Annual Report 2026

Office of Entrepreneurship

July 1, 2025 to October 31, 2026

GOED
NEVADA GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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November 01, 2026

The Honorable Joseph Lombardo
Office of the Governor
101 North Carson Street
Carson City, Nevada 89701

Asher Killian, Director
Legislative Counsel Bureau
401 South Carson Street
Carson City, Nevada 89701

Re: Office of Entrepreneurship Annual Report 2026

Governor Lombardo and Director Thornton:

Pursuant to NRS 231.1287, the Office of Entrepreneurship submits its 2026 Annual Report for review by the Legislative Commission.

The report covers the period from July 1, 2025, through October 31, 2026, and fulfills the Office's annual reporting requirement.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Burns
Executive Director
cc:

Ryan Cherry, Governor's Chief of Staff
Tiffany Greenameyer, Director, Governor's Finance Office
Wayne Thorley, Senate Fiscal Analyst
Sarah Coffman, Assembly Fiscal Analyst

Madison Ryan, Program Analyst, Fiscal Analysis Division
Shayne Powell, Executive Branch Budget Officer, Governor's Finance Office
Angie Mathiesen, Director of Administration, Governor's Office of Economic Development
Melissa Saavedra, Director Office of Entrepreneurship, Governor's Office of Economic Development

Continuing Nevada's Growth Story

Why the Office of Entrepreneurship Was Created



In 2023, Governor Lombardo signed the Office of Entrepreneurship into law.

Nevada has always been home to bold ideas, independent thinkers, and people willing to create new opportunities. From the ingenuity behind the state's historic mining communities to the technology companies shaping its future, entrepreneurship has remained a driving force in Nevada's economic growth.

Following the 2023 Legislative Session, the Nevada Office of Entrepreneurship was established to strengthen statewide coordination and expand opportunities for entrepreneurs, innovators, and startup founders. The Office serves as a central connection point within Nevada's entrepreneurial ecosystem, helping businesses navigate resources, mentorship, capital, and identify pathways for growth. Nevada has long supported traditional small businesses through Small Business Development Centers (SBDC), regional development authorities, chambers of commerce, and community organizations. The Office of Entrepreneurship builds upon this foundation while placing additional emphasis on innovation-driven enterprises, the kind creating scalable companies, attracting outside investment, and anchoring high-wage jobs in Nevada.

The Office recognizes economic development requires more than attracting established companies. Nevada must also create opportunities for homegrown businesses to expand, innovate, compete, and become the next generation of major employers.

The goal is to make Nevada not only a great place to start a business, but also an exceptional place to build, expand, and sustain one.

One State, One Connected Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

Creating Clearer Pathways for Nevada Entrepreneurs

Nevada offers entrepreneurs an extensive network of business assistance providers. accelerators, universities, lenders, chambers of commerce, Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs), and community organizations provide valuable services for businesses at different stages of development.

Despite these resources, entrepreneurs frequently encounter challenges identifying the right program, understanding eligibility requirements, or determining where to begin. The Office of Entrepreneurship works to bridge these gaps by connecting founders with the organizations and programs best suited to their needs.

The Front Door for Nevada Entrepreneurs

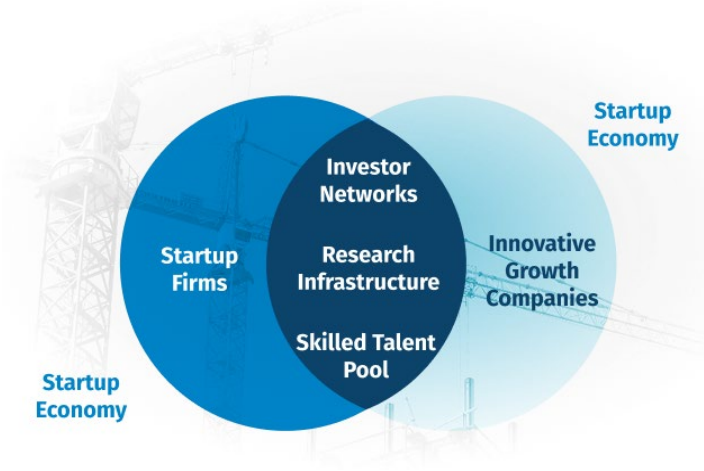
The Office serves as a statewide navigation resource for entrepreneurs across industries and business models. Whether an individual is opening a neighborhood business, expanding an established company, or developing an emerging technology, the Office helps identify relevant opportunities for technical assistance, financing, mentorship, and business development.

Each engagement begins with an assessment of the entrepreneur's needs, business stage, and growth objectives. Through referrals, ongoing communication, and collaboration with resource partners, the Office helps entrepreneurs move forward while identifying barriers within the broader support system.

This approach also provides valuable insight into gaps in existing programs. When entrepreneurs encounter recurring challenges, the Office can work with partners to strengthen services, improve coordination, and explore new solutions.

The Right Home for Innovation

Why the Office of Entrepreneurship Operates Within the Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED)



Placing the Office of Entrepreneurship within the Nevada Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED) was a deliberate and strategic decision. GOED already plays a central role in attracting businesses including early-stage high growth firms, developing workforce initiatives, and fostering public-private partnerships strengthening the state's economy.

Within GOED, the Office of Entrepreneurship operates under Innovation-Based Economic Development (IBED), a division aligning research, entrepreneurship, and investment to spark new industries. Its mission is to support the translation of basic research into useful market-based applications at Nevada's universities, growing entrepreneurial and startup development, attracting and providing risk capital to startups and early-stage high-growth companies, while developing innovative solutions for the recruitment of a workforce into high demand occupations within Nevada's key industry sectors. By doing so,

this enhances Nevada's national and global competitiveness in a knowledge-driven economy through fostering regional entrepreneurial-driven innovation systems.

This placement gives the Office of Entrepreneurship access to the full ecosystem entrepreneurs need:

- **Use-Inspired Research**
  The ***Knowledge Fund*** advances Innovation-Based Economic Development by accelerating tech readiness, building research capacity, and supporting university startups and deep-tech companies.

- **Small Business Funding**
  Battle Born Growth, the Nevada State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI), is improving access to capital for Nevada's small businesses and startups by unlocking private loans and investments as well as providing technical assistance to help them grow and succeed.

- **Innovation Workforce**
  GOED pioneered the ***Individual Career Mapping (ICM)™*** methodology to drive labor market literacy and guide job seekers to make informed career and training decisions in the age of automation and AI.

By being part of GOED, the Office of Entrepreneurship offers more than guidance it provides access, giving every founder a bridge to the full infrastructure of state-level economic development.

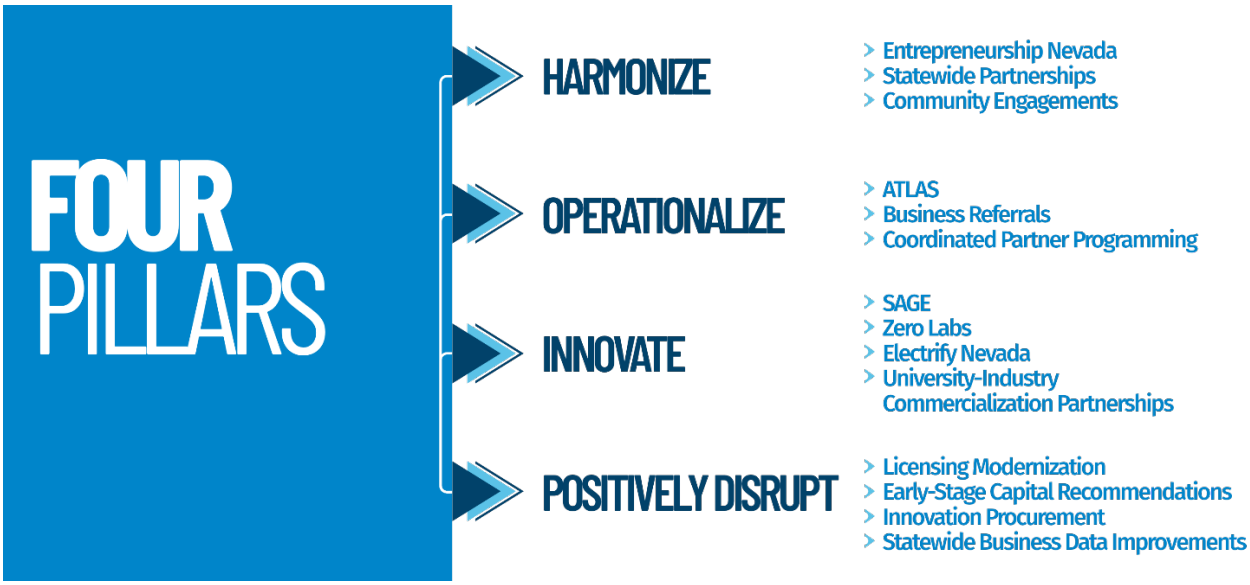
Four Pillars, One Vision

A Strategic Framework for Strengthening Nevada's Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

Building a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem requires more than creating individual programs. It requires a coordinated approach to connecting resources, improving systems, encouraging innovation, and identifying opportunities for meaningful change.

The Nevada Office of Entrepreneurship advances its mission through four strategic pillars: **Harmonize, Operationalize, Innovate, and Positively Disrupt**.

Together, these pillars guide the Office's efforts to strengthen partnerships, improve the entrepreneur experience, and support Nevada's long-term economic competitiveness.



Harmonize: Connecting People, Programs, and Opportunities

Nevada benefits from an extensive network of organizations dedicated to supporting entrepreneurs. However, the effectiveness of these resources depends on strong communication and coordination.

The Office works to harmonize Nevada's entrepreneurial ecosystem by bringing together public agencies, universities, economic development organizations, chambers of commerce, lenders, investors, and community partners.

Through collaborative initiatives, statewide convenings, and resource referrals, the Office helps reduce duplication, strengthen relationships, and create clearer pathways for entrepreneurs seeking assistance.

Operationalize: Turning Collaboration into Results

Strong partnerships create opportunities, but meaningful progress requires action.
The Office works to operationalize entrepreneurial support by translating identified needs into practical initiatives, improved processes, and coordinated programs.

Efforts include strengthening referral networks, supporting resource navigation, developing statewide information tools, and collaborating with partners to address barriers affecting business formation and growth.

This pillar emphasizes accountability, efficient use of resources, and measurable outcomes.

Innovate:
Creating New Pathways for Economic Growth

Innovation extends beyond technology. It also involves developing new approaches to longstanding challenges.

The Office encourages innovation by supporting research commercialization, entrepreneurial education, access to capital, and partnerships connecting businesses with Nevada's research institutions.

Initiatives such as ATLAS, accelerator partnerships, and emerging commercialization programs demonstrate opportunities to use new tools and collaborative approaches to strengthen the state's entrepreneurial ecosystem.

By encouraging experimentation and identifying unmet needs, the Office helps create pathways for businesses and industries of the future.

Positively Disrupt:
Challenging Barriers and Advancing Solutions

Building a more competitive entrepreneurial economy sometimes requires reexamining established systems and identifying better ways to serve businesses.

The Office embraces positive disruption by identifying policies, processes, and structural barriers limiting entrepreneurial opportunity.

Through research, community engagement, and legislative recommendations, the Office works to encourage thoughtful improvements in business licensing, capital access, government contracting, research commercialization, and statewide economic data.

Positive disruption is not change for its own sake. It is the pursuit of practical, lasting improvements capable of expanding opportunity and strengthening Nevada's economic future.

