SILICON OASIS

THE MAGAZINE OF INNOVATION & INVESTMENT

MAY 2026

TWO DEALS. ONE OASIS.

Record-Breaking Funding.
A Stronger Silicon Oasis.

basata

$21M

TO SCALE AI PLATFORM FOR SPECIALTY CLINICS

equipifi

SERIES B

$34M

LED BY LEFT LANE CAPITAL

TOTAL FUNDING

$49M

PHOENIX RISES

THE FUTURE IS BUILT HERE.

From AI-powered healthcare to financial innovation, Phoenix continues to attract top talent, bold ideas, and transformational capital.

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MAY 2026

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Silicon Oasis Magazine

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To learn more about our mission or to support our nonprofit work, please visit siliconoasisaz.org

A MESSAGE FROM OUR EDITOR

Editor-in-Chief, Silicon Oasis

As we publish our May 2026 issue, Arizona's startup ecosystem continues to gain momentum.

Across this edition, you'll meet founders building ambitious companies, solving meaningful problems, and proving that world-class innovation can be built right here in the desert.

You'll read about the startups featured at our May Silicon Oasis Pitch Night, where entrepreneurs showcased solutions spanning healthcare transparency, driver safety, industrial sustainability, digital identity, and human performance.

You'll also explore Arizona's growing proptech ecosystem and the companies helping reshape how people buy, sell, finance, and manage real estate.

This issue highlights founders who represent the next generation of Arizona innovation. From Clean AI's work on infrastructure for AI agents, to Chop Local's mission to strengthen local food economies, to Gentle Weapons' efforts to build resilient systems for autonomy at the edge, each story reflects the creativity and determination driving our ecosystem forward.

At Silicon Oasis, our mission remains simple: unite Arizona's startup ecosystem, tell the stories of the people building it, and create meaningful connections between founders, investors, operators, and community leaders.

The momentum is real. The talent is here. And Arizona's future is being built today.

Kyle Macdonald
Co-Founder, Silicon Oasis

VISION & IMPACT

Transforming Arizona into a global tech hub led by local founders, built for the future.

Silicon Oasis is a nonprofit dedicated to uniting Arizona's tech ecosystem. Our mission is to strengthen the local innovation economy by bringing together founders, investors, and entrepreneurs—and by creating spaces where collaboration can thrive.

We do this in three key ways:

- Centralizing the Ecosystem through startup-focused events and practical workshops led by experienced builders and funders.
- Cultivating Community by fostering authentic, expectation-free connections that go beyond traditional networking.
- Spotlighting Talent with dynamic video podcasts and media that highlight Arizona's most promising innovators.

Event Recap

SILICON OASIS PITCH NIGHT - MAY 28, 2026

Arizona's startup ecosystem gathered once again at the University of Arizona Scottsdale Center for another Silicon Oasis Pitch Night, bringing together founders, investors, operators, and community leaders for an evening focused on innovation, entrepreneurship, and emerging technologies. As Silicon Oasis' flagship monthly pitch event, Pitch Night continues to provide a platform for Arizona founders to showcase their companies, receive feedback from investors, and build meaningful relationships within the state's growing innovation economy.

This month's lineup featured startups spanning healthcare, artificial intelligence, consumer technology, industrial innovation, and advanced health measurement systems.

Merkai: Reimagining Driver Safety Through Behavioral Intelligence

Founder Chris Petty presented Merkai, a driver awareness platform designed to improve road safety through real-time behavioral intelligence. Rather than simply tracking a driver's location, Merkai uses a smartphone's front-facing camera and computer vision technology to analyze attention, awareness, and distraction patterns while driving.

The platform aims to create a new category of driver coaching technology, particularly for families with teenage drivers. By rewarding safe driving behavior instead of punishing mistakes, Merkai seeks to improve outcomes while preserving trust between parents and drivers. The company is currently raising $250,000 to support its public launch and customer acquisition efforts.

PICD: Solving the Photo Sharing Problem

Maverick Cavanaugh introduced PICD, a platform built around a simple but surprisingly common problem: people appear in photos every day but rarely receive all the pictures they're in.

Event Recap

PICD uses opt-in facial recognition technology to connect users with photos taken at events, creating a verified network built around real-world experiences. The company believes it is building an entirely new category of identity and engagement data by combining verified attendance, social connections, event participation, and contextual photo data.

The startup has already secured partnerships and pilot programs with organizations including the Phoenix Suns and NEXA Mortgage while continuing to expand its presence across events, sports venues, and university campuses.

Altored Health: Bringing Transparency to Healthcare Pricing

Healthcare entrepreneur Kelsey Dunham presented Altored Health, a platform designed to help patients compare healthcare prices before receiving treatment. The company was born from a growing frustration shared by millions of Americans who often have little visibility into medical costs until after care is delivered.

Altored Health provides consumers with pricing transparency while helping clinics attract new

patients and reduce revenue lost to unpaid or denied claims. The startup has already demonstrated real-world impact, helping one patient save more than $1,000 on medical procedures.

With over 250 consumers already on its waitlist and a soft launch planned for July 2026, Altored Health is positioning itself at the intersection of healthcare technology, consumer empowerment, and cost transparency.

VITAEUM: Building a New Measurement Layer for Human Physiology

Mike Maunu took the stage to present VITAEUM, one of the evening's most ambitious ventures.
The company is developing what it describes as the measurement infrastructure layer for human physiology, seeking to create entirely new methods for tracking physiological change before traditional vital signs begin to move.

