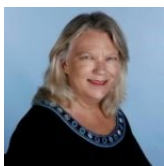


6+ things to know in #MiamiTech: K2 Global invests in MoonPay; NEPTUNYA & Slipbot win big; plus much more



Nancy Dahlberg October 10, 2022



1

K2 Global raises \$300M to invest in startups, and their 1st Miami investment is ...

[K2 Global](#), a Singapore venture capital firm that is expanding in Miami and is focused on early-stage companies, announced it has raised \$300 million of new committed capital to invest in promising technology startups globally and has made its first investment in a Miami-based startup. That would be [MoonPay](#), a [venture-funded](#) global payment solution provider for cryptocurrency.

K2 Global's track record of investments include 18 IPOs and more than 50 portfolio companies such as Uber, Spotify, Airbnb, Coinbase, Warby Parker, Impossible Foods, Oatly, Allbirds, Palantir, Scopely, and Paytm. Led by Ozi Amanat, an international investor, venture capitalist and a Miami area resident, the company is expanding into the Magic City. K2 Global will continue to invest in fintech, foodtech, consumer tech, deep tech, machine learning and artificial intelligence. "We are excited to play a substantial role in scaling up the economic growth in our focused regions with our global connections actively supporting the venture capital ecosystem," said Amanat general partner of K2 Global.

2

NEPTUNYA Ocean Power of Boca wins 2022 Cade Prize: UM spinout takes 2nd

[NEPTUNYA Ocean Power](#) of Boca Raton won the 2022 Cade Prize for developing Octopodz, a technology that unlocks renewable energy.

Octopodz's new offshore wind turbine design drastically lowers energy costs through reduced weight and a floating design that eliminates the need for a separate foundation substructure. The invention could dramatically increase renewable energy adoption by power companies and other energy consumers. Octopodz provides clean renewable energy and supports marine life with an artificial reef system that attaches to its substructure.

Rodrigo Griesi is the founder of NEPTUNYA. The same week his company won the Cade Prize, Griesi and his family were sworn in as U.S. citizens in Royal Palm Beach. A Brazilian native and now a Highland Beach resident, Griesi had several startup exits in both Brazil and the U.S. before launching NEPTUNYA. [Read more about NEPTUNYA [here](#)]

NEPTUNYA was not the only winner from South Florida. Second Place went to [Ambulero](#), of Miami. The University of Miami spinout is developing a gene therapy for rare vascular diseases with the potential to prevent limb and digit loss.

Neptunya and Ambulero won \$34,000 and \$13,000 respectively as part of the prize. Other winners included Ilika Geospatial Orlando, (third place); SG Endocrine Research of Athens, Ga. (fourth place); Polymer Solutions of Atlanta and Sustainable Landfill Solutions of Newberry, Fla., tied for fifth place. The annual prize competition was named about the inventor of Gatorade, Robert Cade. He and his team of University of Florida scientists invented Gatorade in 1965.



Rodrigo Griesi, CEO of NEPTUNYA, at Cade Museum

3

Slipbot of Miami wins Startup Showdown Nashville – and \$120K investment

The Miami based startup [Slipbot](#) received \$120K investment from Panoramic Ventures in Startup Showdown Nashville.

“Slipbot is a State-of-the-Art artificial intelligence platform that reads and comprehends documents in the insurance space. Using a proprietary software architecture, Slipbot is able to comprehend a variety of unstructured documents without the need to pretrain models or change anything about the current systems and processes that organizations already have in place,” said Isaac Hicks, Founder and CEO.

Slipbot was founded in January. It’s a team of nine, and Hicks and two of his developers, Stephen Black and Christian Ruiz, are in Miami.



Isaac Hicks, CEO of Slipbot

4

Small business grants from the \$20M Miami Foundation Open for Business Program now available

The Miami Foundation's [Miami Open for Business](#) program is accepting loan and grant applications from historically underserved small business owners in Miami-Dade County.

Funded with a \$20 million grant from Wells Fargo announced earlier this year, the program aims to support nonprofits and small businesses in building generational wealth and resilience through the purchase and ownership of critical business assets, such as property, equipment, and technology.

