Health care and education provide the largest share of Philadelphia’s jobs and constitute the second largest employment sector in Center City. These institutions are also a major driver of economic growth, attracting research and venture capital, educating the workforce and graduating entrepreneurs, researchers and tech workers, and fostering startups that are expanding Philadelphia’s role as a major center of innovation.

In 2020, combined research and development expenditures at the University of Pennsylvania, Temple University, Thomas Jefferson University, and Drexel University exceeded $4.2 billion. The region is the fourth largest recipient of National Institutes of Health grants, with funding exceeding $1.1 billion in 2021. The region’s growing ability to attract venture capital, $7.7 billion in 2021 total funding, moved Philadelphia up to the sixth largest nationally. Cell and gene therapy and related life sciences have become a major generator of real estate development in University City, with expanding spillover into Center City, both in close proximity to Thomas Jefferson University and in older industrial buildings that can be quickly repositioned for laboratory use.
Consumer oriented health care continues to expand as well. Thomas Jefferson’s Specialty Care Pavilion is under construction at 1101 Chestnut Street, while the Caroline Kimmel Biomedical Research Building is being planned for 9th and Locust streets. Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia has also proposed a new 15 story research tower at 690 Schuylkill Avenue in the Grays Ferry neighborhood, continuing their expansion into Center City.

The presence of high-quality clinical care is a major amenity and service available to the 200,000 residents of Greater Center City, drawing patients from across the region and the nation into Center City and University City to Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, Pennsylvania Hospital, the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania and Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, which U.S. News and World Report ranks second nationally among children’s hospitals.

Fourteen institutions of higher education enrolled more than 105,000 students in and around Center City in fall of 2020 and granted more than 30,000 degrees in the 2019-2020 academic year, with the greatest number in STEM fields, health professions, and business. Citywide educational attainment has grown rapidly in recent years with the number of adults with less than a high-school diploma reduced by half in the last two decades. In 2020, 31% of Philadelphia residents were college graduates, up from 18% in 2000. In the four ZIP codes of core Center City, 78% of residents in 2020 held a bachelor’s degree, up from 67% in 2000.

Fourteen institutions of higher education in and around Center City enrolled more than 105,000 students in the fall of 2020.

Degrees Conferred by Field, 2020

- **STEM**: 27.6%
- **Health Fields**: 23.3%
- **Business**: 19.7%
- **Visual and Performing Arts**: 6.1%
- **Liberal Arts**: 5.4%
- **Education**: 4.4%
- **Legal Professions and Studies**: 3.2%
- **Other**: 10.4%

**30,178**

Degrees Conferred in 2020

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System
Educational Attainment, Philadelphia Population Age 16 and Over, 2000–2020

Research and Development Expenditures at Philadelphia Health Care and Education Institutions
($ in Millions)

Value of Venture Capital Deals in Philadelphia Region
($ in Billions)
The Philadelphia region attracted $7.7 billion in venture capital funding in 2021, moving Philadelphia to the sixth largest nationally.
Universities and health related research institutions are a major driver of economic growth and are expanding Philadelphia’s role as a major center of innovation.