VITAEUM's platform centers around a concept called the Spatial Inflammation Vital Sign (SIVS), a proposed framework for measuring physiological changes that are not currently captured by conventional healthcare monitoring systems.

Event Recap

VITAEUM's platform centers around a concept called the Spatial Inflammation Vital Sign (SIVS), a proposed framework for measuring physiological changes that are not currently captured by conventional healthcare monitoring systems. The company has filed intellectual property around its architecture and believes emerging trends in digital health, AI-powered medicine, and personalized healthcare are validating its long-term vision.

ADAR Technologies: Turning Waste into Value

Dan Kelly presented ADAR Technologies, an industrial technology company tackling one of the world's largest overlooked markets: wet waste. ADAR estimates the global wet waste market exceeds $200 billion annually and generates more than 5 billion tons of waste each year.

The company's patented acoustic shockwave technology dries, sanitizes, pulverizes, and deodorizes organic waste without requiring fossil fuels, heat, or chemicals. The resulting output can be transformed into nutrient-rich products with significantly higher economic value.

ADAR reported more than $20 million in customer commitments and highlighted applications across agriculture, food processing, mining, paper manufacturing, and municipal operations

Arizona's Momentum Continues

While each company addressed a different industry, a common theme emerged throughout the evening: Arizona founders are increasingly building ambitious solutions to large-scale problems.

From healthcare affordability and driver safety to industrial sustainability, digital identity, and advanced physiology measurement, the diversity of ideas on display reflected the growing sophistication of Arizona's startup ecosystem.

As Silicon Oasis continues its mission of uniting Arizona's startup community, events like Pitch Night serve as a reminder that the next generation of transformative companies may already be taking shape right here in the desert. The future of innovation is being built in Arizona—and Silicon Oasis is helping bring the builders together.

Silicon Oasis Community

INSIDE ARIZONA'S GROWING PROPTECH ECOSYSTEM

Arizona has become one of the fastest-growing real estate markets in the United States. But alongside the cranes, construction projects, master-planned communities, and industrial developments transforming the state, another ecosystem has quietly emerged: proptech.

Short for property technology, proptech encompasses the startups and technology companies reshaping how people buy, sell, finance, lease, manage, and experience real estate. While cities like San Francisco and New York often receive much of the attention, Greater Phoenix has developed into one of the nation's most active proptech hubs.

Driven by rapid population growth, housing demand, institutional investment, and a thriving entrepreneurial community, Arizona is producing companies that are solving challenges across every stage of the real estate lifecycle.

Natural Environment for Proptech Innovation

Arizona's growth story has created ideal conditions for proptech founders. Over the past decade, the state has attracted millions of new residents, billions of dollars in development, and some of the country's largest real estate operators.

The region's housing market, multifamily sector, industrial expansion, and commercial development pipeline provide startups with a living laboratory to test and scale new technologies.

Unlike many coastal markets, Arizona offers founders direct access to decision-makers. Real estate developers, property managers, investors, brokers, lenders, and contractors are often only a few introductions away, creating an environment where startups can rapidly validate products and build industry partnerships. This combination of growth and accessibility has helped Arizona become fertile ground for proptech innovation.

The Companies Leading the Way

Several Arizona-based companies have already achieved national prominence.

Silicon Oasis Community

OpenDoor helped pioneer the iBuying category, fundamentally changing how homeowners sell residential real estate. By creating a streamlined digital experience, the company demonstrated how technology could remove friction from one of life's largest transactions.

SmartRent emerged as one of Arizona's most successful proptech stories, building smart-home technology and operational tools for multifamily owners and operators. Today, the company's solutions are deployed across apartment communities throughout the country.

HomeLight continues transforming residential transactions through technology-enabled mortgage, title, and home-selling solutions that help consumers navigate increasingly complex real estate markets.

Lofty has become a major player in real estate marketing and CRM technology, providing agents and brokerages with tools powered by automation and artificial intelligence.

Lessen, another Arizona success story, has built a technology platform that streamlines property maintenance, repairs, and vendor management for institutional property owners nationwide.

Building the Infrastructure Layer

Beyond the state's largest proptech companies, a growing number of startups are focused on the infrastructure that powers real estate transactions and operations.

CommLoan is modernizing commercial real estate lending by connecting borrowers, brokers, and lenders through a digital marketplace that increases efficiency and transparency in the financing process.

That level of support reflects the broader direction Arizona's startup ecosystem has increasingly moved toward in recent years: a more collaborative, founder-led approach to ecosystem building.

Property Simple helps real estate professionals strengthen their online presence through websites, lead generation, and digital marketing solutions. Nurture Boss is applying conversational AI and automation to multifamily leasing, helping apartment operators improve lead conversion and resident engagement.

Luxury Presence, founded in Scottsdale, has become a leading provider of digital marketing platforms for top real estate agents, teams, and brokerages across North America.

Propwire is expanding access to real estate data and analytics, empowering investors, agents, and entrepreneurs with tools traditionally available only to large institutions.

Arizona's Next Generation of Proptech

The ecosystem continues to expand as new startups tackle challenges across ownership, operations, and investment.

Silicon Oasis Community

One company helping redefine the future of homeownership is Rhome, which is building technology designed to simplify and modernize the home-buying experience. As affordability challenges and transaction complexity continue to impact buyers nationwide, startups like Rhome are focused on creating more accessible pathways to ownership while reducing friction throughout the purchasing process.

Companies such as Rhome represent a broader trend within Arizona's startup ecosystem: founders identifying inefficiencies in traditional industries and applying technology to create better outcomes for consumers.