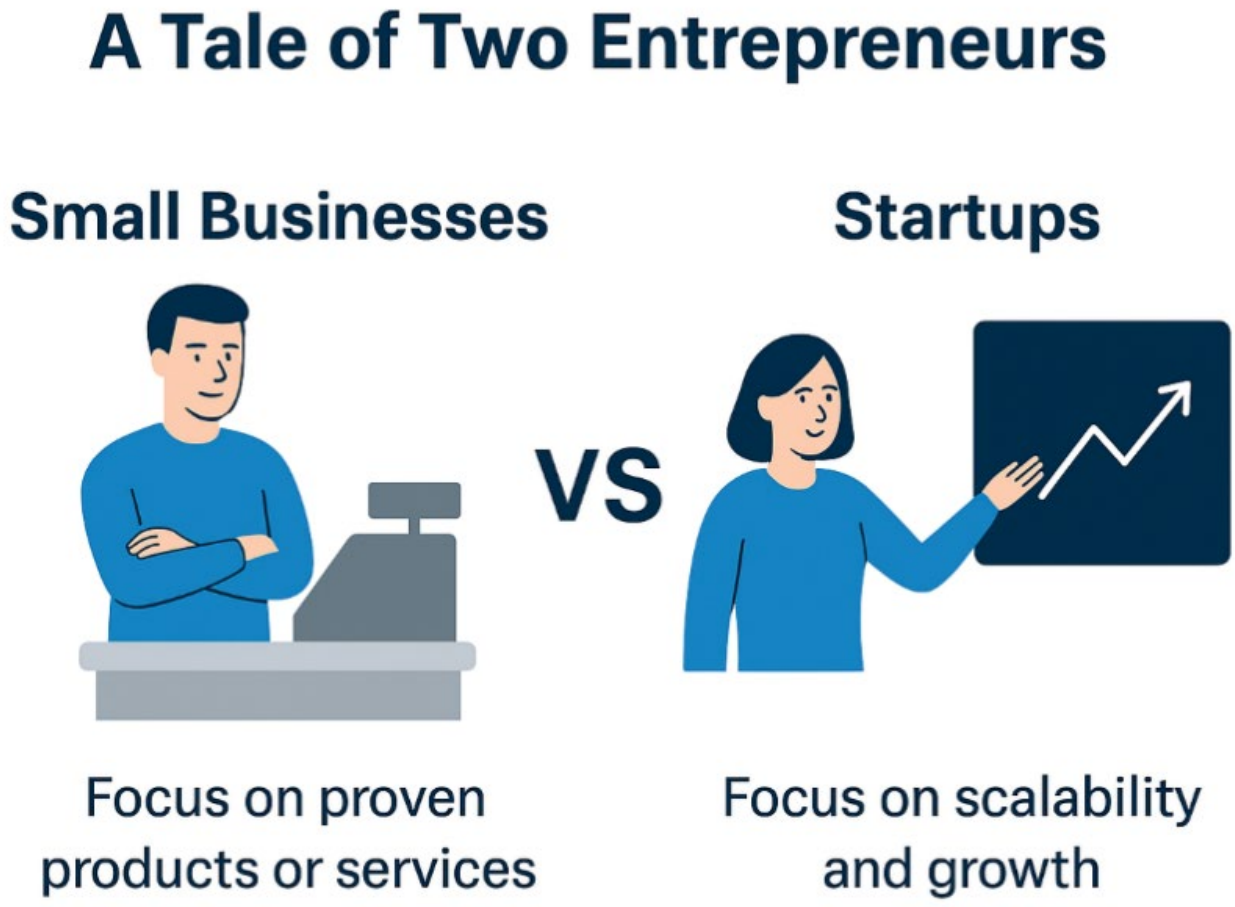
Together, these four pillars provide a foundation for the Office's work: connecting Nevada's entrepreneurial community, translating ideas into action, advancing innovation, and creating meaningful opportunities for progress.

Two Paths, One Goal

Understanding Small Businesses and Innovation-Driven Startups

Entrepreneurs contribute to Nevada's economy in different ways. Understanding these differences is important when developing programs and policies designed to support business growth.

In their research paper for the Kauffman Foundation, *A Tale of Two Entrepreneurs: Understanding Differences in the Types of Entrepreneurships in the Economy*, Bill Aulet and Fiona Murray, both at the Martin Trust Center for MIT Entrepreneurship, highlight two major categories of entrepreneurship:



Aulet, W., & Murray, F. (2013). A Tale of Two Entrepreneurs: Understanding Differences in the Types of Entrepreneurship in the Economy. Kauffman Foundation. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2259740.

Small and Medium Enterprises (SME): The Heart of Local Communities

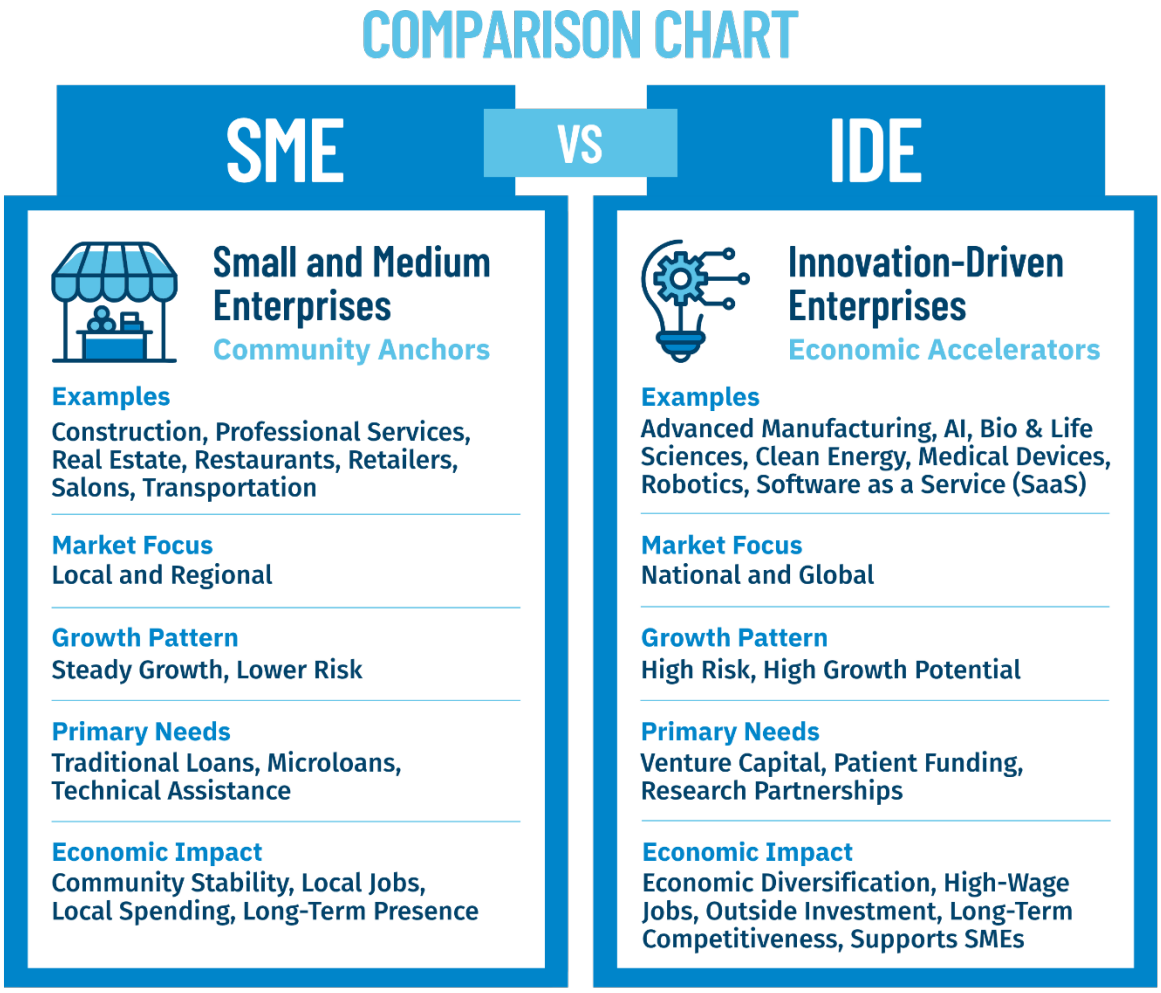
Small and medium enterprises include businesses such as restaurants, construction companies, salons, retailers, professional service providers, and family-owned enterprises. These businesses often serve local or regional markets and focus on building stable operations, serving customers, and creating lasting community connections. Their contributions extend beyond employment. They strengthen neighborhoods, provide essential services, support local supply chains, and keep economic activity circulating within communities.

Common needs include access to traditional loans, microloans, business planning, licensing assistance, workforce support, and practical mentorship.

Innovation-Driven Enterprises (IDE): Building Industries of the Future

Innovation-driven enterprises pursue new technologies, products, services, or business models with the potential to reach national and international markets. These companies often require substantial research, specialized talent, and investment before generating consistent revenue. Examples include businesses developing advanced manufacturing technologies, artificial intelligence applications, medical innovations, energy storage systems, and emerging scientific discoveries. Their growth can be less predictable, but successful companies have the potential to attract significant investment, create high-wage employment, and strengthen Nevada's position in emerging industries.

Unlike many traditional businesses, innovation-driven startups frequently depend on research grants, venture capital, patient funding, and specialized commercialization assistance.



Aulet, W., & Murray, F. (2013). A Tale of Two Entrepreneurs: Understanding Differences in the Types of Entrepreneurship in the Economy. Kauffman Foundation. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2259740.

Different Needs, Shared Economic Value

Both entrepreneurial pathways are essential to Nevada's economic future. ***The Office of Entrepreneurship recognizes both and builds distinct but complementary pathways***, so the local coffee shop and the clean-energy innovator can grow side by side, each strengthening Nevada's economy in unique ways. Recognizing their distinct needs allows Nevada to develop more effective programs and policies while ensuring entrepreneurs receive appropriate support throughout their business journeys.

Understanding the Capital Needs of Entrepreneurs

Access to financing remains one of the most common challenges facing Nevada entrepreneurs. Different businesses require different forms of capital depending on their industry, development stage, financial position, and growth objectives.

Traditional Loans and Microloans

Traditional business loans provide financing through banks, credit unions, and community lenders. Businesses commonly use these funds to purchase equipment, manage operating expenses, acquire property, or expand operations.

Lenders generally evaluate credit history, repayment capacity, business performance, and available collateral.

Microloans provide smaller financing options, often through nonprofit lenders and community development financial institutions. These loans can be particularly valuable for entrepreneurs with limited borrowing histories or businesses unable to qualify for conventional financing.

Nevada's SSBCI-supported lending programs, including partnerships with the Rural Nevada Development Corporation (RNDC), help expand financing opportunities for eligible businesses.

Technical Assistance: More Than Funding

Access to capital alone does not guarantee business success. Entrepreneurs also need guidance to prepare financial documents, develop business plans, understand lending requirements, identify customers, and manage growth.

Technical assistance provides practical support through training, mentorship, and individualized advising. Organizations such as the Nevada Small Business Development Center, Sierra Accelerator for Growth and Entrepreneurship (SAGE), Nevada APEX Accelerator, chambers of commerce, and other resource partners help entrepreneurs strengthen their business operations and prepare for financing opportunities.

Venture Capital and Patient Funding

Innovation-driven companies often require financing beyond traditional loans.

- **Venture capital** is private investment provided to startups with significant growth potential in exchange for an ownership interest. Investors accept substantial financial risk with the expectation of returns if a company grows successfully.

- **Patient funding** provides longer-term financial support for businesses developing innovations requiring extended periods of research, testing, and commercialization. This form of capital recognizes some technologies may take years to reach the marketplace.

For Nevada's emerging technology companies, access to appropriate financing throughout development is essential for retaining innovation, talent, and future economic opportunities within the state.

Turning Ideas into Impact

What the Office Achieved

Throughout the reporting period, the Office of Entrepreneurship strengthened partnerships, supported entrepreneurial programming, expanded statewide engagement, and advanced initiatives designed to improve access to resources.

These activities reflected the Office's central mission of connecting people, aligning programs, and creating opportunities for Nevada businesses to succeed.

Highlights

Nevada the Entrepreneurial

Nevada joined ***America the Entrepreneurial*** as a Founding State, participating in a national movement celebrating entrepreneurship in connection with America's 250th anniversary.

