for tech workers, it is important to examine the efficacy of the region's tech talent pipeline and how it stacks up against others.



Who's Graduating with Computer Science Degrees Across the Region?

Early stage talent from two and four year universities is an important source to fill tech jobs in the Kansas City region. However, it cannot be the sole source. Even if every graduating computer science student in Kansas, Missouri, Iowa and Nebraska were recruited, the Kansas City region would still not be able to fill all available tech positions. This highlights the critical need to explore alternative talent sourcing strategies beyond traditional four-year college degrees.

2021-2022 ENROLLMENT AND GRADUATION

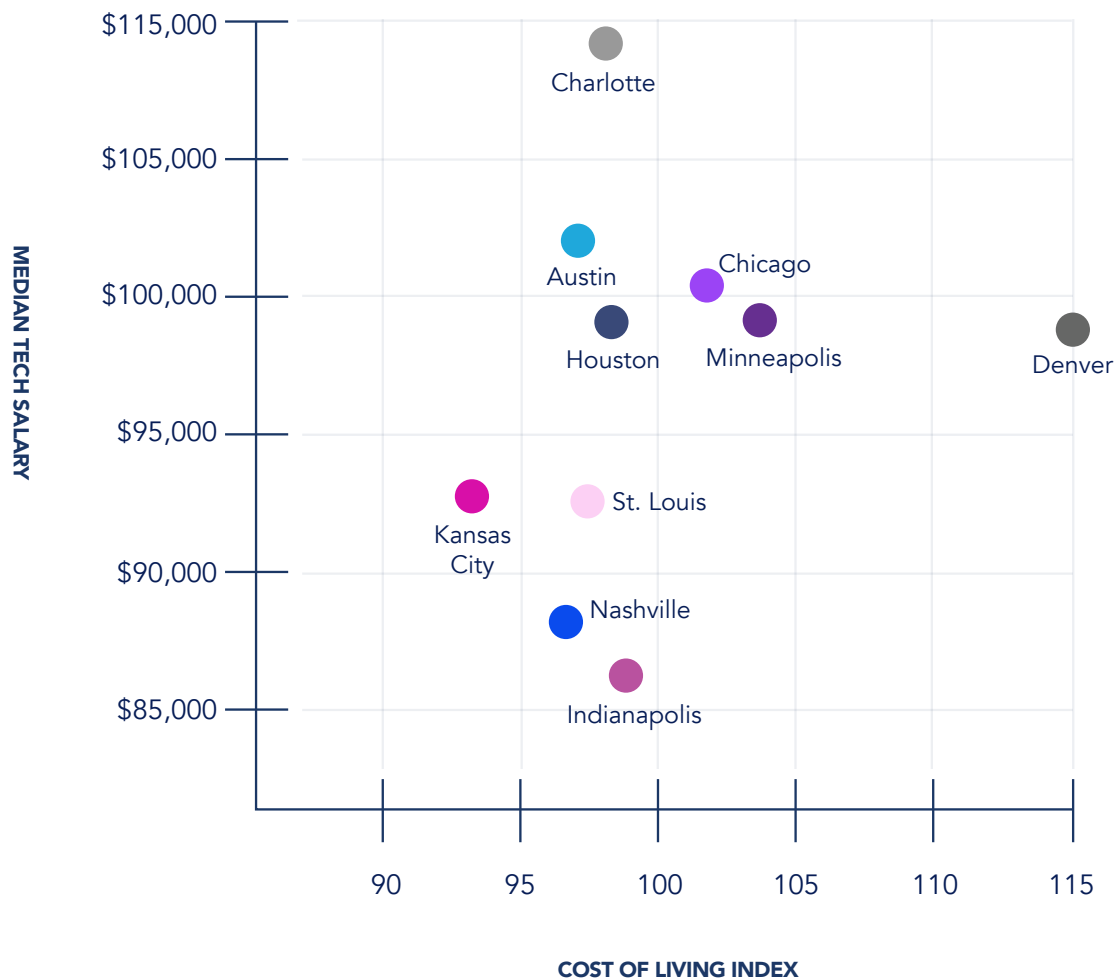
	KANSAS	MISSOURI	IOWA	NEBRASKA
BACHELOR'S	738	1,756	770	770
MASTER'S	194	1,229	578	256
ASSOCIATE'S	219	393	275	253
DOCTORATE	13	30	14	15
TOTAL TECH DEGREES	1,491	3,866	1,966	1,495
	2.8% OF TOTAL DEGREES	4.2% OF TOTAL DEGREES	3.6% OF TOTAL DEGREES	4.5% OF TOTAL DEGREES
TOTAL DEGREES	53,458	92,329	55,373	33,026

Cost of Living Adjusted Tech Wages

Understanding cost of living differences is crucial, as wages in one location are not directly comparable to another. For instance, the buying power of a salary in New York City will not go nearly as far as it would in Kansas City.

