

Economic Impact Study

USC Lancaster generates \$118.4M in economic impact as USC's statewide contributions grow, new study finds

The University of South Carolina Lancaster generates \$118.4 million in statewide economic impact, a new study found.

The university is responsible, directly or indirectly, for 877 jobs and \$44.4 million in labor income across South Carolina, according to the study conducted by USC's Darla Moore School of Business.

USC Lancaster accounts for roughly 1 in every 50 jobs and \$1 out of every \$56 in labor income in Lancaster County.

"The University of South Carolina Lancaster plays an active role in the Lancaster region by improving the economy through partnering with businesses to enhance the workforce," said Dr. Courtney Catledge, Dean USC Lancaster. "USC Lancaster continues to positively impact our local communities and to improve the quality of life of South Carolina residents."

The findings showing USC Lancaster's impact was part of a broader study examining the impact of the USC's eight-campus system.

The USC system has a \$7.4 billion annual impact on the state's economy, growing by 35 percent since researchers first studied it eight years ago when it stood at \$5.5 billion. A subsequent study in 2021 placed the system's annual impact at \$6.2 billion.

"Working together as a university system, we're ensuring our students are career ready while also producing significant economic benefits to the entire state," USC Board Chairman Thad Westbrook said. "We look forward to doing even more in coming years and will continue to set the standard for what a strong university system can achieve for our local communities and beyond."

The latest study examined the economic impact of USC's seven system institutions across the state. The campuses outside Columbia combined have a \$1.5 billion impact, about 11,000 jobs and \$550 million in labor income.

Nearly two out of three USC alumni living in South Carolina reside outside the Columbia metropolitan region, demonstrating how the university's graduates contribute to local economies throughout the state, the study found.

The Moore School impact study highlighted USC's momentum in bolstering South Carolina's workforce, employee paychecks and state taxes.

Statewide employment tied to the USC's eight system campuses has reached 61,700 – accounting for one out of every 39 jobs in South Carolina.

The USC system accounts for \$3 billion in annual labor income, or roughly \$1 out of every \$50 earned in South Carolina.

USC generates \$224.6 million in annual state tax revenue.

USC is poised to grow its statewide economic impact through a number of ongoing business and education initiatives, including developing a new neurological hospital and rehabilitation center and propelling an advanced energy tech hub through the SC Nexus collaborative along with other efforts.

"The University of South Carolina has been vital to the growth and prosperity of the Palmetto State for two centuries and continues to demonstrate its role as a leader in boosting South Carolina's economy and workforce," said Gov. Henry McMaster, who holds history and law degrees from USC.

USC's initiatives will promote growth in existing businesses and attract new firms that should help keep more highly skilled graduates in the state. The Moore School impact study found that every percentage point increase in USC's graduate retention rate generates \$18.8 million in new annual economic activity.

A new statewide internship program launched in 2023 has placed nearly 1,000 students across the USC system in South Carolina companies, supporting the needs of students and businesses alike.

"Working together as a university system, we've made tremendous progress in ensuring our students are career ready while also producing significant economic benefits to the entire state. We look forward to doing even more in coming years and will continue to set the standard for what a state flagship university can achieve," said USC Board Chairman Thad Westbrook.

Here is the statewide impact from each USC campus from the study led by Moore School economist Joseph Von Nessen:

Four-year campuses

USC Columbia: \$5.9 billion in economic impact, 50,814 jobs and \$2.5 billion in labor income.

USC Aiken: \$360.5 million in economic impact, 2,770 jobs and \$140.8 million in labor income.

USC Beaufort: \$141.3 million in economic impact, 1,236 jobs and \$63.6 million in labor income.

USC Upstate: \$624.3 million in economic impact, 4,479 jobs and \$226 million in labor income.

Palmetto College campuses

USC Lancaster: \$118.4 million in economic impact, 877 jobs and \$44.4 million in labor income.

USC Salkehatchie: \$70.3 million in economic impact, 506 jobs and \$25.5 million in labor income.

USC Sumter: \$88.8 million in economic impact, 668 jobs and \$33.9 million in labor income.

USC Union: \$45.9 million in economic impact, 358 jobs and \$18.2 million in labor income.