

An even dozen: ASU named No. 1 in innovation for 12th straight year

University also garners No. 1 spot in U.S. for supply chain management, plus 24 more top-20 rankings among public institutions

By Mary Beth Faller, ASU News
September 21, 2026

Story highlights

ASU has placed first every year since the “Most Innovative Schools” category was created by U.S. News & World Report magazine.

W. P. Carey School of Business' undergraduate supply-chain management program is ranked No. 1 among all universities, public and private.

In addition to supply chain management, ASU had 24 more top-20 rankings among public institutions.

As Arizona State University works to improve the landscape of higher education, its peers have once again noticed.

For the 12th consecutive year, ASU has been ranked No. 1 in innovation by U.S. News & World Report, earning the top spot in the publication's [2027 “Best Colleges” rankings](#), ahead of MIT and

Stanford.

ASU has placed first every year since the “Most Innovative Schools” category was created by U.S. News & World Report magazine in 2015, each time coming in ahead of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Stanford University.

(Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WkxJmQqRBSY>)

The ranking is based on a survey of college presidents, provosts and admissions deans, asking them to name the institutions they think are making the most innovative improvements in curriculum, faculty, students, campus life, technology or facilities.

“Knowledge and technology are advancing at an unprecedented rate, and the significant ramifications for our world are evident,” ASU President Michael M. Crow said. “At ASU, we believe it is imperative that higher education improve its clock speed and its ability to responsibly innovate and integrate education, research and tech at scale to better serve the needs of an increasingly complex world.”

The latest rankings also placed ASU No. 1 among all universities, public and private, for its undergraduate supply-chain management program, in the W. P. Carey School of Business, ahead of MIT, Michigan State University and the University of Texas.

Additionally, ASU ranked highly among national public universities in several important areas:

No. 4 for first-year student experience.

No. 7 for learning communities, which is cohort-based learning.

No. 8 for undergraduate teaching programs.

In an area critical for career building, ASU ranked No. 3 among public universities for senior capstone projects and No. 9 among publics for undergraduate/creative projects.

Joins a stable of top rankings

In addition to the U.S. News standings, ASU has recently placed highly in other rankings for sustainability and impact:

U.N. goals: For the seventh consecutive year, ASU was ranked No. 1 in the U.S. for work toward the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals, announced by Times Higher Education in its [2026 Sustainability Impact Ratings](#). The rankings measure how institutions worldwide advance sustainability toward fulfilling 17 specific objectives designed to create a better world by 2030 — goals that serve as a collective framework for promoting environmental sustainability, as well as peace and prosperity for all.

Campus sustainability: ASU was ranked No. 1 in the U.S. and No. 2 in the world in the 2026 [Sustainable Campus Index](#), earning its fourth consecutive Platinum rating through the

Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System, or STARS — ahead of Cornell University, Stanford University and the University of California, Berkeley. The distinction places ASU among only 19 institutions globally to achieve the highest possible STARS rating and reflects broad performance across academics, climate action, operations, engagement and institutional leadership.

Digital leadership: ASU ranked fourth among U.S. public universities for developing the next generation of digital and AI-ready leaders by the [Digital Leaders in Higher Education Survey](#), which ranked ASU 17th among all American universities — public and private.

Employability: The newest [Global Employability University Ranking and Survey](#), or GEURS, again ranked ASU second among public U.S. universities for employable graduates — ahead of UCLA, the University of Michigan and Purdue. Among all U.S. institutions, ASU was ranked No. 14. Globally, the university is ranked No. 37, ahead of the University of Melbourne, LMU Munich and King's College London.

New approaches to higher education

This year, ASU has made advances in innovating higher education:

[John Shufeldt School of Medicine and Medical Engineering](#): The first cohort of students began classes in this first-of-its-kind initiative that integrates medicine, engineering and systems thinking to improve care for individual patients and communities.

