



# Communicating TBED

## Entrepreneurship Development Subcommunity Call

*April 23, 2025*

Casey Nemecek, Program Director, SSTi

*Disclaimer: This presentation was prepared by SSTi using Federal funds under award ED22HDQ3070129 from the Economic Development Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce. The statements, findings, conclusions, and recommendations are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Economic Development Administration or the U.S. Department of Commerce.*

# About SSTI & the TBED Community of Practice

- **Our mission:** SSTI strengthens initiatives to create a better future through science, technology, innovation and entrepreneurship.
- **Project goals:** Strengthen EDA awardees during period of performance + better-position for long-term success
- **Learn more:** [ssti.org/tbedcop](https://ssti.org/tbedcop)

# Events & announcements

- **EDGE support reminder:** email [grantHDsupport@eda.gov](mailto:grantHDsupport@eda.gov) and copy your program officer
- **Lab-to-Market:** May 13 @ 2:00 PM
- **Entrepreneurship Development:** May 28 @ 3:00 PM
- **Global Entrepreneurship Congress:** June 2-5 (Indianapolis)



# Keeping tabs on TBED

# Statement presented

The U.S. leads much of the world in research, but often the research is turned into new products that are made overseas. Companies, universities, economic development agencies and non-profit organizations in some parts of our country have come together to convert our nation's strength in research into new businesses and jobs, bringing the benefits of American innovation to the American people.

- *After reading this statement, how important do you consider each of the following possible outcomes of this work?*

# Options (presented randomly)

	Very/ somewhat important	Not too/ not at all important	Unsure
It creates jobs for Americans			
It creates jobs for Americans that will help expand the middle class			
It creates jobs for Americans who have not benefited as much as others from an economy increasingly focused on science and technology			
It creates jobs in parts of America that have not benefited as much as other places from an economy increasingly focused on science and technology			
It results in new medical treatments and cures			
It improves national security			
It results in cleaner air and water and reduces the negative effects of climate change			
It makes American companies more competitive globally even at the expense of some jobs			

# Responses

	Very/ somewhat important	Not too/ not at all important	Unsure
It creates jobs for Americans	94%	4%	2%
It creates jobs for Americans that will help expand the middle class	94%	4%	2%
It creates jobs for Americans who have not benefited as much as others from an economy increasingly focused on science and technology	92%	5%	3%
It creates jobs in parts of America that have not benefited as much as other places from an economy increasingly focused on science and technology	92%	5%	3%
It results in new medical treatments and cures	92%	5%	3%
It improves national security	89%	7%	4%
It results in cleaner air and water and reduces the negative effects of climate change	86%	10%	4%
It makes American companies more competitive globally even at the expense of some jobs	78%	16%	6%