The Opportunity Ahead

The future of proptech in Arizona extends far beyond residential real estate. Artificial intelligence, predictive analytics, digital twins, smart buildings, construction technology, infrastructure software, energy management systems, and property operations platforms are creating entirely new categories of opportunity.

As Arizona continues attracting major employers, semiconductor investments, advanced manufacturing facilities, and new residents, demand for innovation across the built environment will only increase. For founders, investors, and operators, the opportunity is substantial. Real estate remains one of the world's largest asset classes, yet many processes remain fragmented, manual, and inefficient. The companies solving those challenges stand to create enormous value.

A Defining Silicon Oasis Pillar

For Silicon Oasis, proptech represents more than just another startup category.

It sits at the intersection of several of Arizona's greatest strengths: real estate, construction, infrastructure, population growth, and entrepreneurship. It reflects the state's unique ability to blend physical development with technological innovation.

As Phoenix continues to grow into one of America's most important metropolitan areas, the technology powering that growth is increasingly being built here as well.

From homeownership and lending to leasing, maintenance, analytics, and property operations, Arizona's proptech ecosystem is helping shape the future of the built environment.

And if current momentum continues, the next generation of industry-defining proptech companies may emerge not from Silicon Valley—but from Silicon Oasis.

Founder Spotlight

CLEAN AI: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU DON'T QUIT

Tejas' story of reinvention, risk, and the obsessive pursuit of building something that outlives the hype cycle.

Tejas didn't grow up around startups. He grew up in Delhi — in a middle-class home where money wasn't abstract, it was oxygen. He learned early that if you wanted something, you worked for it. He traded stocks with his dad before he ever wrote a line of code. And when the IIT JEE path felt like a cage instead of a calling, he took the biggest swing he could imagine: he left India for the United States.

Arizona State University became his proving ground. Year one was fun.

Year two was grind. By year three, he wasn't just studying — he was building. ASU gave him the room to experiment, fail, and try again, and he took full advantage of it.

That's where Clean was born.

Not in a boardroom. Not in a lab. At a hackathon. Next Hacks — one of the largest in the country — became the spark.

Tejas and his team built a prototype of something they wished existed: a context infrastructure for coding agents. A way for AI tools to talk to each other, share memory, and actually understand the work happening across systems. It wasn't glamorous. It wasn't polished. But it worked.

VCs noticed. Engineers noticed. And suddenly, the team had a decision to make.

Thirty days before this conversation, they incorporated Clean. Three months in, they'd already pulled all-nighters, rewritten their product twice, and pushed themselves past the point where most people quit. But that's the thing about Tejas — he believes genius isn't talent. Genius is obsession. It's the person who keeps working when they're tired, hungry, or discouraged. It's the person who refuses to stop.

He learned that the hard way. In his quant management grad program, he wasn't the naturally gifted one. He had to work three times harder than everyone else. He built the perfect study guide, helped everyone score high, and still watched the curve punish half the class. It didn't matter. The work ethic stuck. And that same ethic is what's powering Clean today.

Tejas believes in risk — real risk. The kind you take before you're ready.

He tells students to be "stupid until 25," not because recklessness is noble, but because fear kills more dreams than failure ever will. He used to be painfully introverted. At 19, he forced himself to study etiquette, communication, and human behavior. He practiced talking to strangers in different countries. He rebuilt himself from scratch. If he can do that, he believes anyone can.

And that's why Clean is built the way it is: obsessive, competitive, but kind. Four co-founders. Best friends. Six-hour meetings every day. Not chasing a quick exit. Chasing the top spot in their category — however long it takes.

Small teams, Tejas says, are brutally honest. If someone messes up, they hear it immediately. No politics. No pretending. No Google-style "we're all friends" energy. Just accountability, speed, and clarity. Investors love that. They love founders who aren't trying to flip their company for a fast check. They love founders who are in it for five years, ten years, however long it takes to win.

But Tejas also sees the darker side of the startup world. The elitism. The gatekeeping. The reality that a Stanford kid gets chances an ASU kid never will.

He's honest about it — Stanford and Harvard are elitist, but they're also opportunity machines. They give students networks, exposure, and unfair advantages. Most students don't fail because they lack talent. They fail because they lack access.

That's why he believes Arizona needs its own ecosystem. Its own network. Its own culture of builders.

Silicon Oasis, he says, is part of that solution — spotlighting overlooked talent, creating collisions, and giving students even a single day of exposure to startups and venture capital. Sometimes that's all it takes to change someone's trajectory. He's also seen the other side — the New York and San Francisco pace, the investor dance, the coded language founders are expected to speak.

Most people butcher it because no one teaches them how the game works. But once he found his people — through Founders Friday, through community — Arizona started to feel less lonely.

And that's the heart of it: Arizona isn't San Francisco. It's smaller. But it's loyal.

People here care. They stay. They build for their families, not for clout. They work harder because they've had to. And with AI tools like Claude, Tejas believes anyone can build something real — identify a problem, solve it, and make money.

San Francisco has quantity. Arizona has heart.

And Clean is betting on heart.

Founder Spotlight

CHOP LOCAL: REBUILDING THE LOCAL FOOD ECONOMY

Intimate Moments in Giant Worlds

Chop Local is redefining how people experience cities — not through top-10 lists, influencer rankings, or algorithm-driven recommendations, but through the places that feel lived-in, real, and rooted in community. Built for travelers, locals, and food lovers alike, Chop Local is creating a new way to explore a city from the inside out, spotlighting restaurants that represent the true flavor and identity of a place. The platform's mission is simple: help people discover what matters, not what's trending.

