CU system climbs to $12.2 billion in economic impact across state[1]

The University of Colorado system generated $12.2 billion in economic impact across Colorado last year, highlighting CU's growing role in the state's economy through education, research, innovation and health care, according to a new economic study. This is growth of more than half a billion dollars over 2024.

The report, issued annually by the Business Research Division of CU Boulder's Leeds School of Business, covers the 2024-25 fiscal year, which spans July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025.

CU's campus-by-campus economic impact was led by CU Anschutz in Aurora, with $5.7 billion in economic impact. CU Boulder followed with $5 billion while CU Denver and UCCS generated $665 million and $567 million, respectively. CU system administration contributed $245 million.

That significant contribution rose to $20 billion when the $7.8 billion economic boost of the UCHealth University of Colorado Hospital and Children's Hospital Colorado, both located on the CU Anschutz campus, were considered, the report found.

"The University of Colorado plays a vital role in shaping our state's future," said CU President Todd Saliman. "Every day, our campuses and partners contribute to Colorado's prosperity through education, research, innovation and health care. This report highlights the real impact CU has on people's lives and the real and economic health of communities across the state."

This year's study shows growth for another year. The $12.2 billion total represents a 5.2% increase over last year's $11.6 billion. Including the two hospitals, the figure rose 3.6%, from $19.3 billion to $20 billion, the report found.

CU operated on $6.6 billion in revenues and $5.8 billion in operating expenditures in FY 2024-25. A significant portion of this activity was tied to sponsored research, tuition and fees, and health services. Sponsored research generated $1.7 billion during the period studied in the report.

The economic impact figures also include employee and student worker earnings, operating expenditures, construction, research and spending by students and visitors. The study did not include the impact of alumni, retirees, technology transfer or events such as athletics and conferences.

CU directly employed 51,848 people in the year the study covered, with total salaries, wages and benefits of $4.3 billion. With this total, CU is the third-largest public employer in the state.

Along with employing thousands, CU drives economic growth by buying from local vendors, attracting investment, educating the local workforce and delivering research discoveries. CU's research expenditure alone represented $5.6 billion of the total $12.2 billion impact.

CU's greatest economic impact regionally at $7.1 billion is on the Denver Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), which includes Denver, Arapahoe, Jefferson, Adams, Douglas, Broomfield, Elbert, Park, Clear Creek and Gilpin counties.

The Boulder MSA follows, with CU's economic impact at $4.2 billion. The Colorado Springs MSA is next at $0.6 billion.

Beyond its economic footprint, CU drives innovation and entrepreneurship across the state. Venture Partners at CU Boulder and CU Innovations at CU Anschutz helped launch more than 35 startups and finalize over 90 licensing agreements. These efforts translate university research into new businesses and technologies.

Meanwhile, CU's 68,000 students and nearly 19,000 graduates each year continue to strengthen Colorado's skilled workforce.

From classrooms and laboratories to hospitals and startup incubators, CU's work touches every corner of the state. That reach, powered by the talent and dedication of its people, demonstrates why Colorado's investment in CU continues to yield extraordinary returns for the state's economy and its citizens.

“Our graduates, researchers and employees are the backbone of this state’s economy,” Saliman said. “Their expertise and innovation are what power Colorado’s progress and resilience.”

Campus food banks seek donations to aid students in need[2]

With the federal government shutdown expected to trigger a pause in food benefits for those in need, members of the CU community are encouraged to make donations to the food banks on the four campuses.

Food banks across the state are bracing for a spike in need this weekend as Coloradans who receive money for groceries through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) will be without that benefit.

The campus food banks provide food and personal hygiene items to students who are experiencing financial insecurity.

To learn more about specific needs at each food bank and how to donate, visit campus websites:
CU Boulder, Buff Pantry[3]**UCCS,** Clyde’s Cupboard[4]**CU Denver,** Milo’s Market[5]**CU Anschutz,** CU Anschutz Food Pantry[6]

CU launches major timekeeping overhaul to simplify employee experience [7]

Nominate an outstanding CU leader for the Excellence in Leadership Award by Nov. 25 [8]

Colorado Shakespeare Festival returns to Mary Rippon Outdoor Theatre for ’26 season [9]

Photo feature: President Saliman visits campus [10]

CU Denver hosts second Mary E. Guy Distinguished Lecture[11]

We’re not saying the Fitzsimons Building is haunted, but … [12]

Federal update: Government shutdown, USCIS H-1B visa fee guidance, more[13]

From Oct. 24, this update from CU Federal Relations and Counsel includes information on the Federal Government Shutdown, USCIS H-1B Visa Fee Guidance, DOD Indirect Cost Cap Vacated, UVA WH Deal, Federal Loan Forgiveness Resumption, WH Higher Ed Compact, ARPA-H Director Sworn In, and DOE Science Advisory Committee Consolidation.

Click here to read the post.[14]

For the latest communications and federal memos, please visit the CU System Federal Updates and Actions[15] page.

Rosario-Ortiz on visioning process for CU Boulder Online[16]

Patten named Children's Hospital Colorado LIC Seminar Teacher of the Year[17]

Heikkila honored for public policy contributions [18]

Innovators at CU are building a 'sexy' walker to get older people back on their feet[19]

Weekly Wisdom | Staying on Mission Is Key for UCCS Chancellor Jennifer Sobanet[20]

How Much Weight Can Popular Backpacks Handle? This Is How We Test.[21]

Links
[1] https://connections.cu.edu/spotlights/cu-system-climbs-122-billion-economic-impact-across-state[2] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/campus-food-banks-seek-donations-aid-students-need[3] https://www.colorado.edu/support/basicneeds/buff-pantry[4] https://dos.uccs.edu/basic-needs/clydes-cupboard[5] https://www.ucdenver.edu/wellness/food-pantry[6] https://www.cuanschutz.edu/student/support/student-food-pantry[7] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/cu-launches-major-timekeeping-overhaul-simplify-employee-experience[8] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/nominate-outstanding-cu-leader-excellence-leadership-award-nov-25[9] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/colorado-shakespeare-festival-returns-mary-rippon-outdoor-theatre-26-season[10] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/photo-feature-president-saliman-visits-campus[11] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/cu-denver-hosts-second-mary-e-guy-distinguished-lecture[12]

https://connections.cu.edu/stories/we-re-not-saying-fitzsimons-building-haunted[13]
https://connections.cu.edu/stories/federal-update-government-shutdown-uscis-h-1b-visa-fee-guidance-more[14]
https://www.cu.edu/blog/government-relations/federal-government-update-102425[15] https://www.cu.edu/office-government-relations/federal-relations/federal-updates-and-actions[16] https://connections.cu.edu/people/rosario-ortiz-visioning-process-cu-boulder-online[17] https://connections.cu.edu/people/patten-named-children-s-hospital-colorado-lic-seminar-teacher-year[18] https://connections.cu.edu/people/heikkila-honored-public-policy-contributions[19]
https://connections.cu.edu/itn/innovators-cu-are-building-sexy-walker-get-older-people-back-their-feet[20]
https://connections.cu.edu/itn/weekly-wisdom-staying-mission-key-uccs-chancellor-jennifer-sobanet[21]
https://connections.cu.edu/itn/how-much-weight-can-popular-backpacks-handle-how-we-test