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Every worker. Every industry.
A strong economy.

Closing the Digital Skill Divide:

What Land-Grant University Educators & Advocates Need to Know

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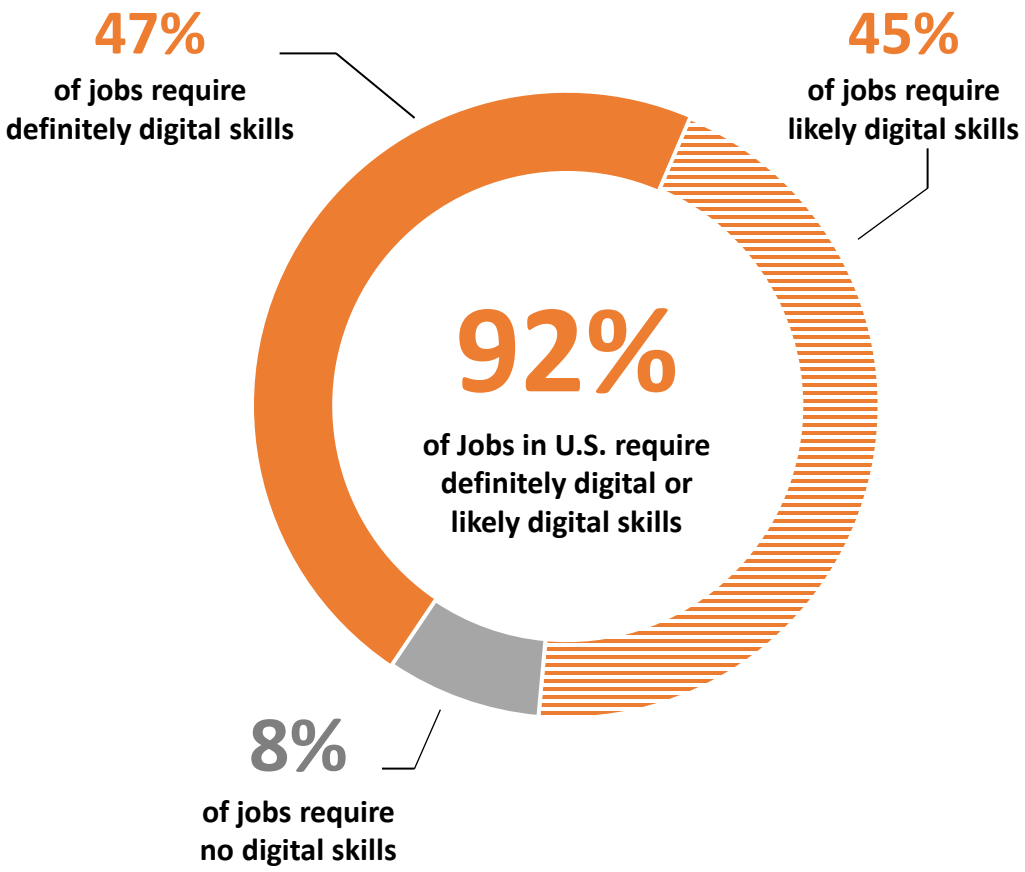
Northeast Digital Equity Summit
September 19, 2023

We analyzed 43 million Help Wanted ads to understand the labor market demand for digital skills.

Virtually all of today's jobs require digital skills



- ***Definitely*** digital: Microsoft Excel; Python language
- ***Likely*** digital: Bookkeeping; survey design
- ***Not*** digital: Ironing; changing diapers

Construction workers using mobile apps to submit work-order changes.

Food processing plant workers using inventory control technologies

Medical office staff supporting telehealth patients.

Aerospace workers using augmented reality.

Photo credit: Airbus

Agriculture workers using in-cab tractor technology.