This report utilizes Cost of Living (COL) data published by Lightcast, developed from baselines from the Council for Community and Economic Research (C2ER). The COL Index (COLI) evaluates regional costs of living against national standards and across different areas. It is comprised of six major categories: grocery items, housing, utilities, transportation, health care and miscellaneous goods and services. An index rating below 100 indicates a lower relative cost of living, while a rating above 100 signifies a higher cost of living.

Understanding these differences allows for a better appreciation of the economic advantages of living and working in Kansas City. Lower living costs in the region enhance the real value of wages and contribute to a higher overall quality of life.



KC vs. Select Markets

The matrix below outlines various metrics to measure how large the tech industry’s employment base is in peer cities, how significantly tech has grown, and its share of economic impact within the market.

Kansas City’s tech sector is rapidly growing, with 77,699 employed, comprising 6.9% of the overall workforce and contributing 9.0% to the city’s economic impact. These figures underscore Kansas City’s robust tech presence and potential for future growth. While cities like Austin have a larger tech employment share, Kansas City’s consistent growth and economic integration position it as a rising star in the tech industry.

It’s no wonder the Wall Street Journal ranked Kansas City sixth among all large cities for tech momentum, surpassing cities such as Chicago, Minneapolis and Houston.*

	MSA POPULATION	TECH ECONOMIC IMPACT AS A % OF OVERALL	NET TECH EMPLOYMENT AS A % OF OVERALL WORKFORCE	NET TECH EMPLOYMENT 2023 EST
KANSAS CITY	2,209,152	9.0%	6.9%	77,699
AUSTIN	2,421,115	22.2%	13.7%	180,507
CHARLOTTE	2,756,069	7.2%	6.5%	90,859
CHICAGO	9,444,957	6.9%	5.2%	245,800
DENVER	2,985,871	13.0%	9.4%	160,057
HOUSTON	7,340,118	3.4%	4.4%	152,084
INDIANAPOLIS	2,142,193	6.0%	4.9%	55,585
MINNEAPOLIS	3,693,729	9.2%	7.3%	147,088
NASHVILLE	2,046,715	6.4%	5.2%	60,502
ST. LOUIS	2,801,319	7.4%	5.6%	78,129

Source: CompTIA State of the Tech Workforce 2024 & Wall Street Journal (<https://www.wsj.com/tech/best-cities-tech-workers-6dcc3dbb>)

Report's NAICS and SOC Codes

INDUSTRY CLASSIFICATION BY NAICS (NORTH AMERICAN INDUSTRY CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM)

IT/TECH SERVICES

423430, 541511, 541512, 541513, 541519, 611420, 811211, 811212, 811213, 811219

TELECOMMUNICATIONS, INTERNET SERVICES AND DATA HOSTING

517311, 517312, 517410, 517911, 517919, 518210, 519130

SOFTWARE

511210

MANUFACTURING: COMPUTER, PERIPHERAL AND COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT, SEMICONDUCTORS AND ELECTRONIC COMPONENTS

333242, 334111, 334112, 334118, 334210, 334220, 334290, 334310, 334412, 334413, 334416, 334417, 334418, 334419, 334510, 334511, 334512, 334513, 334514, 334515, 334516, 334517, 334519, 334613, 334614

OCCUPATION CLASSIFICATION BY SOC (STANDARD OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION)

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) OCCUPATIONS

11-3021, 15-1211, 15-1212, 15-1221, 15-1231, 15-1232, 15-1241, 15-1242, 15-1243, 15-1244, 15-1251, 15-1252, 15-1253, 15-1254, 15-1255, 15-1299, 15-2051, 17-2061, 49-2011