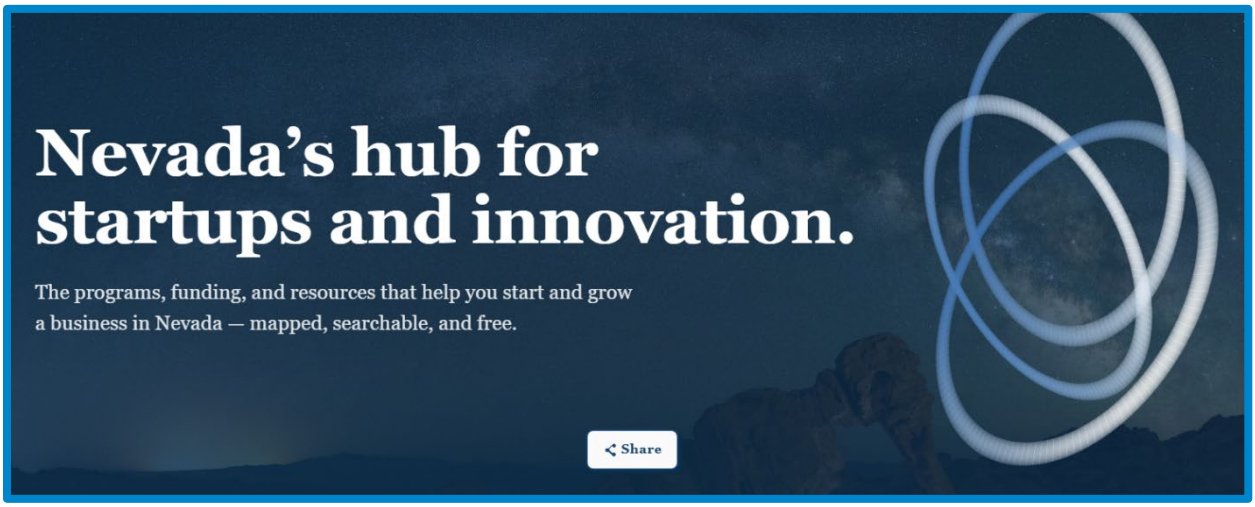


Filming Nevada the Entrepreneurial campaign with the owners of Stellar Snacks, Elisabeth and Gina Galvin.

Building upon this designation, the Office launched Nevada the Entrepreneurial in July 2026, a yearlong storytelling campaign designed to recognize the people, businesses, and organizations contributing to Nevada's economic future. The campaign features entrepreneurs, community partners, and elected officials while highlighting the importance of collaboration, innovation, and access to opportunity.

Through weekly stories and digital outreach, the initiative showcases Nevada's entrepreneurial spirit across industries and regions. By sharing the experiences of Nevada entrepreneurs, the initiative seeks to inspire future founders, strengthen community pride, and demonstrate the importance of entrepreneurship to economic development. The campaign also recognizes Founding Partners (organizations formally supporting Nevada the Entrepreneurial and its mission). Through their participation and shared visibility, these partners help showcase the programs, resources, and connections available to entrepreneurs at different stages of business development.

ATLAS Entrepreneurial Dashboard



Entrepreneurs frequently describe the difficulty of navigating business licensing, financing opportunities, and available support programs.

At the same time, policymakers and economic development organizations face challenges obtaining comprehensive information about Nevada's entrepreneurial ecosystem.

To address these needs, the Office advanced ATLAS, an internally developed initiative designed to improve access to entrepreneurial resources and economic information.

ATLAS is being developed around two complementary purposes:

- **For entrepreneurs**, it aims to simplify the process of identifying relevant resources, funding opportunities, business requirements, and support organizations.

- **For policymakers and ecosystem leaders**, it aims to provide better visibility into economic conditions, industry trends, innovation activity, business formation, and capital access.

The initiative draws upon existing state and federal data sources while exploring opportunities to strengthen reporting and analysis.

ATLAS also supports the development of Nevada's Innovation Index, helping establish a more informed understanding of the state's research and entrepreneurial activity.

The entrepreneurial dashboard was targeted for availability during the fourth quarter of 2026, with continued development planned as additional data and resources become available.

Partnerships Powering Innovation

The Office's work is strengthened by collaboration with organizations delivering specialized assistance across Nevada.

Sierra Accelerator for Growth and Entrepreneurship (SAGE)

SAGE helps Nevada technology companies pursue federal research funding through the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs.

Through training, individualized assistance, and university partnerships, SAGE supports entrepreneurs in identifying funding opportunities and preparing competitive applications. During 2026, the program reported 68 applications submitted and seven events reaching approximately 180 participants.

Additional federal FAST funding and Knowledge Fund support created opportunities to expand commercialization assistance and connect emerging technology companies with potential investment partners.

Zero Labs

Zero Labs supports startups through focused accelerator programming connected to Southern Nevada's gaming, hospitality, and innovation industries. Its free, non-dilutive programming helps founders connect with industry experts, prospective customers, investors, and business partners.

During FY2026, three Innovation Launchpad cohorts supported 47 companies and 78 founders. Participating companies reported progress involving investment, pilot projects, and customer relationships. Three companies collectively raised approximately $1.21 million.

Zero Labs demonstrates how industry-focused accelerators can help emerging companies validate ideas and establish meaningful commercial connections.

Electrify Nevada Accelerator

Powered by gener8tor, Electrify Nevada supports startups working in energy, battery technology, critical minerals, sustainable infrastructure, and related industries.

The accelerator connects founders with mentorship, industry expertise, investors, and Nevada's broader innovation ecosystem. In 2026, the program reported two cohorts supporting 21 startups, bringing its two-year total to 41 participating companies. Program alumni reported approximately $9.5 million in follow-on capital, with several companies relocating to or establishing operations in Nevada.

The accelerator supports the state's economic diversification goals by encouraging innovation and business formation in industries closely connected to Nevada's resources and research strengths.

Rural Nevada Development Corporation (RNDC)

The RNDC remains an important financing partner for entrepreneurs outside Nevada's major metropolitan areas. Through community lending and participation in Battle Born Growth, RNDC helps eligible rural businesses access financing for equipment, expansion, acquisitions, and working capital. Recent financing examples include Silver State Exploration in Spring Creek, Owen Equipment and Truck Repair in Winnemucca, and Coats Broadcasting in Ely.

These investments illustrate the importance of financing options suited to the needs of rural communities. By supporting local businesses, RNDC helps strengthen economic stability, preserve essential services, and create opportunities for long-term community growth.

Stronger Together: Community Engagement Across Nevada

The Office of Entrepreneurship continued to participate in community events, business forums, and collaborative initiatives across the state. These engagements provided opportunities to connect entrepreneurs with resources while gaining firsthand insight into barriers affecting business formation and growth.

Entrepreneurship Nevada: Connecting Resource Partners

The Office expanded its involvement with Entrepreneurship Nevada, a monthly convening bringing together entrepreneurial support organizations from across the state. The Office has helped strengthen participation and statewide virtual access.

The meetings provide opportunities for organizations to share programming, coordinate events, improve referrals, and identify gaps in available services. This collaboration supports a more connected statewide network while reducing duplication among organizations serving entrepreneurs.

Global Entrepreneurship Week: Opportunity Across Communities



Director Saavedra speaking at the White Pine Economic & Community Jam Session in Ely, NV

During Global Entrepreneurship Week in November 2025, the Office worked with partners to promote entrepreneurship events throughout Nevada. The statewide celebration included programming in Southern Nevada, Northern Nevada, and rural communities, including Ely.

Events brought together founders, students, veterans, business owners, and community organizations to celebrate entrepreneurship and share resources. With 42 events supported statewide, the initiative demonstrated the value of bringing entrepreneurial programming directly into communities.

Veterans Small Business Coalition: Serving Those Who Served

The Veterans Small Business Coalition continued its work to strengthen coordination among organizations supporting veteran entrepreneurs. The coalition brought together partners including the Veterans Business Outreach Center, Warrior Rising, the Southern Nevada Veterans Chamber of Commerce, and VetsinTech.



AnchorPoint participants pitching judges from VBG, GOED, and local ecosystem partners following the 13-week program.

Its focus included identifying barriers involving financing, government contracting, business development, and the transition from military service to entrepreneurship. The coalition also helped establish connections supporting the development of AnchorPoint, a veteran-focused accelerator pilot.

Rural Roundup: Supporting Rural Entrepreneurs and Tourism



Director Saavedra with Rural Pitch Day Challenge winner, Liz Woolsey, owner of Bristlecone General Store and Stargazer Inn, and judge Fred Steinmann.

The Director of the Office of Entrepreneurship at GOED served as a panelist for the third annual Rural Pitch Day Challenge on April 22, 2026, during the 33rd annual Rural Roundup in Elko. Hosted by the Elko Convention & Visitors Authority, Rural Roundup brought together Nevada's tourism industry to share ideas, strengthen partnerships, and explore opportunities to grow rural tourism across the state.

The Rural Pitch Day Challenge highlighted new and expanding businesses in rural Nevada, giving entrepreneurs an opportunity to pitch innovative ideas that enhance tourism and support local business growth. The competition offered $20,000 in seed funding to help turn a business idea into reality, supporting entrepreneurship as a driver of economic development in rural communities. The event aligned with the Office of Entrepreneurship's role in strengthening Nevada's entrepreneurial ecosystem by helping connect entrepreneurs, resources, and support networks to foster business growth across the state, including in rural communities.

Rural Community Development Luncheon: Roundtable Discussion

The White Pine Chamber of Commerce hosted a full week of small business events in Ely, Nevada, designed to support, educate, promote, and celebrate its members as part of National Small Business Week. As part of the week's events, the Office of Entrepreneurship participated in the Rural Community Development Luncheon on May 6, 2026, organized in collaboration with the Governor's Office of Federal Assistance and the Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED).

The luncheon featured a roundtable discussion titled *The Big 3: Strategic Economic Growth, Rural Business Resilience, and Key Resource Partnerships*. The discussion brought together institutional knowledge, data-driven insights, and perspectives from across sectors to support the economic health and long-term sustainability of Ely, White Pine County, the surrounding region, and Nevada. The roundtable focused on strategic economic growth, small business resilience, and stronger partnerships among organizations providing business development resources. By convening public-sector representatives, business leaders, and resource partners, the luncheon provided an opportunity to exchange perspectives on rural economic development and explore how coordinated support can strengthen businesses and communities.

Through its participation, the office supported regional collaboration and strengthened connections with stakeholders working to address rural business needs and advance economic development across Nevada.

Eureka Grant Summit: Bringing Resources to Rural Nevada



Director Saavedra moderating the Regional Collaboration for Economic Diversification Panel at the Eureka Grant Summit.

The Office of Entrepreneurship participated in the 2026 Eureka Grant Summit, hosted by the Governor's Office of Federal Assistance June 1–3 at the Eureka County Opera House with partners including i-80 Gold Corp. The summit convened community leaders, health care providers, state agencies, housing developers, and nonprofits to explore strategies for economic growth in Eureka County, with presentations, panels, and networking focused on strengthening rural communities. GOED's participation through panels and resources brought entrepreneurship into a conversation often centered regional collaboration through partnerships and cross-county planning. Bringing these discussions to central Nevada reflects the Office's commitment to ensuring entrepreneurs in every county, not only Reno and Las Vegas, can access state support. The Office engaged over 100+ attendees through the resource fair and speed networking.

AnchorPoint: A New Pathway for Veteran Entrepreneurs



Four veteran entrepreneurs participated in the annual MCON Pitch Competition with Alyxander Nelson, CEO of Undyz, winning $20,000 in non-dilutive capital from Warrior Rising.

Launched in June 2026 in partnership with Warrior Rising, AnchorPoint provided structured entrepreneurial training and mentorship for veteran-owned businesses. The pilot connected 12 participating businesses with subject matter experts from Nevada's entrepreneurial support network.

Four founders were selected to receive non-dilutive funding opportunities through MCON, a national military and veteran-focused conference. The initiative demonstrated how coordinated partnerships can turn identified community needs into practical programming.

Tech Alley: Las Vegas and Henderson

Tech Alley has become one of Southern Nevada's key gathering places for the startup community. It began in the summer of 2021 in downtown Las Vegas, transforming a portion of the 18b Arts District once a month into a place for the tech startup community to meet, share knowledge, and network. Founded by Josh Leavitt, Tech Alley is a nonprofit organization that aims to strengthen the Las Vegas startup community through monthly events at Taverna Costera and now THIRD Street. Regular meetups are held on the third Saturday of each month, and the community has grown to nearly 4,000 members on its Meetup page alone. Building on that model, Tech Alley expanded to Henderson through Lorraine Yarde. The inaugural Tech Alley Henderson chapter event was held on November 13, 2024, and the chapter now convenes regularly across Henderson. It is supported by partners including the City of Henderson, the Henderson Chamber of Commerce, and local businesses in Henderson. With the launch of Innovation Henderson and LaunchLab, Henderson's first startup accelerator, it extends the Las Vegas model into one of the region's fastest-growing cities, giving Henderson's entrepreneurs, technologists, and investors a local home for networking, startup stories, and collaboration.