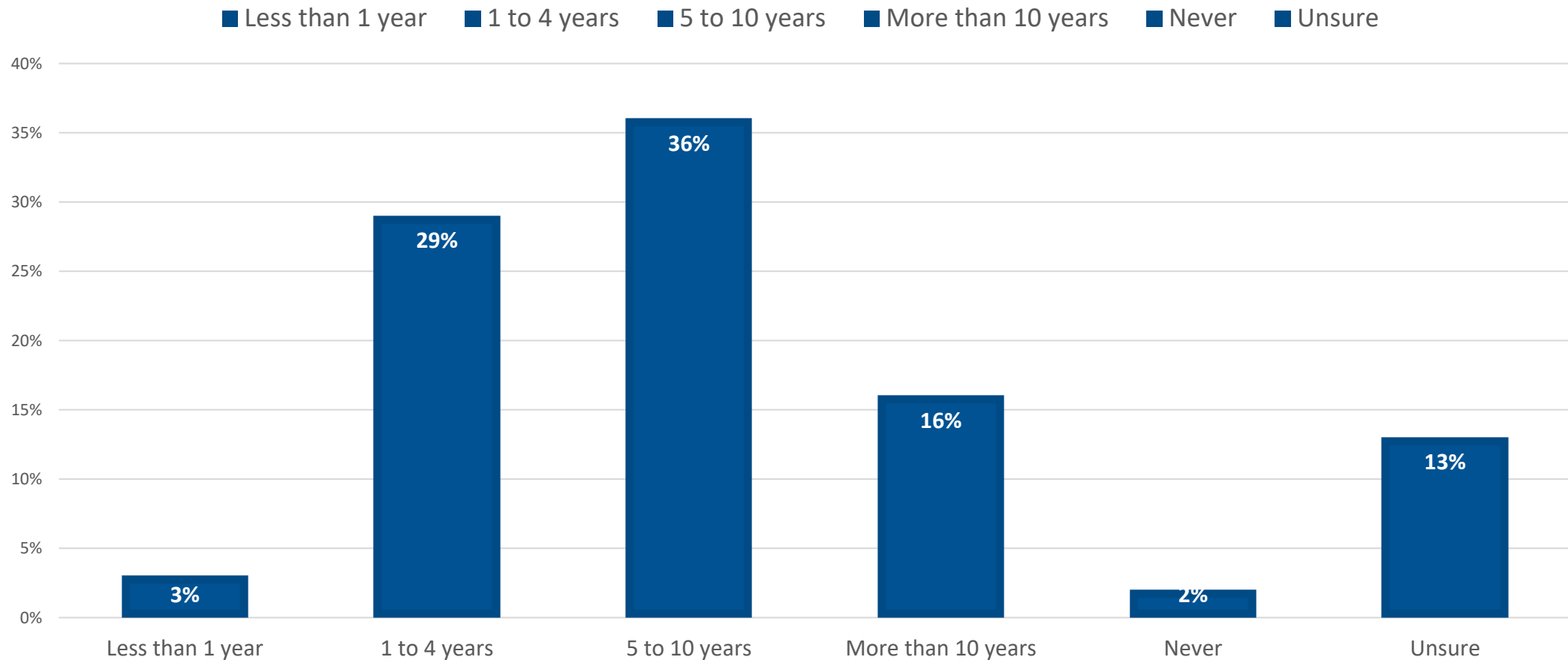
# Rank top 3 preferred outcomes

Outcome	Top choice
It creates jobs for Americans	25%
It creates jobs for Americans that will help expand the middle class	17%
It results in cleaner air and water and reduces the negative effects of climate change	12%
It results in new medical treatments and cures	12%
It improves national security	10%
It creates jobs for Americans who have not benefited as much as others from an economy increasingly focused on science and technology	8%
It creates jobs in parts of America that have not benefited as much as other places from an economy increasingly focused on science and technology	8%
It makes American companies more competitive globally even at the expense of some jobs	7%



# How long for these outcomes?

## TIME HORIZON FOR OUTCOMES



# Which of these comes closest to your view?

Public policy that fosters research and innovation should be pursued even if the results won't benefit me but will benefit future generations	71%
Public policy that fosters research and innovation should be pursued only if the results will benefit my generation	17%