Eligible non-profits and small businesses can now apply at miamiopenforbusiness.org for a variety of grants and loans, including microgrants up to \$20,000 for technology and equipment, loans up to \$100,000 for asset-building inventory and more, and down payment assistance for commercial real estate.

Find out more and apply: miamiopenforbusiness.org.

5

Seaworthy Collective launches Founder Mentorship Program, opens applications for Cohort 3

Seaworthy Collective, a Miami-based BlueTech community and venture studio, announced the launch of its newest startup program, the Founder Mentorship Program. This program offers a year-round opportunity to become part of Seaworthy's startup pipeline and will offer founders support on a more casual basis than its flagship venture studio. "After propelling 20 ocean and climate startups over the last year, we're excited to build on our proven impacts by better democratizing our support for early-stage startup founders," said Daniel Kleinman, Founder and CEO Seaworthy Collective. Interested startups can apply [here](#).

Additionally, Seaworthy is opening applications for its flagship Venture Studio program, with cohort 3 launching in March 2023. The venture studio hosts 12-week cohorts that consist of two types of program participants: aspiring founders co-creating new startups and current founders growing existing startups. As the first BlueTech venture studio in the United States, Seaworthy says it works to not only co-create individual solutions, but also build systems of solutions. Current and aspiring founders worldwide are encouraged to apply on the Seaworthy [website](#).

6

MDC to launch student digital agency program

Miami Dade College's Business Innovation & Technology Center will launch the College's first Student Operated Digital Agency (SODA) on Thursday and open for business on Nov. 1. Through SODA, students interested in careers in marketing can obtain industry-recognized certifications, such as Google and Hootsuite free of charge, and will have the opportunity to work with local businesses and organizations to help them overcome marketing and business growth challenges.

“Since opening in 2020, the BIT Center has proudly carried out its mission to facilitate access and understanding of emerging technologies, including Blockchain, Cryptocurrencies, DeFi, NFTs and Metaverse, among others,” said Chechu Lasheras, BIT Center director. “With SODA, we are expanding that mission, allowing students to put their knowledge to the test by creating marketing strategies for real clients while earning certifications and learning new skills at no cost.”

Students or local businesses interested in learning more may contact Max Ramirez at rramire2@mdc.edu.

Plus

Opportunity knocks

- Founders have the chance to win \$400,000 in investments at **eMerge Americas’ Global Startup Showcase** in Miami Beach. 100 startups – a mix of university, early-state and later-stage ventures — will be selected to showcase their company at the two-day event April 20-21. [Learn more and apply here by Dec. 20.](#)
- **FAU Tech Runway** is now accepting applications for its Venture Class 11 of its flagship accelerator program. Accepted ventures will receive more than \$100,000 worth of entrepreneurial resources and services to build and scale their startups. [Find out more and apply here](#) by Nov. 20.
- TechCrunch is looking for **founders building** web3 or crypto companies to pitch in-person at **TC Sessions: Crypto** coming to Miami on Nov. 17. Startups applying to pitch should have web3 or crypto as the central pillar of their product, regardless of industry application. Founders will have 4 minutes to pitch followed by a Q&A with our panel of judges. Selected companies will be announced on TechCrunch. [Apply here.](#)

ICYMI

- [Miami-based Index Health secures \\$6M seed round](#)
- [BLCK aims to help people make money hosting short-term rentals – without owning property](#)
- [Endeavor Miami selects women-led EndeavorLAB cohort: Let’s meet them](#)
- [Musicasa is bringing the concert to your house, and getting you paid for it](#)
- [Israeli tech shines bright in Miami, the new hub for three hospitality startups](#)
- [Look who’s pitching at Florida Early Stage Capital Conference next week](#)
- [CedrusMed expands platform to more than 4,300 mental health specialists](#)
- [Magic Leap 2 hits the market, and the UM community got a first look](#)

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I am a writer and editor with extensive media experience and a passion for journalism and serving the community. Most of my career has been spent with the Miami Herald in business news, and my expertise is writing about tech and entrepreneurs. I love hosting this blog for Refresh Miami and we aim to be the go-to site for South Florida startup and tech news, features and views. Have news? Contact me at ndahlbergbiz@gmail.com. Thanks for reading!