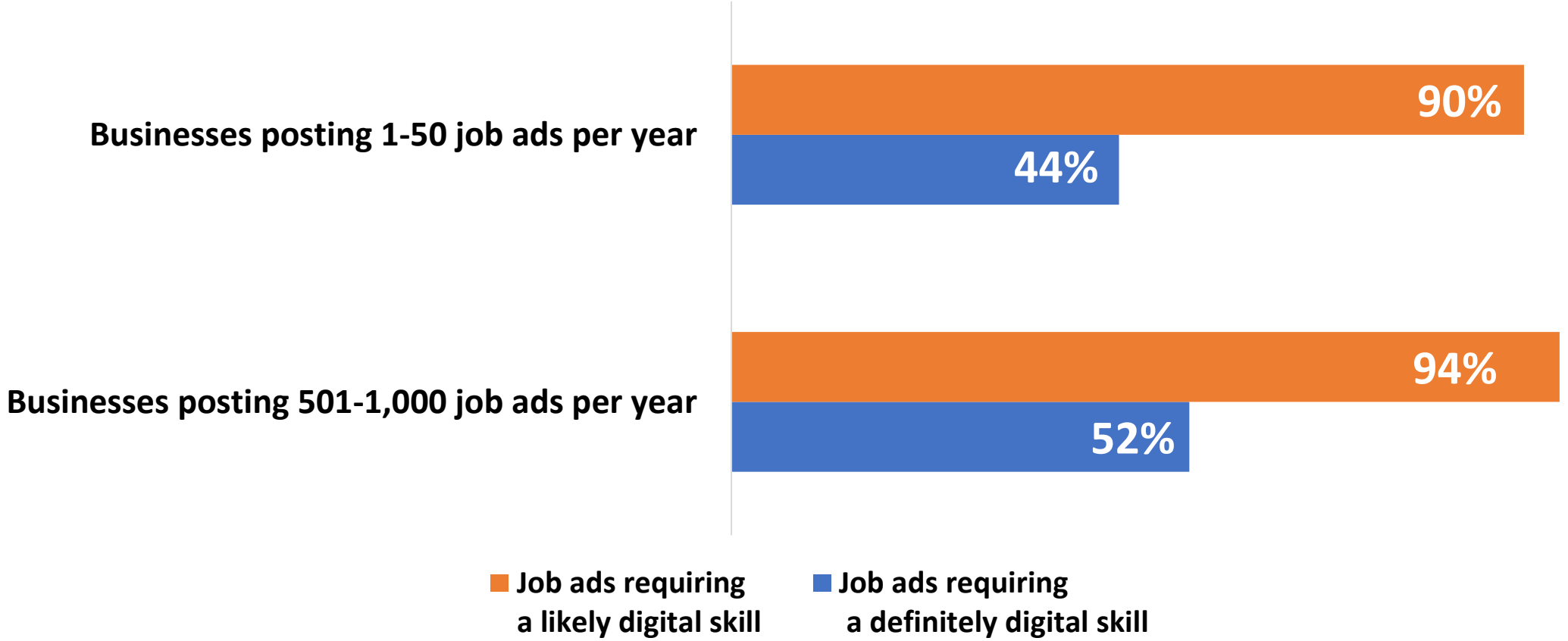
Warehouse/logistics workers using digital order-picking and shipment tools.

Workers at every level need digital skills

Educational credential required	Percentage of job ads requiring likely digital skill	Percentage of job ads requiring definitely digital skill
High school diploma	94%	46%
Associate's degree	97%	47%
Bachelor's degree	99%	74%
Master's degree	97%	46%
Ph.D.	97%	39%

National data. For details, see full report: ***Closing the Digital Skill Divide*** *(National Skills Coalition, 2023.)*

