Washington State's Space Economy & The Artemis Mission

Facts & Figures

41 Washington state companies are NASA suppliers for the Artemis mission.

- 100+ companies are part of Washington's space cluster. (See a list of leading companies here.)
- The industry employs 13,000+ workers and generates $4.6 billion in economic activity in Washington communities.
- Commercial space generates nearly $80 million in state taxes and an annual payroll of $1.6 billion.

How WA's Space Economy Has Grown

The ingredients of our state's success include a concentration of experts in the fields of aerospace manufacturing and software development, the pioneering science research conducted at regional educational institutions like UW, WSU, and Gonzaga, enthusiastic local seed investors, and workforce training.

Federal funding has helped bolster the growth of this industry in Washington state.

- The University of Washington's federally-funded "Center for Excellence" in the research of composite materials for aircraft was created thanks to legislation sponsored by Sen. Cantwell.
- The U.S. Department of Labor's $20 million grant for Air Washington helped train 4,722 advanced aerospace manufacturing workers. Sen. Cantwell helped secure the grant.
- Washington state's aerospace community earned a designation as one of 12 manufacturing communities nationwide to be seeded with federal support, thanks to Sen. Cantwell's support.
- Washington Aerospace Training & Research (WATR) Center in Everett trains workers for space industry jobs. The WATR Center is connected to the Edmonds

College's Aviation Manufacturing Center of Excellence that Sen. Cantwell helped fund.

- Machinists Institute, established by the International Association of Machinists District 751, is a nonprofit educational institution that provides cutting edge education and training to workers in aerospace and other industries.
- Sno-Isle TECH Skills Center is a public high school that gives students hands-on experience to prepare them for a career in manufacturing.

Sen. Cantwell's Support for Space

- In 2022, Sen. Cantwell spearheaded passage of the CHIPS & Science Act, one of the largest five-year federal research and development investments in U.S. history.
    - The CHIPS & Science Act also included the first new NASA Authorization since 2017, which enshrined the Artemis missions in U.S. law to return Americans to the surface of the Moon.
- This year, Sen. Cantwell led Commerce Committee passage of the bipartisan NASA Authorization Act of 2026 which will give NASA the authority to continue the Artemis program, create a vibrant new low-earth-orbit space economy, and establish a permanent base on the Lunar surface.
- The WA space industry is well-positioned to lead in the areas of satellite manufacturing and operations, launch vehicles, and commercial space stations. A multi-year reauthorization for NASA will ensure stable guidance for the agency's programs.
- Several Washington companies are part of NASA's Hi-Rate Composite Aircraft Manufacturing (Hi-CAM) project, which supports lightweight thermoplastic and composite materials research and manufacturing. Sen. Cantwell has urged NASA to accelerate investment into composite manufacturing and is advocating for a Manufacturing USA Institute focused on composites to be sited in the Pacific Northwest.