On January 21, 2026, Shaquille Cruz, Entrepreneurship Data Manager for the Office of Entrepreneurship, joined Todd DeRemer, Hoz Roushdi, and Jonathon Sterritt as a special guest speaker at Tech Alley Henderson's Kick-Off 2026 event at The Pass Casino. Cruz opened with a central question: where does prosperity come from? His answer pointed to the founders in the room. New businesses drive job creation, community resilience, and long-term economic growth, and the Office of Entrepreneurship exists to help those businesses start and scale. He introduced the Office's role as a statewide connector across Nevada's entrepreneurial ecosystem and highlighted GOED programs available to founders, including Battle Born Growth (SSBCI) capital and the Knowledge Fund. He also previewed Nevada the Entrepreneurial, the Office's yearlong storytelling campaign celebrating the entrepreneurs and support organizations shaping the state's economy, and invited attendees to share their stories. The event reached 80 attendees and strengthened the Office's connection with Henderson's growing tech and startup community.



Shaq Cruz speaking at Tech Alley Henderson sharing the Office's journey so far with resources hub, dashboards, and announcing Nevada the Entrepreneurial.

Silver State Grants & Procurement Conference



GOED and Office of Entrepreneurship team members at the Silver State Grants & Procurement Conference.

The Office of Entrepreneurship sponsored the 2026 Silver State Grants & Procurement Conference, held September 1-3 at the Las Vegas Convention Center. Hosted by the Nevada Governor's Office of Federal Assistance, the conference convened more than 500 attendees from state and local government, higher education, nonprofits, tribal entities, federal agencies, and private industry to strengthen understanding of grants, procurement, and public funding opportunities throughout Nevada.

As a conference sponsor, the Office hosted a vendor table to share information about GOED's entrepreneurship initiatives and connect attendees with resources available to Nevada businesses. The broader conference program covered federal funding trends, grant development and management, compliance, sustainability, technology, workforce development, procurement, and public-private partnerships.



Office of Entrepreneurship team members at their resource table during the Silver State Grants & Procurement Conference.

The Director of the Office of Entrepreneurship, served as co-master of ceremonies alongside Sienna Stierman, Grants and Contracts Manager for Elko County. Director Saavedra also participated in the closing panel, Partnerships that Deliver: How Collaboration Creates Better Outcomes for Nevada. Moderated by Divya Narala, Director of Partnerships and Engagement at Nevada Grant Lab, the panel featured Ali Caliendo, founder of Foster Kinship, and Shadrach Robertson, CEO of the White Pine Chamber of Commerce. Panelists shared perspectives on building effective partnerships, drawing on successful examples to explore how organizations can align resources, reduce duplication, address gaps in services, and achieve greater community impact. The discussion also examined practical considerations for sustaining partnerships, including identifying the right partners, establishing trust, defining roles and responsibilities, and navigating competing priorities.



Director Saavedra with fellow panelists during the Partnerships that Deliver closing panel at the 2026 Silver State Grants & Procurement Conference.

GOED Data Manager Shaquille Cruz led *Measuring What Matters: Demonstrating Impact Through Data and Performance*, a 60-minute interactive session supported by a custom app he developed specifically for the workshop. Participants entered their existing metrics, categorized them as outputs, outcomes, or human evidence, and developed questions to help assess changes in the experiences of the people they serve. The exercise illustrated how person-centered feedback can complement traditional performance metrics and provide additional context for evaluating program impact.

The Office's sponsorship and participation supported its broader mission to strengthen Nevada's entrepreneurial ecosystem by expanding connections among public, private, and community partners, increasing awareness of funding and procurement resources, and promoting collaboration that helps entrepreneurs access opportunities and build sustainable businesses.

Reno Startup Week: Celebrating Northern Nevada's Entrepreneurial Spirit

GOED served as title sponsor of Reno Startup Week 2026, helping deliver the event's largest turnout to date with a record 1,946 attendees, 90 sessions, and an average of 82 attendees per hour-long session. With an average of 82 attendees per hour-long session, the week brought together entrepreneurs, business leaders, and ecosystem partners to celebrate Northern Nevada's entrepreneurial spirit. As a free, community-powered event, Reno Startup Week provided programming for both types of entrepreneurs the Office of Entrepreneurship supports: small and medium-sized enterprises building the backbone of local economies, and high-growth, innovation-driven enterprises scaling new technologies. GOED's sponsorship reinforced its commitment to fostering innovation, supporting entrepreneurs, and strengthening Nevada's entrepreneurial ecosystem. GOED's involvement also extended to event leadership, with Melissa Saavedra, Director of the Office of Entrepreneurship, serving on Reno Startup Week's Leadership Council alongside representatives from across the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

GOED-supported panels connected attendees directly to IBED resources, including Battle Born Growth (SSBCI) capital, Knowledge Fund–backed university commercialization, and the state's accelerator network. The two GOED-supported sessions ranked among the event's 10 most attended and highly valued sessions, demonstrating strong interest in the resources and opportunities available to Nevada businesses. The week expanded across Reno's growing innovation footprint, with events at Kiln, the Reno Experience District (RED), and Reno Public Market.

The broader schedule offered practical programming for entrepreneurs at different stages of business development. Sessions covered topics such as artificial intelligence, raising capital, scaling a business, founder wellness, and technology adoption. Through keynotes, workshops, fireside chats, and panel discussions, participants heard from experienced founders and business leaders and explored strategies for addressing common business challenges.

The Build Better Expo provided another opportunity for entrepreneurs to access support, bringing together approximately 70 resource partners in one place. Attendees could connect directly with organizations offering business advising, funding guidance, technical assistance, and other services. The office also hosted a resource table, sharing information about state entrepreneurship initiatives and helping attendees identify relevant programs and support.

A strong Latino community presence defined this year's event, highlighted by a keynote from Dr. Jesus "Chuy" Cepeda and Comida y Comunidad, a bilingual evening of music, dancing, and networking connected entrepreneurs with organizations ready to support them at every stage. Latinos made up 22.3% of the audience with 350 reporting Hispanic/Latino, this is an increase from 199 Latino attendees in the 2025 week. Programming also included Spanish sessions and translation services, providing additional opportunities for Spanish-speaking entrepreneurs to engage with resources and connect with the broader entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Reno Startup Week reflects deep collaboration among Northern NV Now, GOED, Nevada Small Business Development Center, and partners across Nevada's innovation ecosystem.

RENO STARTUP WEEK
PRESENTED BY GOED
NEVADA GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SEPTEMBER 28TH- OCTOBER 2ND

2026 RENO STARTUP WEEK



1,946
registered



90
sessions



134
speakers

TOP 5 HIGHLIGHTS

1	PRESENTING SPONSOR	GOED reinforced its commitment to fostering innovation, supporting entrepreneurs, and strengthening Nevada's startup ecosystem
2	GOED SESSIONS	Top 10 Most Attended and Valuable Sessions
3	BUILD BETTER EXPO	Entrepreneurs connected with 70 resource partners to build and scale stronger businesses
4	BUILDING COMMUNITY	Sessions in Spanish, Translation Services Available, Increase in Latino, Black, and Indigenous Communities
5	KEYNOTE SPEAKER	Dr. Jesus "Chuy" Cepeda *PhD in A.I., tech entrepreneur, and World Economic Forum Young Global Leaders*

Silver State Chambers of Commerce Summit



Director Saavedra with panelists from the Whole State Solutions discussion at the 2026 Silver State Chambers of Commerce Summit.

The Office of Entrepreneurship participated as a sponsor of the Silver State Summit, hosted by the Silver State Chambers of Commerce at the Grand Sierra Resort in Reno on October 8–9, 2026. Before 250 attendees from 22 chambers of commerce, GOED connected business owners with Battle Born Growth (SSBCI) lending, Knowledge Fund–supported commercialization, and the state's accelerator network, and invited chambers to nominate founders for Nevada the Entrepreneurial.

The Director of the Office moderated two panels. Whole State Solutions brought together leaders from the Reno+Sparks, Vegas, Fernley, Laughlin, Chambers for Innovation, and Silver State chambers to discuss workforce, healthcare, housing, and access to capital across urban, suburban, and rural communities. Innovative Funding Pathways featured Karsten Heise of GOED, A'Keia Sanders of the Governor's Office of Federal Assistance, and Winnie Dowling of the Nevada SBDC. The panelists examined how capital options, from SSBCI and CDFIs to federal funding, venture capital, and the Knowledge Fund, must match each business's stage and goals. They also emphasized that capital availability alone is not enough without the technical assistance and partnerships that prepare entrepreneurs to access it.



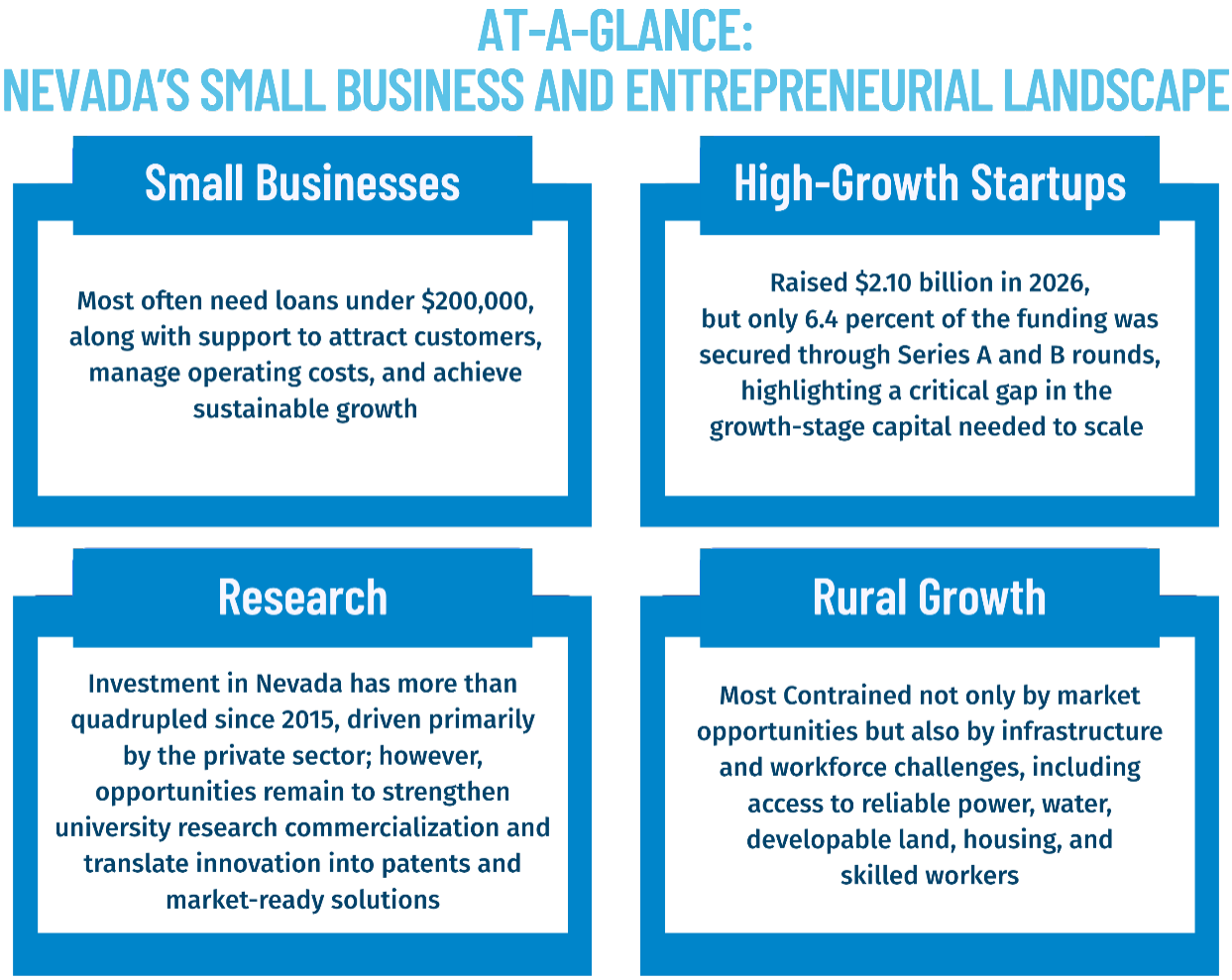
Director Saavedra moderates the Innovative Funding Pathways panel featuring Karsten Heise of GOED, A'Keia Sanders of the Governor's Office of Federal Assistance, and Winnie Dowling of the Nevada SBDC.

Listening to Nevada

Understanding the Challenges Facing Entrepreneurs

Across Nevada, entrepreneurs describe a path to starting and growing a business that is harder than it needs to be. Three challenges come up again and again: licensing and permitting rules that differ from one city and county to the next and can carry steep fees; capital that is hard to find, qualify for, and apply for; and local conditions outside the business itself, including workforce, housing, commercial space, broadband, roads, utilities, and childcare. These challenges are sharpest in rural communities and for entrepreneurs who need language-accessible or culturally relevant help.