A New Way to See a City

Every city has two sides: the polished version shaped by tourism and marketing — and the authentic version you only find by spending time there. Chop Local exists to bridge that gap. Instead of pushing users toward the same over-promoted hotspots, the platform guides them to restaurants that locals actually love, the ones that make a city feel like home. It's a philosophy rooted in presence, not popularity.

Chop Local's app helps users uncover hidden gems, neighborhood staples, and culturally meaningful spots that rarely make the "best of" lists.

Whether a restaurant has been hiding in plain sight or sits just a few streets away from where someone is staying, Chop Local brings it into view — and into the hands of people hungry for real experiences.

Built for Restaurants, Powered by Loyalty

For restaurants, Chop Local offers something rare in the digital era: a platform that builds genuine loyalty rather than chasing clicks. Instead of competing for rankings or paying for visibility, restaurants connect directly with guests who value authenticity and want to support the places that define their city's identity.

Founder Spotlight

Chop Local becomes a bridge — not a billboard — helping restaurants be discovered for what they truly are.

This approach resonates especially with independent restaurants, which often struggle to stand out in a landscape dominated by chains and aggregator apps. Chop Local gives them a space where their story, their food, and their presence matter more than metrics.

A Founder's Vision Rooted in Culture and Community

Chop Local's philosophy reflects a deeper belief: food is one of the most powerful ways to understand a place. The platform's founders recognized that modern discovery tools were flattening cities into the same predictable lists, stripping away the nuance and character that make each community unique. Chop Local was built to reverse that trend — to help people explore cities the way locals do, through the restaurants that carry history, culture, and identity.

Why This Matters

In an era where travel is increasingly curated by algorithms, Chop Local is pushing for something more human. It's not about the most photographed dish or the highest-rated spot — it's about the places that feel real.

The platform champions restaurants that anchor neighborhoods, shape culture, and tell the story of a city through food.

By elevating these spaces, Chop Local strengthens local economies, supports independent restaurateurs, and helps travelers form deeper, more meaningful connections with the places they visit.

The Bottom Line

Chop Local isn't just a food discovery app — it's a movement toward authenticity. By spotlighting the restaurants that locals love, the platform is helping people experience cities the way they were meant to be experienced: through flavor, culture, and community. In a world of curated feeds and algorithmic sameness, Chop Local is bringing back what matters most — real food, real places, real connection.

Ultimately, Chop Local is building more than a guide — it's building a cultural archive. Every restaurant added, every neighborhood highlighted, every local favorite surfaced becomes part of a living map of what makes a city unique.

For travelers, it's a way to experience a place with depth. For locals, it's a celebration of home. And for the restaurants at the heart of it all, it's a platform that honors their craft and amplifies their voice in a way that feels human, not transactional.

Founder Spotlight

HOW GENTLE WEAPONS HOLDS THE LINE FOR AUTONOMY

THE ENGINEER WHO BUILDS FOR THE EDGE

Before he founded Gentle Weapons, JK Jensen spent years inside the machinery of modern software — building infrastructure, leading engineering teams, and architecting systems where reliability wasn't a luxury, it was the baseline. He worked across startups and high-pressure technical environments, always gravitating toward the same problem: the world depended on software that wasn't built for the conditions it would actually face.

He saw it everywhere. Systems that assumed stable networks. Robotics platforms that assumed clean environments. AI deployments that assumed the cloud would always be reachable. Assumptions that collapse the moment reality shows up.

Jensen's background wasn't in defense at first — it was in engineering discipline. In building things that had to work. In understanding the layers beneath the layers: kernels, drivers, networking, deployment, attestation. It was this background that led to him continuously asking the question. What are the unglamorous foundations that

determine whether a system survives contact with the real world? Over time, the pattern became impossible to ignore:

The future of autonomy wasn't going to fail because of intelligence. It was going to fail because of the infrastructure.

Robots jammed by bad updates. AI agents unable to run offline. Field units bricked by mismatched CUDA stacks. Teams shipping models into environments their systems were never hardened for.

So Jensen built Gentle Weapons — not as a metaphor, but as a correction.

A hardened Linux distribution for robotics and autonomy. A secure, self-forming mesh network for contested environments. A deployment system engineered for field conditions, not office Wi-Fi. Three products. One philosophy:

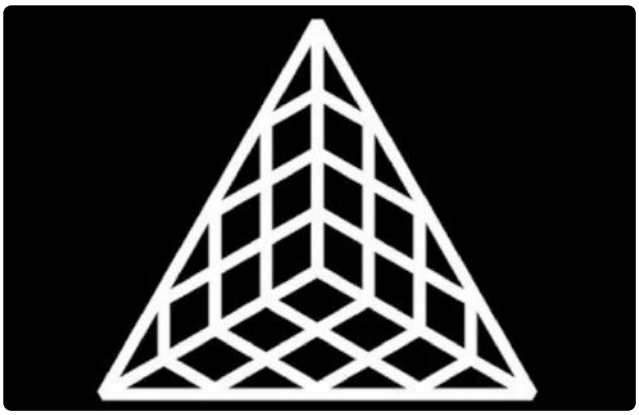
If it doesn't survive the edge, it doesn't matter. Gentle Weapons is built for the places where nothing is guaranteed — not bandwidth, not power, not uptime, not safety. The places where warfighters operate. The places where robotics teams deploy into dust, cold, jamming, and chaos. The places where the cloud is a rumor and failure is not academic.

Jensen didn't build this company to chase hype cycles. He built it because the world is entering an era where autonomy will decide outcomes — and autonomy cannot depend on fragile infrastructure.