# Agree Response breakdown

## Community

- Urban– 72%
- Suburban– 74%
- Rural– 66%

## Ideology

- Conservative– 70%
- Moderate– 71%
- Liberal– 75%

## Education

- Non-college– 66%
- College– 79%

## Financial situation

- More stable– 76%
- More precarious– 68%

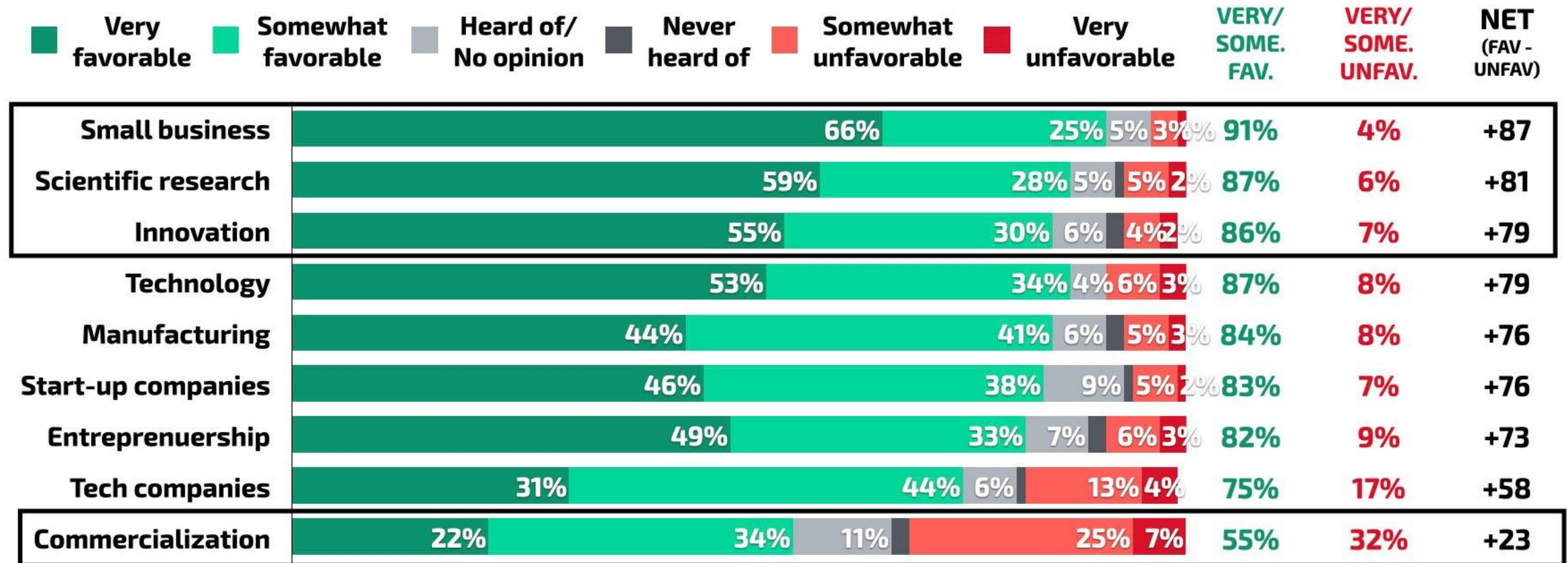
## Income

- <\$50K– 66%
- \$50K-\$74K– 72%
- \$75K-\$125K– 73%
- >\$125K– 83%



What resonates

# Small business, scientific research, and innovation were viewed the most favorably, while commercialization was more divisive



Q. Listed below are some general terms that are typically used when discussing innovation and the economy. For each of these terms, please tell me how favorably or unfavorably you view the term. If you have never heard of one, please just say so.

# What Respondents Say:

- Innovation

86% Favorable

7% Unfavorable

2% Never Heard

6% No Opinion



"Creating something new based on something old ... **99% of the time as something positive.**" — Chris F.

"When I hear innovation I think of a company or entity coming up with a **breakthrough in technology.**"  
— Brian M.

"I find the word innovation very favorable because I feel like **it deals with technology and success of a company or a organization.**" — Amanda R.

"Innovation **sometimes means fixing what's not broken.** An example right now would be furthering AI technology to replace artists and writers."  
— Monica M.



# What Respondents Say:

- Technology

87% Favorable

8% Unfavorable

\*% Never Heard

4% No Opinion



**“Technology has helped make life easier in many ways:** transportation, communication, science and health. I think of robotics when I hear technology.”

— **Christina H.**

“Favorable as to me technology is important in the modern world. **Technology helps us in many ways.** Knowledge, scientific knowledge.” — **Debra E.**

“I find the word technology very favorable because I **love new technology and I think it's very helpful** especially now a days.” — **Amanda R.**