This section reports what we heard and what the data show in five parts: small businesses, high-growth startups, university and business research, rural Nevada, and Nevada's urban regions and the communities within them.



Challenges for Small and Medium Enterprises: Capital, Customers, and Costs

Funding is the top challenge for new businesses statewide. In the Nevada Small Business Development Center's (SBDC) annual Small Business Challenges Survey, 81 percent of new and startup businesses named funding as a top challenge in 2026, up from 70 percent in 2024 (*Figure 1*).[1] Many small businesses need financing below $200,000 but struggle to qualify because of cash flow, debt-to-income ratios, or personal credit history. Most rely on banks and online lenders, and they ask support providers for faster responses, clear step-by-step guidance, and financing options for businesses outside the software sector.

Owners also want practical help finding customers, including marketing, pricing, distribution, and government contracting. Capital is only part of the problem: businesses also need help becoming loan-ready, reaching customers, and managing day-to-day operations.

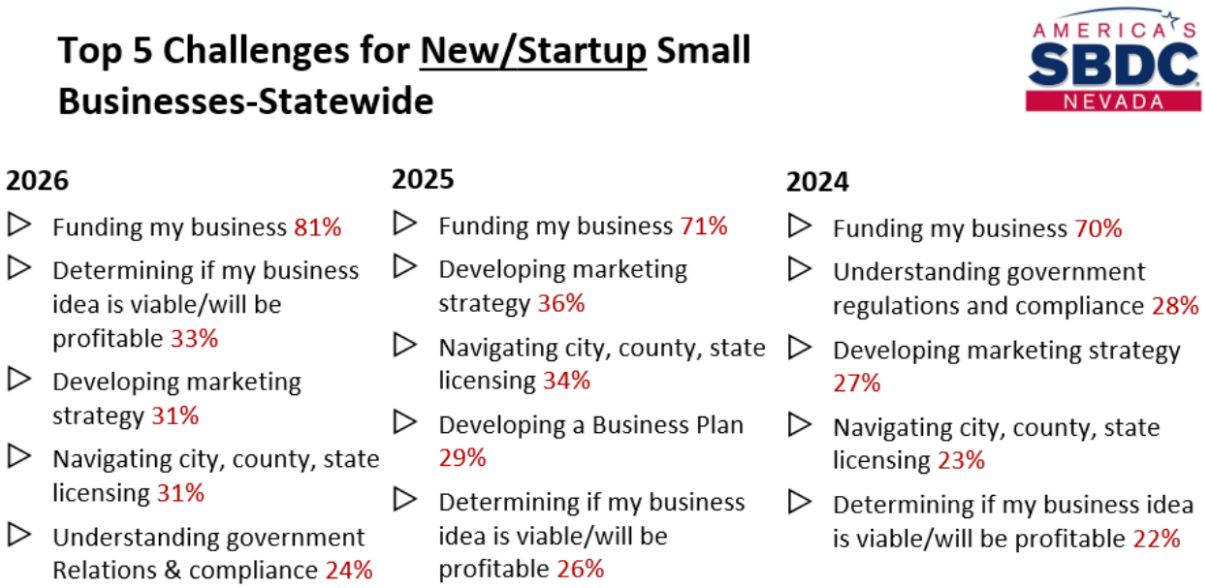


Figure 1. Top five challenges for new and startup small businesses statewide, 2024-2026. Source: Nevada SBDC, Small Business Challenges Survey

[1] Nevada Small Business Development Center, *2026 Nevada Small Business Challenges Survey* (Reno: Nevada SBDC, University of Nevada, Reno, 2026), "Top 5 Challenges for New/Startup Small Businesses—Statewide," slide 4. Findings on financing needs below $200,000, credit barriers, lender types, and requested support are from the same survey.

Rising Costs and New Tools

In Nevada State Bank's 2026 small business survey, inflation was the leading operating concern, and 53.3 percent of respondents had raised prices in response. Economic uncertainty ranked as the top challenge for the first time in the survey's history. Hiring has eased: 37.0 percent reported difficulty recruiting quality candidates, down from 52.2 percent a year earlier.[2]

Businesses are also adopting new technology. Just over half (51.8 percent) already use artificial intelligence (AI) tools, another 35.5 percent plan to adopt them within a year, and 60.4 percent of current users reported significant performance gains.[3] Practical guidance can help small businesses choose tools that pay off.

Challenges for Innovation-Driven Enterprises

The challenges facing innovation-driven enterprises (IDEs) differ fundamentally from those facing small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Where SMEs typically request technical assistance, licensing guidance, and access to working capital, IDEs depend on a pipeline of risk capital, research, and technical talent that must be present at each stage of growth. This section examines that pipeline and where it holds or breaks in Nevada.

Nevada's Venture Market Has Grown

Nevada's venture market has grown from a niche into a meaningful part of the national landscape. Companies in the state drew an average of $1.48 billion a year in venture capital in 2021–2025, nearly 18 times the $82.7 million a year of 2008–2010, while the number of deals grew from about 21 to about 186 a year.[4] From January through September 2026, Nevada companies raised $2.10 billion in equity, and four of them (SendCutSend, TensorWave, Positron AI, and Ridgeline) reached valuations above $1 billion without leaving the state.[5]

Those dollars are concentrated. Six rounds of $75 million or more accounted for $1.95 billion, or 92.5 percent of the total, and Positron AI alone raised $1.11 billion.[6] A few large deals can lift statewide totals while many other companies still lack the capital they need to grow.

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[2] Nevada State Bank, *2026 Small Business Survey*, 13th annual ed., conducted by Applied Analysis (Las Vegas: Nevada State Bank, May 2026), https://www.nsbank.com/business/community/resources/small-business-survey-report/.
[3] Nevada State Bank, *2026 Small Business Survey*.
[4] National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, "Venture Capital Disbursed," *State Indicators*, National Science Foundation, Nevada, 2008–2025, accessed September 12, 2026, https://ncsesdata.nsf.gov/indicators/states/api/v2/dataseries/venturecapitaldisbursed.json. Author's calculation: $1,480 million ÷ $82.7 million = 17.9.
[5] Nevada Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED), "Nevada Raised $2.10 Billion in Equity through September, and Four Companies Hold 75% of It," *Atlas Insights*, no. 2, October 2, 2026, revised October 16, 2026, https://atlas-public-fe-production.up.railway.app/analytics/insights/no-2-four-cap-tables/.
[6] GOED, *Atlas Insights*, no. 2.

Where the Rounds Fall

The 44 equity rounds raised in the first three quarters of 2026 fall into three groups (Figure 2):[7]

- **Early Stage**
  30 rounds under $5 million (21 pre-seed rounds under $1 million and 9 seed rounds of $1 million to $5 million), totaling $23.0 million, or about $770,000 per round.

- **Late Stage**
  6 rounds of $75 million or more, totaling $1.95 billion.

- **The Missing Middle**
  Just 8 Series A and B rounds of $5 million to $75 million, totaling $134.2 million, or 6.4 percent of all dollars raised.

The middle range is where a company with a working product raises the money to grow into a business with millions of dollars in annual revenue. It is also where Nevada recorded the least activity.

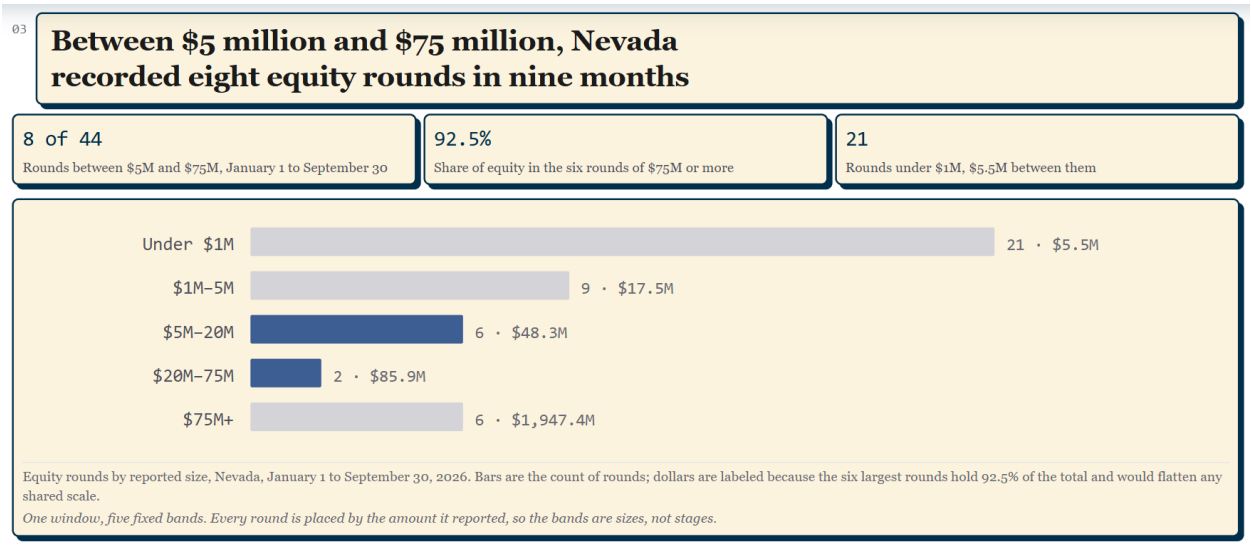


Figure 2. Nevada equity rounds by size, January 1 to September 30, 2026.
Bars show the number of rounds; labels show dollars raised.
Source: GOED, ATLAS Insights, no.2.

Why the Middle Matters

To see what happens to companies after they raise money, the Office of Entrepreneurship modeled the paths of 78 venture-backed Nevada companies. The model estimates how likely a company at each stage is to end in one of three outcomes: sustained growth; an exit through acquisition or initial public offering (IPO); or stalling, meaning three years with no new funding.[8]

[7] GOED, *Atlas Insights*, no. 2. Rounds are grouped by reported size: under $1 million, $1–5 million, $5–20 million, $20–75 million, and $75 million or more. Shares are of $2.10 billion.
[8] GOED Office of Entrepreneurship, Atlas lifecycle model, computed June 16, 2026. The model is an absorbing Markov chain fit to 78 venture-backed Nevada companies, 24 of which have reached a final outcome and 54 of which are still active. Results for the four companies that started at pre-seed are too few to report.

Stalling is the most likely outcome at every stage, but the odds improve as companies advance. A seed-stage company has a 71 percent chance of stalling and a 15 percent chance of growth. At Series A the odds are similar (68 percent stall, 13 percent grow), but exits peak at 19 percent, which suggests that founders without a clear path to Series B often sell early. Companies that reach Series B nearly double their chance of growth, to 24 percent, and by Series C growth (43 percent) is almost as likely as stalling (47 percent). Companies that cross from Series A to Series B are far more likely to become lasting Nevada businesses, and the shortage of Series A capital keeps most of them from making that crossing.

The gap is institutional, not a shortage of entrepreneurial talent. Each size of round tends to come from a different kind of investor. Small rounds come from angel networks and state matching programs, many of them based in Nevada. Rounds of $75 million or more come from national investors who will travel for a company already worth finding. A Series A round of $5 million to $20 million, however, usually comes from a resident fund with a Nevada focus and a partner who sits on the company's board. That is the investor Nevada is still missing.

Where the Capital Goes

An analysis of 291 venture rounds across 22 sectors shows that the largest rounds go to capital-intensive industries: battery recycling, energy, data centers, cloud computing, and healthcare.[9] This supports Nevada's strategy around clean energy, critical materials, and the closed-loop lithium economy. A middle group (AI, analytics, cybersecurity, fintech, the Internet of Things, and manufacturing) raises rounds near the cross-sector median of $7 million, and manufacturing has moved into the well-capitalized range, a proof point for other physical-product industries. Many of the state's target industries remain at the earliest stage. Defense, biotech, health tech, hardware, deep tech, and food tech typically raise rounds of about $500,000 and less than $1 million over a company's lifetime, the territory of grants, Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) awards, and pre-seed investment.

Research: Turning Discovery into Companies

Nevada's long-term opportunity lies in turning the research done in its universities and companies into new businesses. Becoming an innovation hub on the scale of San Jose or Austin will not come from a single program. It depends most on growing the research base and the technical talent it produces, a constraint that sits upstream of every other economic development tool.

