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DECEMBER 2011
10 GREAT CITIES FOR STARTING A BUSINESS

Oklahoma City



Metro population:
1,252,987

Number of small businesses: 23,057

Self-employed cost-of-living score: 90.4

Invested venture capital:
\$3,500,000

Patents per 10,000 residents: 1.0

Standout start-ups: InterGenetics, CoMentis, A3 Environ

Oklahoma City entrepreneurs have two big advantages over business owners elsewhere: midwestern start-up costs are low, and government support for business is strong. The city has been a friend to new business since 1996, when it funded a low-rent, 27-acre research park for life-science start-ups. Oklahoma City has also partnered with i2E, an incubation nonprofit, to launch an entrepreneurial development center; investors contributed some \$35 million to i2E companies in 2011. Despite the number of deep-pocketed investors in the region, living costs remain low, and taxes fall 10% below the national average. The cost of doing business is also one of the lowest in the country -- even below comparable cities in the region, such as Little Rock and Kansas City.

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