He built it because national security requires systems that are:

- Attestable
- Hardened
- Recoverable
- Deployable at the edge
- Trusted under pressure

He built it because robotics teams deserve tools that don't break when the environment gets hostile.
He built it because the mission demands it.



Gentle Weapons is an American company with a singular focus: give warfighters and autonomy teams the infrastructure they need to win in contested environments.

Not someday. Not theoretically. Now.
And Jensen leads it with the same clarity that shaped his entire career — the belief that real engineering is not loud, not performative, not decorative.
It is disciplined. It is hardened. It is built for when everything breaks.

Because in the end, the future won't belong to the flashiest demos or the cleverest abstractions.
It will belong to the systems that endure.

Funding Rounds

EQUIPIFI RAISES $34M TO ACCELERATE BNPL

The Scottsdale fintech powering the future of Buy Now, Pay Later inside digital banking apps

equipifi, the Scottsdale-based fintech modernizing how banks and credit unions deliver Buy Now, Pay Later (BNPL), has secured new funding to accelerate its expansion across the U.S. financial sector. The raise underscores a major shift in consumer lending: BNPL is no longer the domain of standalone fintech apps — it's becoming a core feature of digital banking itself.

While BNPL giants built massive consumer adoption over the last five years, traditional financial institutions were left without the tools to compete. Equipifi's platform changes that by embedding BNPL directly into the digital banking experience consumers already trust. Instead of opening new accounts or downloading new apps, users can split purchases into installments right inside their existing bank or credit union app. Equipifi's traction reflects a broader shift in how consumers want to manage short-term credit.

Instead of juggling multiple third-party apps, they're gravitating toward solutions that live inside the financial ecosystem they already use daily.

Why Investors Are Paying Attention

The BNPL market is still booming, but the next phase of growth belongs to the institutions with regulatory experience, customer trust, and long-term relationships. equipifi sits at the center of that transition. Its platform integrates with core banking systems, enabling financial institutions to:

- identify eligible transactions
- surface personalized BNPL offers
- manage repayment plans
- reduce risk with real-time data
- retain the customer relationship

Funding Rounds

For banks and credit unions, it's a new revenue engine at a time when overdraft fees and traditional consumer lending margins are under pressure.

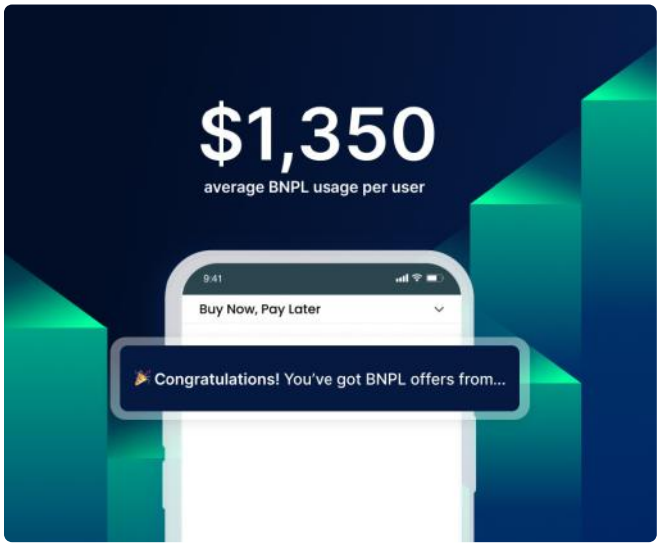
A Signal for Arizona's Fintech Ecosystem

The raise reinforces Arizona's position as one of the fastest-growing fintech hubs in the country. With the state's regulatory sandbox, strong financial-services workforce, and rising venture activity, equipifi's momentum reflects a broader trend: founders are choosing Arizona as the place to build the next generation of financial infrastructure.

The company's growth also highlights a shift in fintech investment priorities. Instead of consumer-facing apps, investors are backing infrastructure — the rails that power the financial experiences people use every day. equipifi is one of the clearest examples of that thesis in the Southwest.

What's Next

With fresh capital, equipifi plans to scale its integrations, expand its financial-institution partnerships, and deepen its analytics capabilities. As BNPL becomes a standard expectation inside digital banking, equipifi is positioning itself as the default provider for institutions that want to compete without building the technology themselves.



The Bottom Line

BNPL isn't going away — it's maturing. And equipifi is ensuring that the next chapter belongs to the institutions consumers already trust.

The raise marks a milestone not just for the company, but for Arizona's fintech ecosystem as a whole: a signal that the state is producing the infrastructure companies shaping the future of finance.

It also reflects a broader shift in the market: the most valuable fintech companies today aren't the ones trying to replace banks — they're the ones helping banks compete. equipifi sits squarely in that lane, giving financial institutions the tools to deliver modern lending experiences without sacrificing compliance, trust, or customer ownership. Investors are betting that this "embedded finance inside the bank" model will define the next decade of consumer lending.

Funding Rounds

BASATA RAISES CAPITAL TO SCALE PROPTECH SOLUTION

The Tempe startup turning jobsite chaos into real-time operational clarity

Basata, a Tempe-based construction-tech startup, has secured new funding to accelerate the rollout of its AI-powered platform designed to bring real-time intelligence to one of the world's most operationally complex industries. The raise signals growing investor confidence in the next generation of construction software — tools built not for the office, but for the jobsite itself.

Construction remains one of the last major industries to fully digitize. While project management tools have improved dramatically over the last decade, the field still struggles with fragmented communication, inconsistent reporting, and a lack of real-time visibility into what's actually happening on site. Basata is tackling that gap head-on.