Research Spending is Growing, Led by Business

Total research and development (R&D) performed in Nevada grew 4.4 times between 2015 and 2023, from $566 million to about $2.5 billion (Figure 3).[10] Businesses accounted for nearly 90

[9] GOED Office of Entrepreneurship, Atlas analysis of 291 venture rounds in 22 sectors with at least five rounds each. Medians are of round size and of each company's total capital raised to date.
[10] National Science Board, "R&D Performed, All Sectors," *Science and Engineering State Indicators*, compiled by the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, National Science Foundation, Nevada, 2015 and 2023, accessed October 20, 2026, https://ncsesdata.nsf.gov/indicators/states/api/v2/dataseries/rdperformed-all.json.

percent of that increase, and their share of the state's R&D rose from 67 percent to 84.5 percent.[11] University R&D has grown steadily as well, reaching $352.6 million in 2024. That is 2.3 times its 2012 low, or 1.7 times after inflation, and it has risen every year since.[12] Federal research funding has not kept pace. Federal R&D obligations to Nevada swing sharply from year to year and ended 2023 at $504.9 million, about 55 percent below their 1990 level after inflation.[13]

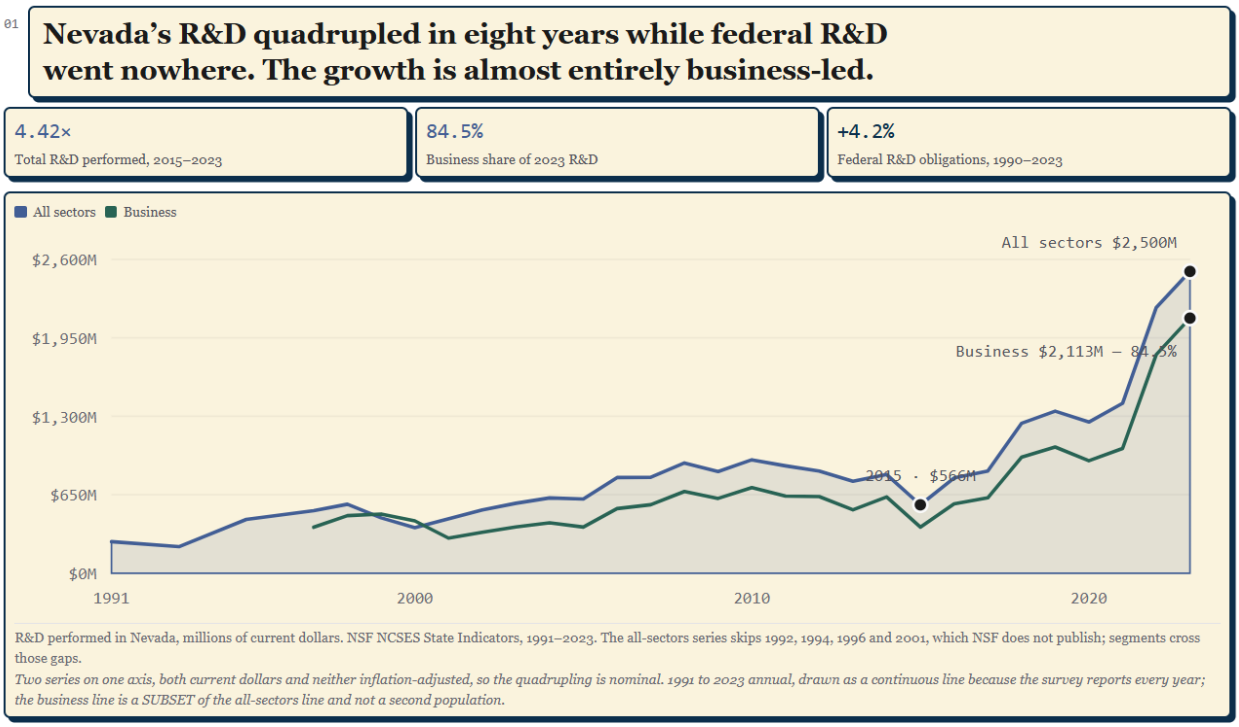


Figure 3. R&D performed in Nevada, all sectors and business sector, 1991-2023, in millions of current dollars. Source: National Science Board, Science and State Indicators.

The Commercialization Gap

Nevada's universities publish at a strong rate but rarely turn research into patents. The state ranks about 10th in academic science and engineering articles per researcher but 50th in academic

[11] National Science Board, "R&D Performed, Business Sector," *Science and Engineering State Indicators*, Nevada, 2015 and 2023, accessed October 20, 2026, https://ncsesdata.nsf.gov/indicators/states/api/v2/dataseries/rdperformed-business.json. Author's calculation: business R&D rose $1,732 million of a total increase of $1,934 million (89.6 percent). Business shares are 381 ÷ 566 for 2015 and 2,113 ÷ 2,500 for 2023.
[12] National Science Board, "Academic R&D Performed," *Science and Engineering State Indicators*, Nevada, 2003–2024, accessed October 20, 2026, https://ncsesdata.nsf.gov/indicators/states/api/v2/dataseries/rdperformed-academic.json. Inflation adjustment is the author's calculation using U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), series CUUR0000SA0, annual averages, https://download.bls.gov/pub/time.series/cu/cu.data.1.AllItems: 2012's $153.3 million equals $209.5 million in 2024 dollars (× 313.689 ÷ 229.594), and $352.6 million is 1.68 times that.
[13] National Science Board, "Federal R&D Obligations," *Science and Engineering State Indicators*, Nevada, 1990–2023, accessed October 20, 2026, https://ncsesdata.nsf.gov/indicators/states/api/v2/dataseries/fedrdobligations.json. Inflation adjustment is the author's calculation using BLS CPI-U annual averages for 1990 (130.7) and 2023 (304.702): $484.7 million × (304.702 ÷ 130.7) = $1,130.0 million in 2023 dollars, of which $504.9 million is 44.7 percent. In current dollars, 2023 obligations were 4.2 percent above 1990 and below the 2005 peak of $593.3 million.

patents.[14] In 2023 its universities produced about 1,260 articles and 2.5 patents: two patents per 1,000 articles, compared with 20 nationally.[15]

The gap also shows up in the private workforce. Private R&D services make up 0.26 percent of employment in metropolitan Las Vegas, compared with 2.27 percent in San Jose. The two metros have nearly identical total employment, about 1.13 million jobs, so San Jose has nearly nine times the research intensity. Seattle is about four times higher than Las Vegas, and Austin, often cited as a peer, is 1.6 times higher, a meaningful but closable gap.[16]

The Knowledge Fund, operating since 2015, was designed to address this constraint, and the years since have coincided with the growth described above. Because the commercialization gap is still widest at universities, programs that turn university research into companies, such as the Knowledge Fund, are a natural place to act.

Challenges for Rural Nevada Businesses

Rural communities are seeing new demand from mining, energy, data centers, and related supply chains. That growth can create work for local contractors and service businesses, but only if communities have the infrastructure, workers, housing, and commercial space to support it.

Rural entrepreneurs face different barriers before and after they open. In the 2025 Nevada Small Business Challenges Survey, 62 percent of rural respondents not yet earning revenue named funding as a top-three challenge and 50 percent named licensing. Others cited marketing (35 percent), testing whether an idea would be profitable (31 percent), and writing a business plan (31 percent). For established rural businesses, the leading challenges were finding customers (45 percent), inflation (34 percent), regulation and compliance (32 percent), access to capital (27 percent), and managing growth (26 percent).[17] New rural businesses need help with financing and licensing; established ones need help with customers, costs, and compliance.

Rural Nevada is not one place. A business owner in Laughlin, competing with Arizona across the river, faces different pressures than one in Lander County, where mining sets the pace. Yet three themes occur across the state: access to workers, affordable housing, and licensing reciprocity. Community leaders reinforced these themes in listening sessions.[18] Carri Larson noted that communities near out-of-state economic hubs lose revenue as residents and spending cross state lines. Marcel Wagner described how major employers hiring locally are raising the importance of soft skills alongside technical training. Shadrach Robertson called for stronger collaboration

[14] National Science Board, "Academic S&E Articles per 1,000 S&E Doctorate Holders in Academia" and "Academic Patents per 1,000 S&E Doctorate Holders in Academia," *Science and Engineering State Indicators*, Nevada, 2023, accessed October 21, 2026, https://ncsesdata.nsf.gov/indicators/states/api/v2/dataseries/articles-academicse.json and https://ncsesdata.nsf.gov/indicators/states/api/v2/dataseries/patents-academic.json. Ranks are among the 50 states.
[15] Author's calculation from National Science Board, *Science and Engineering State Indicators*, 2023: academic patents (2.5) ÷ academic articles (1,257.8) × 1,000. The U.S. rate is 20.0 and the state median 16.3. Counts are fractional: a patent with inventors in two states counts half to each.
[16] U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "NAICS 5417, Scientific Research and Development Services, First Quarter 2025," Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, accessed October 19, 2026, https://data.bls.gov/cew/data/api/2025/1/industry/5417.csv. Private ownership, metropolitan areas, March 2025 employment.
[17] Nevada Small Business Development Center, *2025 Nevada Small Business Challenges Survey*, rural respondents (Reno: Nevada SBDC, University of Nevada, Reno, 2025). Slide 4, https://nevadasbdc.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/2025-Nevada-Small-Business-Challenges-Report-FINAL.pdf.

[18] GOED Office of Entrepreneurship, community listening sessions, 2026.

among chambers of commerce so rural communities can share resources rather than compete for them.

To move from anecdote to evidence, the Office of Entrepreneurship grouped Nevada's 15 rural counties into four regions based on shared economic drivers and the Regional Development Authorities (RDAs) that serve them.

Sierra Nevada Region: Carson City, Douglas, Lyon, Storey, and Mineral Counties

This region is absorbing major industrial investment, including a proposed $11 billion data center development in Lyon County expected to create 150 to 300 permanent jobs and more than 2,200 annual construction jobs, a $1 billion solar and battery storage project, a renewable data park in Storey County, and a semiconductor-related manufacturing expansion in Douglas County.[19] The challenge for entrepreneurs here is less about finding demand than capturing it: positioning local suppliers, contractors, and service businesses to win work from these anchors, and finding space and workers in a tight market. In Douglas County, Gardnerville's main street is 98 percent occupied, leaving little room for microbusinesses.[20]

Northeastern Nevada: Elko, Eureka, Lander, and White Pine Counties

Mining drives the northeast, producing about two million ounces of gold a year, 98 percent of Nevada's copper, and over half of the region's economic output. Growth is capped by infrastructure. Since 2020 the Northeastern Nevada Regional Development Authority has evaluated 181 project leads representing more than $19 billion in proposed investment and over 27,000 potential jobs, but many went elsewhere because of infrastructure limits, most notably too little power capacity in eastern Nevada.[21] Housing compounds the problem: Wells, Ely, Eureka, West Wendover, and Jackpot lack the builders and workers to meet demand, and construction costs run about 30 percent higher than in urban areas.[22] West Wendover and Jackpot, on the Utah and Idaho lines, also face the border-community revenue challenge.

I-80 and Highway 95 Corridor: Humboldt, Pershing, and Churchill Counties

This region is growing on mining, energy, and agriculture. Humboldt and Pershing are seeing major growth from the Thacker Pass lithium project now under construction, gold mining expansions, new geothermal and natural gas projects, and more mining contractor and supply chain activity.[23] That contractor activity is a direct opening for local entrepreneurs. The constraint is local capacity to keep pace, including transportation corridors, water and sewer systems, and attainable housing.[24] Churchill County, anchored by agriculture and Naval Air Station Fallon, is pursuing new industrial and international investment through Churchill Fallon Economic Development.[25]

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[19] GOED, *Rural Regional Development Authority Report* (Carson City: GOED, February 5, 2026), 3, 26, https://goed.nv.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/6.-Rural-RDA-Report.pdf.
[20] GOED, *Rural RDA Report*, 38.
[21] GOED, *Rural RDA Report*, 27.
[22] GOED, *Rural RDA Report*, 25, 27.
[23] GOED, *Rural RDA Report*, 3, 29.
[24] GOED, *Rural RDA Report*, 29.
[25] GOED, *Rural RDA Report*, 4, 30.

