Shield AI in Seattle (2025–2026): Defense-Autonomy Engineering Hiring Outside the Pure-Space Census

Pillar: Company Decisions | **Basis:** 2025–2026 Seattle Hiring & Census Boundary | **Primary Source:** Shield AI / Public Hiring Records | **As Of:** 2025–2026 (verified Nov 2026)

Defense-autonomy firm Shield AI scaled its Seattle engineering presence across 2025–2026—recruiting FPGA, RF/silicon, propulsion, and EHS roles—demonstrating broader aerospace-autonomy talent pull in Puget Sound while remaining outside BC ESG's 67-company pure-space census.

Documented Policy & Site-Selection Record

• Seattle Engineering Footprint: Shield AI (known for Hivemind AI pilot software and autonomous military aircraft) maintains an active Seattle engineering presence.

• 2025–2026 Hiring Signals: Public job postings in 2025–2026 show Seattle recruitment for FPGA design engineers, staff silicon/RF engineers, propulsion technicians, and safety/EHS leadership.

• Census Boundary Discipline: Consistent with BC ESG's Step 0 Census (#1385), Shield AI is classified as defense-autonomy rather than pure commercial space and is therefore not counted inside the 67-company core space roster.

• State-Fight Relevance: Shield AI's Seattle hiring reinforces the same structural signal as K2 Space and Agile Space—software, RF, and autonomy teams co-locate in Puget Sound for engineering density.

Shield AI Seattle Context & Census Classification

Dimension	Documented Record	Classification
Company Focus	Defense AI autonomy (Hivemind) & autonomous aircraft	Defense-autonomy (outside 67-firm space CSV)
Seattle Roles (2025–26)	FPGA, silicon/RF, propulsion tech, EHS leadership	Active Seattle engineering hub
Location Pull	Puget Sound aerospace, RF, and autonomy talent pool	Matches K2 Space / Agile Space pattern

Founder, Staffer & Site-Selector Takeaways

• Staffer Takeaway: Puget Sound's talent pool overlaps defense autonomy, commercial aviation, and space—so space policy debates affect a wider defense-tech hiring base.

• Evidence Rule: Keep Shield AI clearly distinguished from the 67 pure-space operators so cluster counts never inflate.

Cross-Cluster Links & Primary Sources

• **WA Space Cluster Hub (#1382):** https://bcesg.org/washington-space-cluster-census/

• **The 90-vs-67 Gap Analysis (#1385):** https://bcesg.org/washington-space-cluster-90-vs-67-gap/

• **Seattle WA Space Cluster Profile:** https://bcesg.org/seattle-wa-space-cluster-profile/

• **K2 Space WA Profile:** https://bcesg.org/k2-space-washington-space-cluster-profile/

• **Agile Space Industries WA Profile:** https://bcesg.org/agile-space-industries-bellevue-washington-space-cluster-profile/

• **Shield AI Official Site:** https://shield.ai/

• **Washington State Department of Commerce:** https://www.commerce.wa.gov/

Provenance Note: Maintains strict Census boundary: Shield AI is documented in 2025–2026 WA hiring records as defense-autonomy, not in the 67-company pure-space CSV.