

There are several layers to a strong entrepreneurial ecosystem

By Nancy Dahlberg
ndahlberg@miamiherald.com



Emily Michot / Miami Herald Staff

Richard Florida, pictured outside of Panther Coffee in the Wynwood neighborhood last year, is an urban affairs expert and author of *Rise of the Creative Class*. He's curating and organizing a one-day conference called *Start-up City: Miami* on Feb. 13.

Local efforts to accelerate an entrepreneurial ecosystem in Miami got a big lift last week when [Endeavor](#), the global nonprofit that selects, mentors and supports high-impact entrepreneurs, [announced it is setting up](#) its first U.S. affiliate in Miami.

What Endeavor will bring is an important layer to the ecosystem because the organization focuses on early-stage companies that already have significant revenues (typically \$500,000 to \$15 million) and are at an “inflexion point” — they are ready to scale in a big way, Linda Rottenberg, the CEO and co-founder of Endeavor, told me. There are a lot of services for startups but not so many for this stage of company, she says.

Endeavor may ultimately help fill another need in building and sustaining an entrepreneurial hub: more success stories to shine brightly on Miami.

“We’ve got to find two or three or four companies and help turn them into massive successes so we can tell the rest of the world we can get it done here,” Peter Kellner, the co-founder of Endeavor who is now living in South Florida, told me. “The credit goes to [Knight Foundation](#) [which is investing \$2 million to help bring Endeavor here] and the wonderful people in Miami who are committed to making it happen. We have a lot going for us — if we can’t

make it happen, shame on us.”

Also helping in community-building: Atlantic magazine and Richard Florida, the author, urban affairs expert and a part-time South Florida resident, [announced they are bringing](#) a one-day conference [called Start-up City: Miami](#) to Miami Beach on Feb. 13 to explore how to build a tech hub here, building on the area’s success with the arts and urbanization. With nationally known experts like Tony Hsieh of Zappos, Steve Case of Startup America and Brad Feld, who wrote the book on building startup communities, as well as a dozen or so local leaders such as Manny Medina, Adriana Cisneros, Matt Haggman and Susan Amat, it is sure to be a thought-provoking day.

“From London and Paris to New York and San Francisco, great global cities are idea capitals,” Florida said, in a Q&A. “The conference is one small step in this direction and we hope to build from it over time toward something like the broader ideas conference for entrepreneurs, urban transformers, city-builders, place-makers and all those with a stake in a startup city.” [Read more of my Q&A](#) with Florida exclusively on The Starting Gate blog.

Also coming up: The [Game Developers Guild is hosting](#) the Global Game Jam this weekend, which Guild Master Frank Hernandez describes as “a hackathon on steroids.”

Also, [CoFoundersLab.com](#), the match.com for entrepreneurs, [is bringing a meetup](#) — possibly the first of many — to Miami Feb. 6.

Next week, The Miami Herald launches the 15th Business Plan Challenge — start getting your entries ready and find out how last year’s winners are doing.

Read more about these stories on [Starting Gate](#) on [Miamiherald.com/business](#). Send me your startup news at ndahlberg@miamiherald.com and follow [@ndahlberg](#) on Twitter.

Read more here: <http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/01/20/v-print/3189769/there-are-several-layers-to-a.html#storylink=cpy>