Southern Rural Region: Nye, Esmeralda, and Lincoln Counties

The southern rural counties face the most basic barriers: land, utilities, and regulatory certainty. Nearly 98 percent of Lincoln County is federally owned, which limits land for homes and businesses and the property tax revenue needed for infrastructure and public services.[26] In Nye and Esmeralda, regional leaders report that 90 percent of their issues involve pre-planning and utilities; water and sewer approvals can take seven months of utility review and up to three more months of state review before the county will consider plans.[27] The two counties have no rail access and a single highway, and few existing commercial buildings for businesses that cannot build their own.[28] Entrepreneurship support is still producing results: in 2025 the Southwest Central Regional Economic Development Authority (SWCREDA) supported 63 clients, helped launch 13 new businesses, and secured seven approved loans with partners including the Nevada SBDC, Nevada Main Street, the University of Nevada, Reno's Center for Economic Development, and the Rural Nevada Development Corporation.[29]

Rural Clark County

Although Clark County is Nevada's most urban county, its outlying communities have more in common with rural Nevada than with the Las Vegas Valley.[30] Mesquite and Laughlin are older, retiree-heavy economies with low labor force participation, and both compete with larger neighbors across state lines: Mesquite with St. George, Utah, and Laughlin with Bullhead City, Arizona. Mesquite, which has no traditional downtown, is using arts and culture to build a business district along its main boulevard. Smaller communities such as Moapa Valley and Searchlight face the same limits on commercial space and distance from services. For these communities, the challenge is less about capital than about building a local customer base and keeping spending from crossing state lines.

Challenges for Urban Nevada Businesses: Southern Nevada and Reno-Sparks

Southern Nevada

The Las Vegas–Henderson area has one of the most diverse business cultures in the nation, rooted in deep expertise in hospitality, entertainment, and customer experience. Innovation hubs such as Black Fire Innovation, which connects startups with the gaming and hospitality industry, help turn that expertise into new companies. Entrepreneurs experience the region as a patchwork of cities, unincorporated towns, and neighborhoods, each with its own licensing office, economic base, and identity. As the ecosystem grows, coordination among chambers, accelerators, and support organizations matters more than ever, so founders can move between resources rather than navigate them alone.

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[26] GOED, *Rural RDA Report*, 5.
[27] GOED, *Rural RDA Report*, 31. The seven months is the water utility's review time "if everything is perfect."
[28] GOED, *Rural RDA Report*, 31.
[29] GOED, *Rural RDA Report*, 4, 31. The seven loans totaled $62,535.87.
[30] U.S. Census Bureau, QuickFacts, "Mesquite city, Nevada" and "Laughlin CDP, Nevada," American Community Survey 2019–2023 5-year estimates (age and civilian labor force; labor force participation, population age 16 and older: Mesquite 38.4 percent, Laughlin 41.1 percent), https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/mesquitecitynevada/PST045223 and https://census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/laughlincdpnevada/PST045224. Observations on Mesquite's downtown and on cross-border competition: GOED Office of Entrepreneurship, community listening sessions, 2026.

- **Unincorporated Clark County**
  More Southern Nevadans live outside any city than in the largest one. About 1,021,000 residents, 43.8 percent of the county, live in unincorporated Clark County, where the County Commission licenses businesses and plans land use. Its unincorporated towns are cities in all but name: Enterprise has 240,464 residents and would rank fifth among Nevada's cities, and Spring Valley, Sunrise Manor, and Paradise each have between 185,000 and 220,000.[31] Paradise holds the Las Vegas Strip and UNLV, and Enterprise holds UNLV's Harry Reid Research and Technology Park, so much of the valley's visitor economy and university research sits under county rather than city government. For a founder, the county is often the licensing office, the zoning authority, and the economic development partner at once. Its Office of Community and Economic Development leads business support in unincorporated areas. The Harry Reid Research and Technology Park houses UNLV's Office of Economic Development, RebelForge, Rebel Venture Fund, Desert Forge Ventures, Zero Labs, Black Fire Innovation, and the Las Vegas Regional Economic Partnership (formerly LVGEA).

- **Downtown Las Vegas, the Arts District, and Fremont East**
  This is the region's creative and startup core, where newer, smaller founders most often need help with marketing, customer acquisition, and first capital. Tech Alley at THIRD Street, StartUpNV at the International Innovation Center, InnovateNV, the Downtown Vegas Alliance, and the City of Las Vegas Innovation District make the area a growing center for testing new technology.

- **Historic Westside**
  The cultural heart of Las Vegas's Black community. Clark County's $53 million Historic Westside Innovation Commons on Lake Mead Boulevard pairs 76 workforce housing units with more than 20,000 square feet of retail, office, restaurant, and entrepreneur space, and is set to open in early 2027.[32] Nevada Partners hosts Promise Startups, an entrepreneurship and wealth-building program for the West Las Vegas Promise Neighborhood.

- **East Las Vegas**
  The valley's most established Latino business corridor, centered on Eastern Avenue. In 2019 Hispanic owners ran about 37 percent of Las Vegas small shops, compared with a Hispanic population share of about 31 percent.[33] The Latin Chamber of Commerce, with about 1,500 members, remains a key partner.[34]

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[31] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2020–2024 5-year estimates, table B01003, "Total Population," Clark County and places within it, via Census Reporter, accessed October 21, 2026, https://api.censusreporter.org/1.0/data/show/latest?table_ids=B01003&geo_ids=160|05000US32003,05000US32003. Author's calculation: the county's 2,329,548 residents minus its five incorporated cities (Las Vegas, Henderson, North Las Vegas, Mesquite, and Boulder City) leaves 1,021,434.

[32] Clark County, "Clark County Launches Transformative 'Mixed-Use Microbusiness Park' to Boost Workforce Housing and Local Business," news release, March 20, 2025, https://www.clarkcountynv.gov/news/news-detail-t28-r1144; Clark County, "Clark County Renames Westside Microbusiness Park Ahead of Grand Opening," news release, October 2026, https://www.clarkcountynv.gov/news/100626-historic-westside-microbusiness-park.

[33] Hector Mejia, "Growing Hispanic Businesses Exceed Community's Population in Las Vegas," KLAS-TV, September 3, 2019, republished by WISH-TV, https://www.wishtv.com/hispanic-heritage-month/growing-hispanic-businesses-exceed-communitys-population-in-las-vegas/.

[34] Karla Salinas, "City of Las Vegas Recognizes Latin Chamber of Commerce of Nearly 50 Years," FOX5 Vegas, August 6, 2025, https://www.fox5vegas.com/2025/08/06/city-las-vegas-recognizes-latin-chamber-commerce-nearly-50-years/.

- **Chinatown and the Southwest Valley**
  The Asian American and Pacific Islander business community centers on Spring Mountain Road and is spreading west and south along the Rainbow and Tropicana corridors and into Henderson. Language access is the most consistent barrier for first-generation owners (see Entrepreneurs Facing Distinct Barriers, below).

Reno-Sparks

Reno–Sparks has shifted toward advanced manufacturing, logistics, clean energy, and technology while keeping a strong small-business base. The Nevada SBDC, the University of Nevada, Reno's Innevation Center, Northern Nevada Now, and regional accelerators already coordinate through monthly meetings of entrepreneurial support organizations. The opportunity is to make those connections easier for businesses to navigate and to link workforce development to investment and company growth.

- **City of Reno**
  264,165 residents in 2020, up from 225,221 in 2010; median household income of $78,448.[35] Downtown, Midtown, and the University district form the densest startup cluster. Resources include City of Reno Economic Development and Redevelopment, the University of Nevada, Reno Innevation Center, the Nevada Center for Applied Research, Nevada Tech Hub, and Northern Nevada Now.

- **City of Sparks**
  108,445 residents in 2020, up from 90,264 in 2010; median household income of $86,979; 32.6 percent Hispanic or Latino.[36] Resources include City of Sparks Economic Development and Redevelopment and the Oddie District.

- **Main Street Districts**
  Downtown Reno Partnership and Midtown Reno are nationally accredited Main Street programs, and Wells Avenue and Incline Village are affiliates.[37] The Riverwalk District, Brewery District, Downtown Sparks, and the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe's communities are also part of the Nevada Main Street network.[38] Wells Avenue is a largely Hispanic neighborhood and a natural focus for Latino outreach in the north.[39]

- **Tribal Entrepreneurs**
  Resources include the Nevada Department of Native American Affairs, the Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada, and GOED's Tribal Entrepreneur Development Program. The program, led by the Nevada SBDC and StartUpNV and funded through the State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI), is a free six-week course that teaches first-time entrepreneurs how to attract capital.

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[35] U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and 2020 Decennial Census counts; median household income from American Community Survey 2019–2023 5-year estimates, via Data USA, "Reno, NV," https://datausa.io/profile/geo/reno-nv.
[36] U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and 2020 Decennial Census counts; American Community Survey 2019–2023 5-year estimates.
[37] GOED, "Three Nevada Communities Earn National Main Street Accreditation," news release, May 28, 2026, https://goed.nv.gov/newsroom/three-nevada-communities-earn-national-main-street-accreditation-2/.
[38] GOED, "Nevada Main Street," accessed October 20, 2026, https://goed.nv.gov/nevada-main-street/.
[39] Stephanie Serrano, "Wells Avenue: Reno's Melting Pot," KUNR, September 25, 2018, https://www.kunr.org/post/wells-avenue-renos-melting-pot.

Entrepreneurs Facing Distinct Barriers

Veteran-Owned Small Businesses

Nevada's veteran entrepreneurs are a powerhouse of skills and resilience. Many describe themselves as "self-reliant by necessity," with broad networks and valuable experience. These networks, however, remain fragmented and would benefit from targeted programming and greater inter-agency coordination. For veterans, meaningful translation of their skill sets and security clearances is a barrier in both business and in the workforce. Enhancing opportunities for VOSB and SDVOSB businesses and integrating small business technical assistance into veterans support programs can meaningfully improve conditions for veteran small businesses.

Latino-Owned Small Businesses

Latino entrepreneurs are among the largest and fastest-growing forces in Nevada's small business economy. Nevada has 66,037 Hispanic-owned businesses, about one in five statewide: 61,500 without employees and 4,537 with employees.[40] Hispanic-owned firms grew 31.1 percent from 2019 to 2022, nearly three times the rate of the state's small business base overall.[41] They span restaurants, markets, construction, professional services, and transportation.

The opportunity is in growth. About 93 percent of Hispanic-owned businesses in Nevada have no employees, compared with about 81 percent of other businesses.[42] Helping more of these firms make their first hire would multiply their economic impact. That requires language-accessible technical assistance and capital products suited to first-time borrowers, including Battle Born Growth (SSBCI) microloans delivered through community development financial institution (CDFI) partners. It also requires more consistent, culturally aware outreach in Reno and Northern Nevada, including along Wells Avenue, so Latino entrepreneurs statewide have the same access to resources available in Southern Nevada.

Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI)-Owned Small Businesses

About 336,000 Nevadans, roughly 10 percent of the state, identify as Asian or as Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander.[43] An estimated 22,000 Asian-owned small businesses support local jobs and neighborhood revitalization.[44] While the historic Chinatown corridor on Spring

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[40] U.S. Small Business Administration, Office of Advocacy, *2024 Small Business Profile: Nevada* (Washington, DC: SBA Office of Advocacy, November 2024), https://advocacy.sba.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Nevada.pdf. Underlying data: U.S. Census Bureau, Annual Business Survey and Nonemployer Statistics by Demographics.

[41] U.S. Small Business Administration, Office of Advocacy, *2025 Small Business Profile: Nevada* (Washington, DC: SBA Office of Advocacy, 2025), https://advocacy.sba.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Nevada_2025-State-Profile.pdf, accessed October 21, 2026. Underlying data: U.S. Census Bureau, Annual Business Survey and Nonemployer Statistics by Demographics, 2022.

[42] Author's calculation from SBA Office of Advocacy, *2024 Small Business Profile: Nevada*: 61,500 of 66,037 Hispanic-owned firms (93.1 percent) have no employees. Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER), University of Nevada, Las Vegas, *Entrepreneurship and the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Summary of Small Business Creation during and after the COVID-19 Pandemic in Nevada versus the United States*, white paper (Las Vegas: CBER, January 2026, with addendum June 2026), 7, 43, https://cber.unlv.edu/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/Small-Business-White-Paper_May-2026.pdf. Hispanic-owned small businesses grew 31.1 percent from 2019 to 2022, compared with 10.5 percent for non-Hispanic-owned businesses and 12.2 percent for all small businesses (311,949 to 350,125).

[43] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2024 1-year estimates, table B02001, "Race," Nevada, via Census Reporter, accessed October 21, 2026, https://api.censusreporter.org/1.0/data/show/latest?table_ids=B02001,B02011,B02012&geo_ids=04000US32. Asian alone (308,815) plus Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone (27,025) equals 335,840 of 3,267,467 residents (10.3 percent); counts including people of more than one race would be higher.

