Founded in 1900, the Association of American Universities is composed of America’s leading research universities. AAU’s 65 research universities transform lives through education, research, and innovation. Our member universities earn the majority of competitively awarded federal funding for research that improves public health, seeks to address national challenges, and contributes significantly to our economic strength, while educating and training tomorrow’s visionary leaders and innovators.

**ECONOMIC IMPACT**

- 5,583 Patents in 2020
- 5,241 Technology license agreements in 2020
- 4,268 Total operational startups in 2020
- 60 Current Fortune 100 CEOs

**VALUE**

- 84% of AAU students graduate within 6 years
- 57% of AAU students graduate debt-free

**EDUCATION 2020 Data**

AAU universities make up only 3% of all 4-year universities in the U.S., yet award nearly 41% of all research doctorate degrees.  

**RESEARCH**

$28.9 BILLION Federal research dollars awarded in 2020

1 CEOs who attended an AAU university as of 2021.  
2 2020 graduation rate at AAU universities.  
3 Not including professional doctoral degrees.
794,947
Total employees
at AAU universities in 2020

$100.4 Billion
Total salaries
paid by AAU universities
in 2020

25 in Top 10
25 AAU universities
were among the top
10 employers in their
state as of 2020

38 in Top 50
38 AAU universities
were in the top 50 for producing
venture-capital-backed
entrepreneurs as of 2020

ECONOMIC IMPACT OVER TIME (2010–20)

5,583
Patents issued
in 2020

5,241
Technology license agreements
in 2020

4,268
Cumulative operational startup companies
formed as of 2020

676
Startup companies
formed in 2020

453
Startup companies
created in home state
in 2020

AAU America’s Leading Research Universities aau.edu @AAUniversities
DEGREES AWARDED BY AAU UNIVERSITIES IN THE U.S. AS OF 2020

- Total Degrees: 560,239
- Research Doctorates: 30,358
- Professional Practice Doctorates: 26,194
- Master's Degrees: 177,899
- Bachelor's Degrees: 325,437

In 2020, AAU institutions awarded 48% of all research doctoral degrees and 20% of all undergraduate degrees in STEM and Social Sciences.

**RESEARCH DOCTORAL DEGREES** in STEM out of National Total (2020)

- Physical Sciences: 59%
- Engineering: 56%
- Math & Computer Sciences: 53%
- Life Sciences: 42%
- Psychology & Social Sciences: 37%

**BACHELOR'S DEGREES** in STEM out of National Total (2020)

- Physical Sciences: 28%
- Engineering: 27%
- Math & Computer Sciences: 27%
- Psychology & Social Sciences: 22%
- Life Sciences: 13%

**STUDENTS AT AAU UNIVERSITIES IN 2020**

- Undergraduates: 1.3 million
- Graduate Students: 668,824
- Total Postdocs: 45,793
- International Students: 347,582
- Study Abroad Students: 44,451

**GRADUATES OF AAU UNIVERSITIES**

- Governors: 24
- Members of Congress: 265
- Joint Chiefs of Staff: 5
- U.S. Presidents: 13
- Supreme Court Justices: 8
- Supreme Court Justices (1900–2021): 45
- CEOs in 2021: 60
- Fortune 100 in 2021: 8,902
- Teaching Degrees: 7,222
- Medical Degrees: 2,649
- Dental Degrees: 9,909
- Nursing Degrees: 9,909

AAU America’s Leading Research Universities

For all 4-year U.S. institutions. 2 Number of Postdocs in 2019. 3 Number of International Students in 2021.
In 2020, only 4 out of 10 graduating seniors from AAU universities had debt, while 6 out of 10 graduating seniors from public and non-profit universities had debt.

In 2020, institutional grant aid made up 74% of the total financial aid awarded to students at AAU universities.