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Michigan's first bio-industry roadmap shows better policies, capital are crucial

By [Tom Henderson](#)

Michigan ranks highly in academic research and development and in technology innovation in the bioscience sector, but more investment capital and C-suite expertise, as well as better state policies, are needed for a vibrant and growing bio-economy.

That is the conclusion of [bio-industry roadmap](#) being unveiled Wednesday afternoon at the **Radisson Hotel** in Lansing, a joint effort of **MichBio**, the Ann Arbor-based nonprofit trade organization for the state's life-science industry, **Business Leaders for Michigan** and the **University Research Corridor**.

"The reality is that Michigan's biosciences cluster, despite its strengths, is not currently competitive enough in the global bio-industry, either with peer states or with nations that in many ways are outperforming this state," read an introduction to the report.

"For Michigan to succeed in achieving its bioscience vision, the state must take a comprehensive and integrated approach. Michigan still has much to do. Its economic future is threatened by a lack of a common strategy for growing the state's economy and prioritizing investments such as education and economic development activities."

The report also found that Michigan:

- ranks fourth among states for the number of science and engineering workers and eighth for the number of scientists and engineering graduates;
- ranks 11th among the states for academic bioscience R&D annually, about \$1.3 billion;
- ranks 13th in total bio-industry employment, with about 42,000 jobs;
- is 11th in **National Institutes of Health** awards, with almost \$576 million;
- was 18th in patents from 2009 to 2013, with 2,157;
- was 17th in bioscience venture capital invested from 2009 to 2013, \$505 million, and ranks 22nd for seed- and early-stage capital, 33rd for later-stage venture capital and just 41st for commercial and industrial lending; and
- ranks 13th in business tax climate but only 28th for economic development expenditures by state government and 34th for the cost of doing business.

The report recommended that the state:

- add enough staff to adequately enable the **Michigan Economic Development Corp.** it to aggressively recruit in the bioscience space;
- showcase the state's bio-industry through a marketing and branding strategy lined to the successful Pure Michigan campaign;
- help establish relationships between state companies and large multinational companies;
- create a more regulatory friendly environment; and
- increase appropriations for the Michigan Skilled Training Fund to expand the STEM pipeline in education.

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