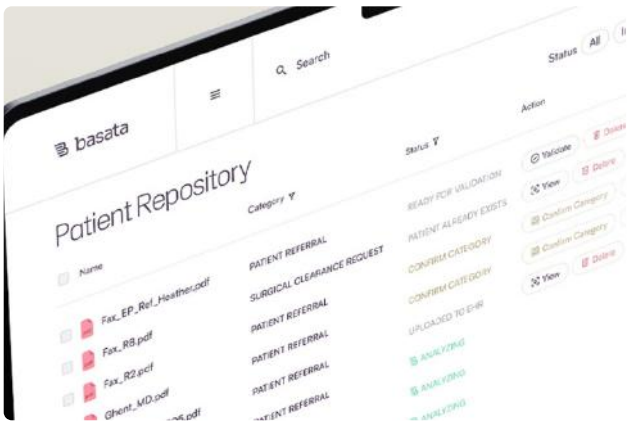
A Platform Built for the Real World, Not the Conference Room

Basata's platform uses AI and on-site data capture to give contractors, developers, and project owners a live operational picture of their jobs. .

Instead of relying on end-of-day reports, manual updates, or siloed communication channels, teams can see progress, issues, and resource needs as they unfold

The system is built to handle the realities of construction: unpredictable environments, shifting timelines, and dozens of stakeholders who all need the same information at the same time. By centralizing field data and automating insights, Basata helps teams reduce delays, prevent rework, and keep projects aligned with budget and schedule.

Funding Round



Why Investors Are Paying Attention

The construction industry is massive — more than $2 trillion in the U.S. alone — but it remains one of the least digitized sectors. Investors have been waiting for platforms that can bridge the gap between field operations and executive oversight, and Basata's approach hits that sweet spot.

Their model aligns with three major industry shifts:

- AI-driven decision support is becoming essential, not optional
- Developers want real-time visibility into risk, cost, and progress
- Contractors need tools that work in the field, not just in the office

Basata's raise reflects confidence that the company can become a core operational layer for modern construction teams.

A Win for Tempe's Growing Tech Corridor

Tempe has quietly become one of Arizona's most dynamic hubs for applied technology — especially in industries like construction, manufacturing, and logistics. Basata's momentum reinforces that trend, adding another high-growth startup to the region's expanding innovation footprint.

The company's presence also highlights a broader shift: Arizona is no longer just a market for construction; it's becoming a builder of construction technology. With major developers, contractors, and infrastructure projects concentrated across the Valley, Basata is scaling in the exact environment where its product is most needed.

Looking Forward

With new capital in hand, Basata plans to expand its engineering team, deepen its AI capabilities, and accelerate deployments with contractors across the Southwest and beyond.

The company is also exploring integrations with existing project-management platforms, positioning itself as the real-time operational layer that sits on top of the tools teams already use.

Construction is entering a new era — one defined by data, automation, and real-time intelligence. Basata's raise signals that the industry is ready for tools built for the field, not just the boardroom.

For Arizona, it's another proof point that the state is producing the next generation of vertical-specific tech companies — startups that don't just build software, but reshape how entire industries operate.

Acquisitions

TEMPE'S SOLESTIAL $67M ACQUISITION

York Space Systems Acquires Tempe's Solestial in $67M Bet on American-Made Space Power

York Space Systems closed its acquisition of Solestial on Wednesday, bringing the Tempe-based maker of space-grade solar cells under one of the country's fastest-consolidating defense primes and handing Arizona's space sector one of its largest exits to date.

The deal, valued at roughly $67 million, was paid in a mix of cash and stock. According to a securities filing, York issued 1,703,577 shares at a negotiated price of $34.00 each as part of the consideration delivered to Solestial's owners at closing. York trades on the New York Stock Exchange under the ticker YSS and is headquartered in Denver.

Solestial will keep operating as a wholly owned subsidiary and continue selling to outside customers across commercial, civil, and national security programs. York plans to fold the company's solar technology into its own spacecraft over time rather than treat it purely as a supplier. The two announced a definitive agreement on May 19 and cleared their closing conditions inside the second quarter, as projected.

Why Solar, and Why Now

Power has become a chokepoint for the satellite industry. As constellations have multiplied, demand for space-rated solar has outrun supply.

The dominant technology, known as III-V multijunction cells, is expensive and capacity-constrained, with lead times that can stretch past two years. Cheaper terrestrial silicon, the kind found on rooftops, was never built for orbit and degrades quickly under radiation.

Both options also lean heavily on materials and manufacturing controlled by China, a dependency that has made Pentagon planners and commercial operators alike nervous.

Acquisitions

Solestial's pitch is that it solves several of those problems at once. The company produces ultrathin, radiation-hardened silicon solar cells engineered specifically for space.

Its signature feature is silicon that repairs its own radiation damage under sunlight at operating temperatures as low as 65 degrees Celsius — a property the company says it has demonstrated on orbit and that no other space solar provider has matched. Because the cells can be built on automated equipment, Solestial argues it can scale to high volumes at costs below traditional III-V products.

Roughly 95 percent of Solestial's supply chain already sits inside the United States, and the company has been pushing toward a fully domestic production line. It recently bought high-volume manufacturing equipment that lets it run the full process from wafer to finished module on American soil.

That domestic footprint is the part York cared most about. "York has consistently invested in U.S.-based manufacturing as a core part of how we deliver for our customers," CEO Dirk Wallinger said in a statement, framing the purchase as a way to shore up the company's supply chain and cut its reliance on foreign sources for critical materials.