Small businesses also need workers with digital skills

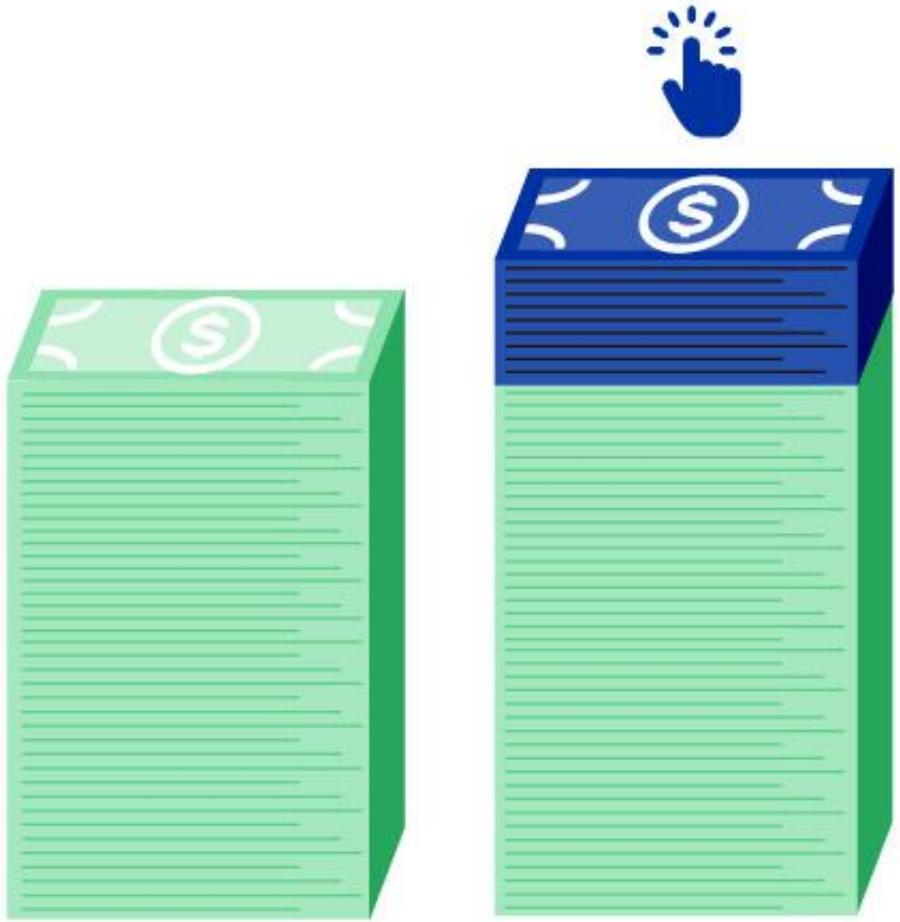


Note: National data. For details, see full report: ***Closing the Digital Skill Divide*** *(National Skills Coalition, 2023.) The dataset used for this analysis does not directly measure the size of a company, so we inferred firm size based on the volume of job ads posted by the company in a year.*

On average, jobs requiring a digital skill pay

23% MORE

than those that do not.



Income with **no** digital skill required

Income with **one** digital skill required

Source: NSC/Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta analysis of 2021 job postings. Full report: Closing the Digital Skill Divide.

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Educators can use these findings to ensure that new federal Digital Equity investments pay off for workers and small businesses.

The federal infrastructure law (IIJA) is sending billions to support digital inclusion

- Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (**BEAD**) funding totaling **$42.5 billion**, overseen by state broadband offices

- **Digital Equity Act** funding totaling **$2.75 billion**:
  - $1.44 billion in ***formula funding*** distributed down to the local level by state agencies in early 2024
  - $1.25 billion in ***discretionary competitive grants*** that county governments can apply directly to the federal government for in early/mid-2024

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How can educators take action?

1. Participate in State Digital Equity and BEAD Action Planning. (Get contact info at www.InternetforAll.gov; click on the map for your state).

2. Make sure that ***local*** expertise is informing state efforts.

3. Begin preparing now to apply for federal discretionary grants.

4. Consider how local assets (land-grant universities, rural nonprofits) can help in building the broadband workforce pipeline.

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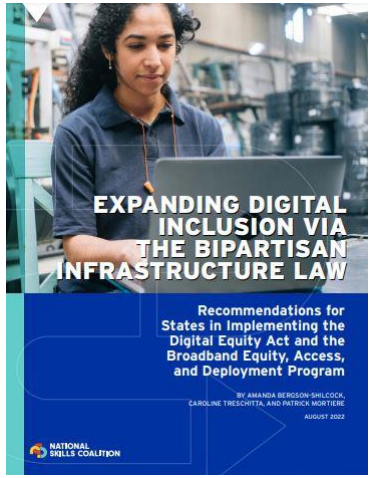
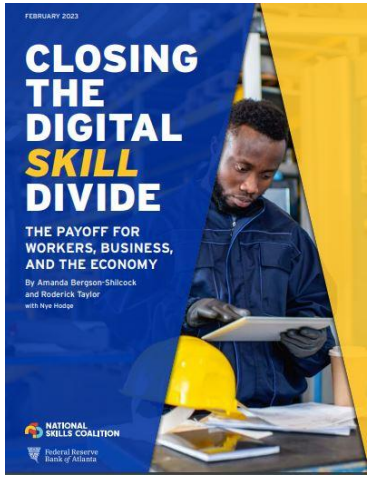
Time for your questions!

Knowledge to action: Additional resources

- Full digital skills research data in NSC's *Closing the Digital Skill Divide*
- Check out NSC's Digital Equity Act 101 fact sheet
- NSC's Digital Equity Act and BEAD recommendations may also be helpful





Stay in touch

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