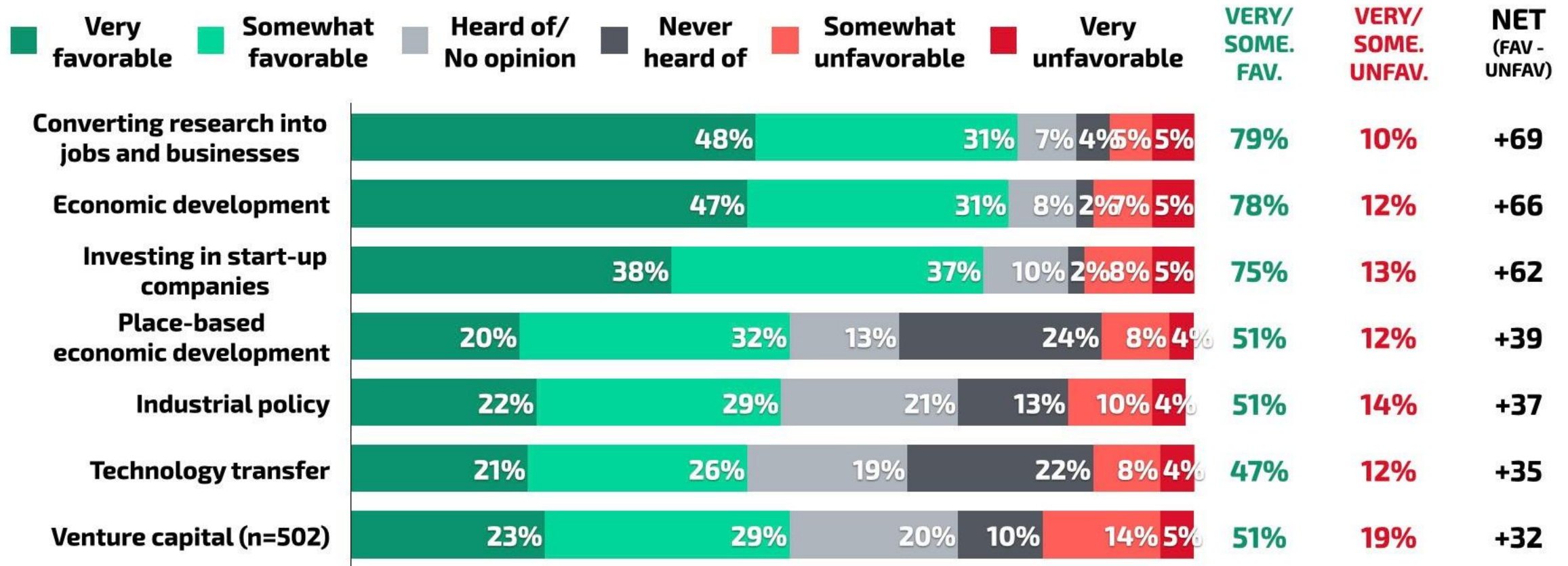
**“Technology is a pretty vague term** that seems to mean anything that reduces manual labor or thinking.” — **Andrew S.**



What doesn't resonate (at first)



# Converting research into jobs and economic development were viewed the most favorably out of the terms tested



Q. Listed below are a few words or phrases that are often used in the context of investments and economic development. For each of these terms, please tell me how favorably or unfavorably you view the term. If you have never heard of one, please just say so.

# What Respondents Say:

- Entrepreneurship

82% Favorable

9% Unfavorable

2% Never Heard

7% No Opinion



"**Freedom**/Independence/Self Expression"  
— **Charlotte C.**

"**The little guy seems to pop in my mind.** When i hear entrepreneur i just think of a guy in his garage making a breakthrough product." — **Brian M.**

"Starting up new businesses. **Creating new products and services.**" — **Chris F.**

"Somewhat favorable towards this word because it **gets misused by people who don't really work** or contribute to society but they're willing to take risks with other people's money." — **Christina H.**

# What Respondents Say:

- Tech Companies

75% Favorable

17% Unfavorable

1% Never Heard

6% No Opinion



"For the most part **tech companies try to make things better and/or easier** for us. Electronics."  
— **Debra E.**

"Somewhat favorable because **tech companies contribute exciting advancements to society** and it makes me think of Google." — **Christina H.**

"**Competitive is the word i think of.** Tech companies come and go pretty fast." — **Brian M.**

"They can create lots of growth and opportunities to improve everyday life, **but they can also wreak havoc if their greed is left unchecked.**" — **Andrew S.**

"Certainly many companies are benefiting our society. **Some are creating dangerous products** and are profiting from the addictive nature of social media."  
— **Chris F.**