York's chief technology officer, Mike Lajczok, said owning the technology would let the company build more capable satellites with better performance, lower cost, and more design flexibility.

For Solestial, the appeal was reach and resources. "Solestial was founded to solve the space power bottleneck," CEO Margo de Naray said. She said partnering with York would let the company expand production, deepen technical integration, and get its American-made hardware onto a wider range of missions.

A Busy Year of Dealmaking

The Solestial purchase is York's third acquisition of 2026, and it fits a clear pattern. In March, the company bought electric propulsion maker Orbion Space Technology for about $74.9 million.

In April, it announced a $355 million deal for terminal manufacturer All.Space. Each move pulled a key subsystem in-house and pushed York further toward owning the components that go into its spacecraft rather than buying them from a strained, foreign-dependent market.

For the Arizona technology community, the outcome is a notable one. A company that started in Tempe to chase a hard materials-science problem has been absorbed by a publicly traded prime that intends to keep building in the state. The local manufacturing operation, and the talent attached to it, stays put — now with a much larger balance sheet behind it.

ADAR - TURNING AGRICULTURAL WASTE INTO A STRATEGIC ASSET

Where zero-emission processing meets the future of food, fertilizer, and sustainable production.

Wet waste has been a global liability for more than a century — expensive to handle, energy-intensive to process, and nearly impossible to monetize. Agriculture, food processing, livestock operations, and municipalities have all treated it as an unavoidable cost of doing business.

But a new class of founders is challenging that assumption, and few companies embody this shift more clearly than ADAR Technologies.

Beyond the scale of the opportunity, what makes ADAR's approach so disruptive is the simplicity of its promise: turn the world's heaviest, smelliest, most expensive problem into a lightweight, shelf-stable, revenue-generating product.

Built in Arizona and engineered for global scale, ADAR is redefining waste not as an endpoint, but as a high-value agricultural input — and in the process, it's positioning itself at the center of a $200B+ industry that has barely changed in 100 years.

The Canopy Program

Every year, the world produces more than **5 billion tonnes of wet waste** — material that is heavy, wet, odorous, and expensive to move or treat. Traditional thermal drying systems rely on fossil fuels and high heat, costing operators **$40+ per ton of water removed** while destroying nutrient value in the process. ADAR's thesis is simple:

If you can dry, pulverize, sanitize, and deodorize waste without heat or chemicals, you don't just reduce cost — you create value.

A Zero-Heat Breakthrough

ADAR's patented acoustic technology performs four functions at once:

- Dry
- Pulverize
- Sanitize
- Deodorize

And it does so without fossil fuels, added heat, or chemicals. The result is a nutrient-rich, odorless, stable powder that can be repurposed into:

- Fertilizer
- Feed inputs
- Nutraceuticals
- Soil amendments
- Industrial materials

This is not incremental improvement — it's a structural shift. ADAR reduces drying costs from $40+ per ton to $4 per ton, while preserving full nutrient value and unlocking 10x new revenue potential.

From Cost Center to Profit Engine

Take chicken waste — historically a disposal problem with industry costs around $90 per ton, totaling $2.4B annually.

With ADAR, that same waste becomes:

- $5,000/ton output material for agricultural use
- $25,000/ton output material for nutraceuticals like collagen

That's a $130B–$650B annual revenue opportunity hiding inside a category the world has ignored.
This is the essence of the waste-to-value movement: the raw materials for tomorrow's agricultural economy are already being thrown away today.

Supersonic Shockwaves: The Technology Behind the Shift

ADAR's system uses supersonic acoustic shockwaves to break apart moisture and cellular structures instantly. The process:

- removes water as vapor
- pulverizes material into fine powder
- sanitizes and deodorizes in real time
- operates in a continuous loop to meet any solids requirement
- This is industrial engineering reimagined through a founder lens — fast, scalable, modular, and built for recurring revenue.

Medtech: Innovation Trends

- ADAR is intentionally moving away from one-time equipment sales and toward an Infrastructure-as-a-Service model:
- usage-based pricing (per ton)
- recurring revenue
- global scalability
- high-margin resource recovery
- This positions ADAR not as a hardware company, but as a resource recovery platform — the “shovel seller” in a world where everyone else is digging for gold.

Traction Across Agriculture and Beyond Large Market Size

ADAR has already tested 70+ materials using its Gen 3 prototype and is now deploying its 4th-generation device. Current commitments total $20M, spanning:

- municipalities
- food processors
- dairy operations
- livestock producers
- mining operations
- paper mills

These are the industries where waste is heaviest, most expensive, and most nutrient-rich — and where ADAR’s economics hit hardest.

Why This Matters for AgTech

AgTech is often framed around sensors, robotics, and yield optimization. But the next frontier is resource recovery — turning what agriculture discards into inputs that agriculture needs.

ADAR sits at the center of that shift:

- reducing emissions
- eliminating landfill dependence
- unlocking new revenue streams
- strengthening supply chains
- creating circular agricultural economies

In a world facing water scarcity, rising fertilizer costs, and climate pressure, the ability to convert wet waste into high-value material is not just innovative — it's essential.

The Bottom Line

ADAR represents the next evolution of AgTech: a world where waste becomes a strategic asset, not a burden.

By combining patented acoustic technology with a recurring-revenue platform model, ADAR is building the infrastructure for a global waste-to-value economy — one that could reshape agriculture, food systems, and resource management for decades to come.

As global industries race to decarbonize and modernize their supply chains, technologies like ADAR's are becoming foundational rather than optional. Waste-to-value systems don't just reduce environmental impact — they create entirely new economic categories, enabling agriculture and food producers to participate in high-margin markets that were previously inaccessible.

