

THE FUTURE OF TECH IN FLORIDA

Building a foundation that makes Florida's growth permanent and accessible statewide

A new initiative in Southeast Florida is powered by three influential partners committed to elevating Florida's position as a global technology and investment powerhouse. eMerge Americas attracts global capital, innovators, and international markets to Florida. Related Ross provides world-class business environments and cultural amenities essential for these innovators to thrive. The Florida Council of 100 connects these innovators with deep economic hubs across Florida—from Pensacola to Jacksonville, Tampa to Orlando, including rural areas of opportunity—leveraging its influential network of the state's top CEOs and business leaders—ensuring they scale successfully statewide.

Together, these partners aim to position Florida as a global technology and investment hub, starting with the strategic Southeast Florida coast and extending statewide.

A Bold Vision for Florida's Future

"South Florida has emerged as a global hub for investment and innovation," said **Melissa Medina, CEO & Co-founder of eMerge Americas**. "This new partnership harnesses this momentum, positioning Florida as the destination for tech-driven global business."

"This is more than an economic development project—it's a global statement that Florida is ready to lead in innovation," said **Mike Simas, President & CEO of the Florida Council of 100**. "Companies landing here won't just start in Southeast Florida—they'll scale into every region of the state."

Florida's Statewide Venture Capital Growth¹

- Florida startups secured **\$4.13 billion** across 588 deals in 2024, a significant rise from \$3.5 billion in 2023.
- Ranked **5th nationally** for deal volume and **6th** for total venture capital investment.
- Miami-Fort Lauderdale led Florida with **\$2.77 billion** raised.

¹ <https://emergeamericas.com/2024-annual-insights-report/#:~:text=Florida%20startups%20raised%20%244.13%20billion,as%20a%20top%20startup%20destination.>

Sector Highlights Across Florida

- **Finance & Insurance:** A \$131 billion statewide industry; Southeast Florida represents 38.7% of Florida's finance GDP and nearly 94% of all statewide venture capital.
- **Health Services, Biopharma & Medtech:** A \$114 billion statewide industry, employing over 419,000 people in Southeast Florida alone.
- **Distribution & Logistics:** A \$125 billion statewide industry, critical for statewide economic growth and innovation.
- **IT & Tech:** Southeast Florida captures 65% of all venture capital raised in IT statewide.
- **Aerospace & CleanTech:** Expanding Florida's innovation footprint.

Miami's Rising Global Profile

- Ranked **16th globally** on Startup Genome's 2024 global startup ecosystem ranking, up seven positions.²
- South Florida attracted **67%** of Florida's VC investment and **61%** of the state's total deals.³
- Miami surpassed major U.S. metro areas, placing **9th nationally** in deal value and **6th** by number of deals.⁴

Why Launch in Southeast Florida

- **Strategic Proximity and Connectivity:** Like Silicon Valley, where innovation hubs San Francisco, San Jose, and Palo Alto are within 50 miles of each other, Southeast Florida's core cities—Miami, Fort Lauderdale, and West Palm Beach—are similarly situated within approximately 70 miles, fostering seamless collaboration and resource sharing.
- **Primary gateway** for global capital, connecting Florida to Latin America and Europe.
- Miami-Fort Lauderdale secured **\$2.77 billion** in venture capital in 2024, the highest in the state.⁵
- Foreign direct investment employment in Florida increased nearly **50%** (2011-2021).⁶

2 <https://startupgenome.com/article/global-startup-ecosystem-ranking-2024-top-40>

3 <https://refreshmiami.com/news/miami-metros-startups-raised-2-77b-in-2024-ranking-south-florida-as-a-top-10-vc-hub-emerge-insights-finds/>

4 <https://refreshmiami.com/news/miami-metros-startups-raised-2-77b-in-2024-ranking-south-florida-as-a-top-10-vc-hub-emerge-insights-finds/>

5 <https://refreshmiami.com/news/miami-metros-startups-raised-2-77b-in-2024-ranking-south-florida-as-a-top-10-vc-hub-emerge-insights-finds/>