# What Respondents Say:

## • Investing in Start-Up Companies

75% Favorable  
13% Unfavorable  
2% Never Heard  
10% No Opinion



**"Great way for new businesses to get started - by finding investors" — Paula P.**

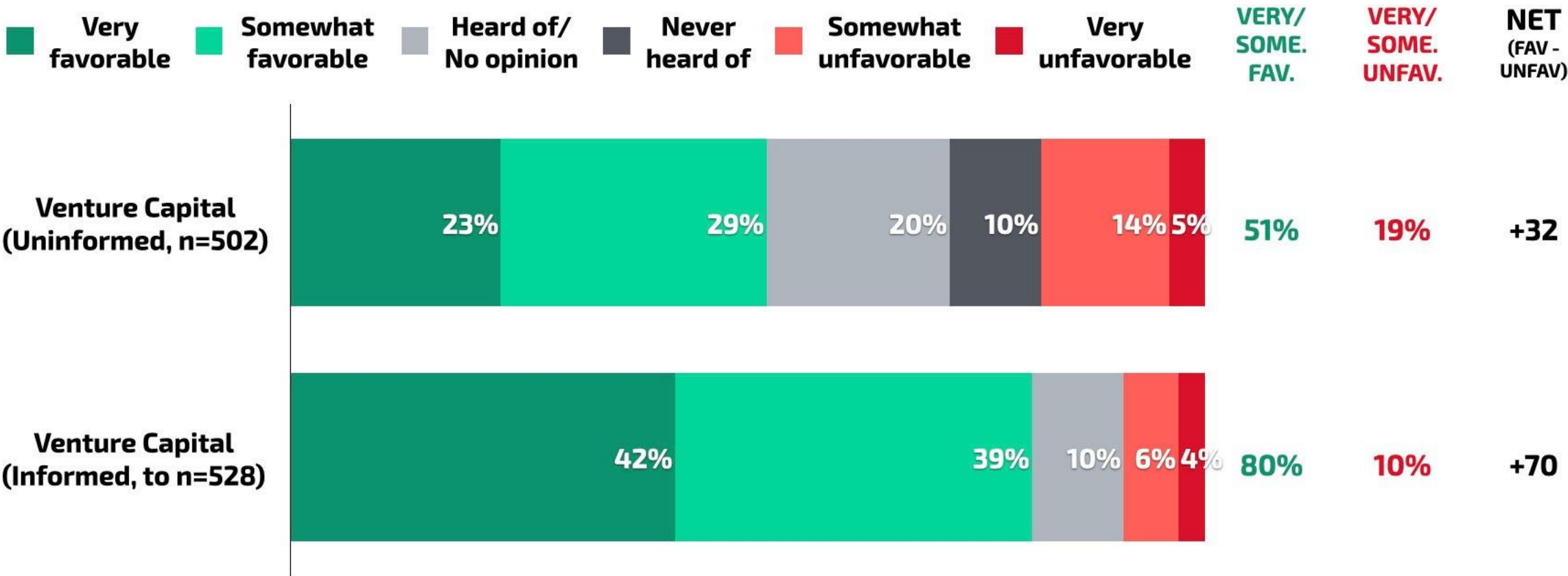
**"Investing can be risky but it makes me think of hope." — Christina H.**

**"They create more jobs" — Tanique M.**

**"Some start ups will become very profitable businesses. They usually need some start up support so when people or groups who can invest in these projects [do] it is beneficial." — Debra E.**

**"'So-so.' It depends on the type of company. Not everyone needs to be an entrepreneur." — Kiara B.**

# More information about venture capital doubles the net margin of favorability among respondents



Q. Listed below are a few words or phrases that are often used in the context of investments and economic development. For each of these terms, please tell me how favorably or unfavorably you view the term. If you have never heard of one, please just say so.

Q. Venture capital is funding from investors that plays a critical role in helping small businesses with a new innovative idea grow. Knowing this, do you hold a favorable or unfavorable view of the venture capital?

[NOTE: THE INFORMED PROMPT USED "Unsure" INSTEAD OF "Heard of/No opinion" AND DID NOT INCLUDE "Never heard of"]

# Communication strategies

- **Gather your champions:** who can help spread your message?
- **Lead with local impact:** focus on specific benefits for your community
- **Make the technical accessible:** explain complex terms through relatable examples
- **Right-size your regional approach:** adapt to your region's unique strengths and needs

# SSTI contact info

## Staff contacts:

- TBED Community of Practice – [tbedcop@ssti.org](mailto:tbedcop@ssti.org)
- Casey Nemecek – [nemecek@ssti.org](mailto:nemecek@ssti.org)
- Jerry Coughter – [coughter@ssti.org](mailto:coughter@ssti.org)

More information: [ssti.org/tbedcop](https://ssti.org/tbedcop)

# Tech-based Economic Development (TBED)

- **Strengthening research capacity** within universities, federal labs, or the private sector
- **Promoting tech commercialization** or the conversion of research into technologies and products
- **Fostering a culture of entrepreneurship** to enable entrepreneurs to start and grow companies
- **Increasing access to capital** to support startup and emerging companies
- **Building a technically skilled workforce** aligned with region and industry needs