



MINNESOTA TECHNOLOGY ASSOCIATION 2022 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



The Minnesota Technology Association (MnTech) is a coalition of more than 200 member companies united in building a stronger tech ecosystem and innovation economy in Minnesota. We work to ensure that Minnesota's technology-driven companies have access to exceptional talent, dedicated public policy advocates, and are part of an innovative and inclusive technology community.

Minnesota's economy has fared better than many states throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in a nearly \$9.3 billion budget surplus. MnTech has developed a robust set of policy priorities to aid policy makers in the state working to make Minnesota's technology sector more nationally and internationally competitive, which includes recommendations on how to leverage investments in tech-related policies and initiatives.

Education and Workforce Development

MnTech's highest priority for the 2022 legislative agenda is on investments in education and workforce development initiatives which are essential to building a more diverse and competitive tech ecosystem in the state. That's why MnTech supports:

- The formation of a foundational blueprint to create statewide access to computer science education, and a \$20 million investment to support professional learning in computer science for teachers across Minnesota.
- The Governor's proposed \$15 million investment in the Tech Youth Training program.
- The Governor's proposed \$13 million investment in the Adult Tech Training Program for Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), and women.
- Robust investments in the creation and expansion of new information technology registered apprenticeship programs.
- The Page Amendment to the Minnesota State Constitution.
- Budget proposals to improve postsecondary infrastructure, particularly infrastructure supporting STEM and computer science programs.

Broadband and Telecommunications

MnTech members support expansion of the availability and use of broadband technology to access new markets, enhance education opportunities, improve quality of life, and provide Minnesota citizens and businesses the capabilities necessary to compete in a dynamic, global marketplace. That's why **MnTech supports the Governor's budget proposal to invest \$170 million to complete the state's border-to-border broadband program**, ensuring all Minnesotans have access to reliable broadband.



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

MnTech members know that diverse teams produce stronger outcomes, yet the Minnesota tech workforce does not reflect diversity of our community. To address this, MnTech is committed to working through the Technology Inclusion Alliance (TIA) to close the tech talent gap while simultaneously addressing racial and economic disparities. This includes supporting policies that help a diverse community of workers address barriers to entering the tech workforce like access to affordable child care, and supporting workplace retention through policies providing paid family leave. Education and workforce development policies and programs that expand talent pipelines to include more diverse representation of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities and women are critical, including expanding access to computer science education for all K-12 public schools, the Tech Jobs Pipeline for Minnesota Youth and Adult Tech Training Program, supporting the adoption of the Page Amendment to the State Constitution, and expanding paid work-based learning opportunities through the SciTech Internship Program and technology apprenticeship programs.

Business Development

The Angel Tax Credit Program (ATCP) has catalyzed nearly \$500 million in investments into more than 430 Minnesota startups and emerging companies since its inception in 2010, providing entrepreneurs from around the state with much needed capital to start and grow their businesses in Minnesota. **That's why MnTech supports the Governor's request of \$7 million in fiscal year (FY) 2023 and \$10 million in FY24-25.**

A strong tech startup ecosystem in Minnesota helps foster innovation and attracts top tech and entrepreneurial talent to the state. **That's why MnTech supports the Governor's request for \$5 million in the Launch Minnesota program to support the tech startup ecosystem and launch an accelerator program to help startups scale in the state.**

Intellectual Property

Ensuring that innovators have the protections they need to secure their intellectual property is crucial for advancing Minnesota's technology economy. **That's why MnTech opposes efforts such as right to repair legislation that allow uncertified repairs to electronic equipment and other devices with sensitive intellectual property.**

Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund

Minnesota's Unemployment Insurance (UI) Trust Fund is facing a more than \$1.1 billion deficit because of the unprecedented increase in UI claims resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Absent critical action to stabilize the Trust Fund, employers across the state face significant increases in UI payroll tax rates. However, Minnesota has a number of resources to address this deficit without raising taxes, including the nearly \$9.3 billion state budget surplus and over \$1 billion in unspent federal pandemic relief funds. **MnTech recommends the state use existing financial resources to address the UI budget deficit and halt any increases to UI payroll taxes in the state.**