6 <http://selectflorida.org/wp-content/uploads/foreign-direct-investment-in-florida.pdf>

Key Strengths of Miami–West Palm Beach Region

- **International Finance Hub:** Attracting finance, VC, and private equity firms from global centers.
- **Global Connectivity:** Miami International Airport provides extensive international routes.⁷
- **Rapid Tech Ecosystem Growth:** Noted growth in fintech, AI, and blockchain; ranked among the top 20 global startup ecosystems in 2024.⁸
- **Palm Beach's Financial Powerhouse:** "Wall Street South" generates a \$10 billion economic impact, 74,000 jobs, and attracted \$39 billion post-pandemic in personal wealth.⁹

Florida's Talent Advantage

Florida has an extraordinary education system, rated #1 in the nation by U.S. News for the past two years, with a higher education system that's been ranked 1st for eight consecutive years.¹⁰ State public and private universities—including the University of Florida, Florida State University, University of Central Florida, University of South Florida, Florida International University, University of Miami and Florida Atlantic University—already graduate tens of thousands of STEM students each year.¹¹ Private institutions, like Vanderbilt University, have also committed to entering the market, further strengthening Florida's talent pipeline.¹²

Florida's Business-Friendly Climate

Florida offers an unparalleled partnership with government through streamlined processes, light-touch regulation, low taxes, and a favorable environment for capital deployment and scaling businesses.¹³

7 <https://news.miami-airport.com/mia-ranked-americas-busiest-international-airport/#:~:text=MIA%2Oranked%20America's%20busiest%20international,and%2030th%20in%202019.>

8 <https://refreshmiami.com/news/cheers-to-miamitech-2024-a-global-ranking-healthtech-and-proptech-rising-megarounds-new-funds-a-climatetech-hub-more/>

9 <https://www.bizjournals.com/bizjournals/partner-insights/palm-beach-florida-fl-first-for-biz-2021/2021/palm-beach-county-florida-wall-street-south.html>

10 [https://floridaphoenix.com/2024/09/25/florida-retains-title-as-top-higher-education-state-from-u-s-news/;](https://floridaphoenix.com/2024/09/25/florida-retains-title-as-top-higher-education-state-from-u-s-news/)
(<https://www.wusf.org/education/2024-05-09/us-news-and-world-report-florida-number-one-education-second-year-row>)

11 https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/2024_SYSTEM_Accountability_BOG_APPROVED.pdf – STEM degrees awarded annually (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, and Medicine)

12 <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/quick-takes/2024/08/21/vanderbilt-moves-forward-florida-expansion-plans>

13 <https://selectflorida.org/why-florida/business-climate/#:~:text=The%20Sunshine%20State%20has%20one,franchise%20tax%20on%20capital%20stock>

Statewide Impact and Benefits

- Entrepreneurs entering the coast gain seamless statewide market entry through the Florida Council of 100.
- Supports job creation and innovation across the state: From Tampa to Orlando, Jacksonville to Pensacola, and rural regions.

How New Partnership Drives Innovation Statewide

✓ Expanded Market Access: Connects startups with statewide business leaders and industries. ✓ Global Investment Attraction: eMerge Americas leverages its international network to draw venture capital, startups, and corporate partners. ✓ Infrastructure Development: Related Ross creates world-class commercial spaces and innovation hubs. ✓ Transparency & Growth Metrics: Tracks investment, job creation, and economic expansion.

Enhancing Existing Regional Accelerators:

- Amplifies Florida's global visibility and investment attraction.
- Expands opportunity pipelines for regional accelerators.
- Connects Florida startups with global markets and international capital.
- Fosters statewide collaboration among accelerators, research institutions, and business leaders.

"Great cities are not simply built; they emerge from the synergies between talent and partnerships," said **Stephen Ross, CEO and Chairman of Related Companies**. "As we navigate an era of rapid change driven by technological advances, South Florida is poised to become an innovation hub. With initiatives like this, we can link educational institutions, entrepreneurial programs, and sources of capital to create a new environment for American businesses."