[ASU London](#): Students began studying this independent, U.K.-degree-awarding higher education provider founded by ASU, where they can complete a three-year bachelor's degree and then pursue an accelerated one-year master's degree at ASU.

[Three-year bachelor's degree in education](#): Believed to be the nation's first three-year bachelor's degrees in education from a public university, it provides education students the option of an accelerated curriculum for certain paths.

Professor will.i.am: The musician, tech founder and philanthropist [will.i.am taught a class](#) in which nearly 80 students learned how to create personalized AI agents that can autonomously reason, research and generate while reflecting a person's values, voice and goals.

[The Foundry School](#): ASU is among eight universities selected to lead a U.S. Department of State initiative focused on preparing the next generation of workers to advance American manufacturing.

[Operation Comeback](#): This initiative helps Arizona residents who started college at ASU but did not complete their degree return and finish what they started with financial, academic and personal support.

Research that makes an impact

ASU researchers are working on ways to improve peoples' lives in several areas:

Health: An ASU professor in The Design School has created a new kind of green-enriched white light, suitable for all uses, that [eases light sensitivity](#) among people who get migraine headaches, while researchers in the ASU Biodesign Center for Health Through Microbiomes developed [a new urine test to screen children for autism](#).

Sustainability: The Center for Hydrologic Innovations was able, for the first time, to quantify [changes in Arizona's snowpack](#) using airborne observations, which can help SRP manage the water supply. Students are collecting data in a partnership that will help the Arizona Department of Transportation better manage [irrigation along freeways](#).

National security: Since 2018, ASU has seen a threefold increase in defense-related research expenditures and is on track to reach nearly \$100 million Department of Defense expenditures this fiscal year — among the top universities for defense-related research. ASU has [elevated its defense work](#) to create the Advanced Capabilities for National Security Institute and launched the Center for Agriculture and National Security, [dedicated to securing U.S. food systems from foreign threats](#).

Other fields in latest US News ranking

In the U.S. News & World Report ranking, ASU also placed in the top 20 among public universities in these undergraduate areas:

No. 4 for business analytics, ahead of Texas, Indiana University and the University of Texas at Dallas.

No. 8 for accounting, ahead of the University of California, Berkeley, the University of Wisconsin and the University of Virginia.

No. 8 for entrepreneurship, ahead of the University of Maryland, the University of Washington and Georgia Tech.

No. 8 for management information systems, ahead of the University of Michigan, UC Berkeley and UT Dallas.

No. 9 for computer science-computer systems, along with Wisconsin, Texas and UC San Diego.

No. 9 for business management, ahead of Ohio State University, Michigan State and the University of Minnesota.

No. 9 for production/operations, ahead of Minnesota, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Texas A&M.

No. 11 for environment/environmental health engineering, ahead of Penn State and Ohio State.

No. 11 for marketing, ahead of Minnesota, Michigan State and Maryland.

No. 12 for cybersecurity, along with Michigan, Texas and UCLA.

No. 12 for electrical/electronic/communications engineering, ahead of Washington and Wisconsin.

No. 12 for industrial/manufacturing engineering, along with the University of Florida.

No. 12 for international business.

No. 13 for computer engineering, ahead of Virginia Tech.

No. 13 for finance, along with Wisconsin, Penn State and Washington.

No. 14 for aerospace/aeronautical/astronautical, along with Ohio State.

No. 15 for civil engineering, ahead of UC San Diego, Ohio State and Washington.

No. 18 for undergraduate engineering (doctorate), ahead of UC Santa Barbara, Rutgers University and Michigan State.

No. 19 for undergraduate business, ahead of the University of Colorado-Boulder, Michigan State and UT Dallas.

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This story originally appeared on [ASU News](#).

Main image



The latest “Best Colleges” rankings placed ASU No. 1 among all universities, public and private, for its undergraduate supply-chain management program, in the W. P. Carey School of Business — whose oculus skylight at McCord Hall is pictured here. Photo by Deanna Dent/Arizona State University