[44] Sonny Vinuya, president, Las Vegas Asian Chamber of Commerce, quoted in Joe Schoenmann, "Asian-Americans Driving New Economic Growth in Southern Nevada," *KNPR's State of Nevada*, Nevada Public Radio, August 21, 2020, https://knpr.org/show/knprs-state-of-nevada/2020-08-21/asian-americans-driving-new-economic-growth-in-southern-nevada

Mountain Road remains a foundation, businesses are spreading west and south as families and entrepreneurs relocating from California open shops, cafes, boutiques, and medical practices along the Rainbow and Tropicana corridors and in Henderson. That visible growth masks real vulnerabilities: independent restaurants, cultural storefronts, and creative microbusinesses in both Las Vegas and Reno operate on thin margins strained by supply chain volatility and reliance on specialized imported goods.

Tagalog, Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese are among the most common languages spoken at home in these communities.[45] Local leaders identify language access as the steepest barrier for first-generation, immigrant, and refugee entrepreneurs. Without bilingual support, many struggle with licensing and tax filings and miss out on state grants, SBA microloans, and low-interest bank loans whose applications are hard to complete without translation or legal help.

Black-Owned Small Businesses

In historically Black neighborhoods, generic, top-down business programs often fall flat because of a long history of mistrust and cultural mismatch. Local entrepreneurs emphasize that equitable growth requires programs co-designed with the community, with local leaders at the table.

Lasting progress comes when programs are rooted in a neighborhood's history, build trust, and meet founders where they are. Both Southern and Northern Nevada are moving toward place-based development, concentrating investment in specific corridors to revitalize whole communities at once. The Historic Westside Innovation Commons, developed with community input, is a leading example: by placing housing, workforce training at the nearby Historic Westside Education and Training Center, and microbusiness space within walking distance, it strengthens the local economy while guarding against displacement. Capital alone is not enough; it must be paired with mentorship and local workforce programs that reflect the community's cultural identity.

[45] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2024 1-year estimates, table C16001, "Language Spoken at Home," Nevada, via Census Reporter, accessed October 21, 2026, https://api.censusreporter.org/1.0/data/show/latest?table_ids=C16001&geo_ids=04000US32. Speakers age 5 and older: Tagalog 99,823; Chinese 41,612; Korean 13,922; Vietnamese 12,542.

From Barriers to Bridges

Recommendations for Nevada Lawmakers

Nevada's entrepreneurs have demonstrated the creativity and determination necessary to build successful businesses.

Thoughtful public policy can help remove unnecessary barriers, strengthen existing resources, and create more opportunities for long-term growth.
The following recommendations reflect statewide research, entrepreneur feedback, and collaboration with economic development partners.

1. Streamline State Licensing and Regulatory Processes

Simplify licensing and permitting requirements to reduce duplication and delays. Entrepreneurs often face inconsistent local and state processes that discourage new business formation. A unified digital platform and clearer cross-agency coordination would make it easier to start and scale a business in Nevada. The Nevada Secretary of State's ORION Business Portal, launched on September 14, 2026, completed Phase 2 of a multi-year overhaul and is an important first step, offering intuitive workflows and simpler filings. Extending this modernization to city and county licensing, sales and use tax registration, and occupational licensing would ease the burden on small businesses that must satisfy multiple licensing requirements from different entities. Matching vendors in procurement systems by common identifiers, such as the Nevada Business ID, rather than by business name would eliminate duplicate records, reduce errors, and let a business register once and be recognized across state and local agencies.

2. Expand Access to Early-Stage Capital

To strengthen support for innovation-driven enterprises (IDEs), we recommend amplifying federal programs such as the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs, known as "America's Seed Fund." The timing is favorable. On April 13, 2026, the programs were reauthorized through September 30, 2031, ending a six-month lapse in authority that had followed their expiration on September 30, 2025. Together, they obligate roughly $4 billion in SBIR and another $600 million in STTR awards annually, and FY2026 funds that were never obligated during the lapse roll into FY2027, expanding the pool available for new awards.

We recommend establishing a Nevada SBIR/STTR Program Matching Initiative to match and leverage these federal dollars. A state match program would extend the runway of Nevada companies that win federal research awards, helping technology-based and highly scalable firms reach the milestones that attract private investment. That support would land precisely where the data shows Nevada's capital stack is thinnest: the middle stages where companies move from a working product to a [i]growing business. Building on SAGE's work helping Nevada companies compete for federal awards and connecting matched firms to Battle Born Growth (SSBCI) capital and Knowledge Fund–supported research, the initiative would put promising companies

on a growth trajectory that can unlock millions in private capital and keep them headquartered in Nevada.

3. Establish an Early-Stage Research and Development Grant Program

Create a dedicated funding mechanism for early-stage entrepreneurs engaged in research and development. Many Nevada innovators face a funding gap between concept and commercialization, where traditional loans and venture capital are difficult to secure. An R&D grant vehicle supported by the Knowledge Fund and designed for very small, technology-intensive businesses would help bridge this gap with flexible, non-dilutive funding to test ideas, build prototypes, and validate technologies. Similar programs are standard in other states and have proven effective at accelerating innovation, attracting private capital, and positioning states as competitive hubs for technology-driven entrepreneurship.

4. Support State Innovation Procurement

Incentivize state agencies to pilot emerging technologies from Nevada-based startups. Early customers build credibility, reduce risk, and keep public dollars circulating in Nevada's economy. Government has long played this role: the Internet, GPS, the microchip, and the camera sensors in today's smartphones were all developed with federal support, and government as a customer helped carry them to broad commercial use.

- **Pilot and Set-Aside Pathways**
  Agencies can work with GOED to identify capability gaps and create set-asides for Emerging Small Businesses (ESBs) whose technology readiness levels fit state needs, giving startups real-world testing environments and proof of concept.

- **Smarter Procurement Matching**
  Expanding NevadaEPro with unified, free vendor registration and automatic matching of small subcontractors to prime contractors would surface opportunities that young companies now miss.

- **Stronger ESB Advantages**
  A distinct tier for businesses under three years old would keep startups from competing with established small firms. Pairing each new certification with a referral to the Nevada SBDC, SCORE, and other technical assistance providers would help certified businesses submit competitive bids and build the capacity to deliver.

5. Strengthen University-Industry Partnerships

Expand support for university commercialization, applied research, technology transfer, and industry collaboration. Nevada’s research institutions generate valuable knowledge with potential

applications in energy, advanced manufacturing, healthcare, water technology, and other emerging industries.

To advance these discoveries, Nevada must strengthen opportunities for industry-sponsored research and development projects at its universities. Companies developing innovative technologies need access to university researchers, specialized equipment, laboratory facilities, and technical expertise. Sponsored research agreements allow businesses to invest directly in university-led research projects while supporting product development, technology validation, and commercialization.

Encouraging stronger partnerships among universities, private companies, and state economic development organizations can help attract additional research investment, expand commercialization opportunities, and strengthen Nevada's innovation ecosystem.

These collaborations can create new Nevada-based companies, support existing businesses, retain highly skilled workers, and position the state as a competitive destination for research, development, and innovation.

6. Expand Opportunity in Entrepreneurship

Provide targeted support to women, veterans, and minority founders. These groups remain underrepresented but make up a growing share of Nevada's business community. America's immigrant population has been a traditional backbone of entrepreneurship. Among new business owners, the immigrant share is 24.2%. Promoting equal access to capital, mentorship, and procurement opportunities will strengthen and inject a new dynamism into Nevada's overall economy.

7. Build a Nevada Deep-Tech Founders Program

Economic development has often utilized business recruitment and attraction of established firms. We are encouraging policymakers to stand up a program to attract entrepreneurial talent to the state while doubling down on local entrepreneurial education and training. Recent success has been seen with founders moving to Las Vegas and Reno with the local ecosystem. Expanding the breadth of accelerators like StartUpNV, Electrify Nevada, and Zero Labs will provide thematic focus to attract entrepreneurial talent to Nevada. Nevada, as a traditional pioneering state, is the natural place for deep-tech founders to build their companies. While inventions can be licensed from out-of-state national labs and universities, startups can be created and grown right here in Nevada.

8. Establish a Statewide Business Data and Insights Framework

Nevada's ability to design effective economic policy is limited by the absence of consistent and comprehensive business data. Currently, state agencies are not required to collect or share information on business formation, industry distribution, growth trends, demographics, or participation in state contracting. This creates significant challenges when lawmakers, agencies, and partners attempt to evaluate economic health or measure the impact of public investments.

To address this, Nevada should establish a Statewide Business Data and Insights Framework requiring agencies engaged in business licensing, regulation, contracting, and funding to collect and report standardized information. This framework would:

1. **Enable lawmakers** to make data-informed policy decisions grounded in accurate and timely information.
2. **Improve transparency and accountability** in public programs by tracking business participation and outcomes.
3. **Provide the state with insight** into the unique needs of different types of businesses, from startups and small businesses to high-growth ventures, to better tailor resources and remove barriers.

The Office of Entrepreneurship, in collaboration with the Governor's Office of Economic Development, could lead the coordination and analysis of this data, working alongside other state agencies. Over time, this framework would serve as Nevada's economic compass, giving policymakers the visibility needed to strengthen business competitiveness and long-term growth statewide.

By adopting these recommendations, Nevada can remove unnecessary barriers and create an environment where innovation thrives, turning novel ideas into flourishing companies and into lasting economic growth for Nevada and our citizens.

Strengthening Nevada's Entrepreneurial Future

2027 Outlook

The Office of Entrepreneurship enters 2027 focused on strengthening statewide connections, expanding access to resources, and supporting Nevada's continued economic diversification.

Building upon the partnerships and lessons developed during 2026, the Office will emphasize community engagement, coordinated programming, and practical solutions addressing entrepreneur needs.

Community Forums: Bringing Conversations Closer to Home

The Office plans to host community forums across urban and rural Nevada, bringing together elected officials, entrepreneurs, business owners, and community leaders.

These discussions will provide opportunities to identify local barriers, share resources, and develop collaborative solutions.

By engaging communities directly, the Office seeks to ensure statewide entrepreneurship initiatives reflect regional conditions and priorities.

Startup Weeks: Expanding Participation and Opportunity

Building upon successful Startup Week programming, the Office will continue working with partners to increase participation among attendees, speakers, volunteers, and resource organizations.

These events provide opportunities for entrepreneurs to learn from experienced founders, connect with investors, explore new technologies, and discover business assistance programs.

Future efforts will emphasize broader geographic participation, industry diversity, and stronger connections between established businesses and emerging startups.

Resource Partners: Stronger Connections, Greater Reach

The Office will continue strengthening relationships with research institutions, chambers of commerce, economic development authorities, lenders, and entrepreneurial support organizations.

Collaborative programming, coordinated outreach, and improved information sharing will help entrepreneurs navigate resources more efficiently.

The Office will also continue identifying opportunities to improve referrals and address gaps in existing services.

Data and Technology: Supporting Smarter Decisions

Continued development of ATLAS and related data initiatives will support a more informed understanding of Nevada's entrepreneurial economy.

The Office will explore opportunities to improve business resource navigation, strengthen data partnerships, and provide policymakers with more useful information about economic trends and entrepreneurs' needs.

These efforts will complement broader recommendations for statewide data modernization.

Building Nevada's Future Together

Closing Thoughts

Nevada has demonstrated its ability to cultivate innovative companies, attract investment, and create new opportunities across industries and communities. From emerging technology companies to family-owned enterprises, entrepreneurs continue to shape the state's economic future.

The findings in this report also reveal opportunities for improvement. Access to growth capital remains uneven, promising research does not always reach commercialization, and rural communities continue to face infrastructure and workforce challenges.
Across Nevada, entrepreneurs are seeking simpler processes, stronger connections, and clearer pathways to opportunity. Nevada's greatest strength lies in its collaborative spirit. Universities, chambers of commerce, investors, lenders, economic development organizations, and community partners share a commitment to helping entrepreneurs succeed.

The Office of Entrepreneurship plays an important role in connecting these efforts and strengthening the systems supporting business growth. Nevada stands at a pivotal moment. Emerging industries, including clean energy, advanced manufacturing, artificial intelligence, and bioscience, are creating new possibilities for economic diversification and long-term prosperity.

With continued collaboration, thoughtful policy, and strategic investment, Nevada can strengthen its position as a national leader in entrepreneurship and innovation. Together, Nevada can build an economy where entrepreneurs in every community have the opportunity to succeed and where the next generation of great American companies proudly declares: "We were built in Nevada."