In a world where every input is scrutinized and every output is monetized, the ability to convert wet waste into stable, nutrient-rich material represents a competitive advantage that compounds over time.

And perhaps most importantly, ADAR signals a broader shift in how founders are approaching the world's toughest industrial problems. Instead of optimizing around legacy constraints, they're rebuilding the system from first principles — designing solutions that are cleaner, faster, cheaper, and fundamentally more aligned with the future of global agriculture.

If the next decade of AgTech is defined by circularity, efficiency, and resilience, ADAR stands as one of the clearest examples of what that future will look like: bold engineering, real-world impact, and a business model built to scale across continents.

This isn't just innovation. This is industrial reinvention, built in Arizona and ready for the world — a blueprint for how founders can turn the planet's most overlooked problems into its most powerful opportunities.

International Partnership

STARTUP ISLAND TAIWAN AND CITY OF PHOENIX

Taiwan and Phoenix Deepen Tech Ties With New Pact in AI and Semiconductors

Taiwan and the City of Phoenix have formalized a wider technology partnership, signing an agreement that pushes their cooperation in artificial intelligence, semiconductors, and health technology beyond the one-off projects that have defined the relationship so far.

The memorandum of understanding, signed in Taipei, links Startup Island Taiwan with the City of Phoenix, the Greater Phoenix Economic Council, and Tesoro Venture Capital, with Taiwan's Industrial Technology Research Institute also taking part.

The signing drew official witnesses from Taiwan's National Development Council, the Ministry of Economic Affairs' startup administration, and the American Institute in Taiwan, the de facto U.S. embassy on the island.

For Arizona, the agreement is the latest sign that TSMC's roughly $65 billion buildout north of Phoenix is pulling more of Taiwan's tech economy into the state. The chipmaker's plants anchor a growing cluster of suppliers, and both sides now want startups and research to follow the same path.

What Startup Island Taiwan Is

Startup Island Taiwan is not a company. It is the national startup brand created by Taiwan's National Development Council, the cabinet-level body that steers the island's economic planning. The council built the brand after a series of workshops with founders, investors, and other agencies, settling on a single identity to represent Taiwan's startup scene abroad rather than letting dozens of programs compete for attention.

The brand functions as a gateway, running overseas hubs in innovation centers such as Silicon Valley and Tokyo that act as two-way bridges between Taiwanese founders and foreign markets, talent, and capital. The Silicon Valley hub in Palo Alto marked its first anniversary in January and says it has brokered more than a thousand business connections. Phoenix is now being positioned as another of those landing points.

From Pilot Projects to A Standing Framework

The two sides have been working together since 2023, when the Greater Phoenix Economic Council first signed on with Startup Island Taiwan. The new pact upgrades that arrangement by adding incubation and acceleration support, much of it routed through Tesoro Venture Capital, and by formalizing "soft-landing" programs that help foreign startups set up and sell in a new market.

The clearest results so far have come in health technology, helped by Phoenix's concentration of medical institutions, including the Mayo Clinic. Taiwanese firm JelloX worked with Mayo to validate its AI-driven 3D pathology imaging and won U.S. Food and Drug Administration clearance for colorectal diagnosis. Brain Navi secured FDA approval for a brain-surgery robotic system, and Aesop completed a proof-of-concept for its clinical diagnostic AI in U.S. healthcare settings.

Phoenix Mayor Kate Gallego framed the city as more than a manufacturing site. She described Phoenix as an innovation gateway that brings together AI, talent, and capital, and called it a strategic entry point for Taiwanese startups, pointing to local assets such as a Mayo Clinic accelerator and direct flights between Taipei and Phoenix.

Christine Mackay, who leads the Greater Phoenix Economic Council, said the partners have already set up a physical showcase site in the city's biomedical innovation district and have leaned on the federal SelectUSA program to give Taiwanese firms a practical route into the market.

A Five-Year Bet

The most concrete ambition came from Tesoro Venture Capital founder Andy Lombard, who said the firm plans to cultivate 200 to 300 startups over the next five years through large investments in AI and semiconductors. He argued that the effort needs to stay aligned with industry players already in the region, naming TSMC, Cadence, and Amkor, and proposed an executive committee drawn from the signing organizations to set goals and hold the partnership to them.

Taiwanese officials cast the workforce and talent angle as central. The agreement now reaches into AI, semiconductors, advanced manufacturing, photonics, AI-enabled healthcare, and defense-related industries. For a state trying to convert a single anchor tenant into a durable industry, the value of the deal lies in whether it produces companies and jobs that stick. The partners say the goal is measurable, repeatable economic results rather than ceremony, with the next phase resting on execution.

Startup Program

DEVLABS SCALES FROM LOCAL HACKATHONS TO GLOBAL NETWORK

Most builder communities trace back to one person who decided a roomful of talented strangers should be working in the same place. For DevLabs, that person is Dhanush Vardhan Kalaiselvan, a Silicon Oasis ambassador who goes by @geeky_dan online and has spent years assembling one of the region's more active developer scenes.

DevLabs grew by iteration rather than a single launch. It started with small hackathons and worked up to hacker houses, co-hosted with Silicon Oasis, where builders lived and shipped under one roof. The partnership with Silicon Oasis gave the effort institutional footing and a physical home while leaving its grassroots character intact.

The bigger leap came when Kalaiselvan organized a nationwide startup program and recruited a roster of startup-software companies to take part rather than simply sponsor. The named partners include Stripe, Kickstart, Superhuman, Autosend, Dodo Payments, Smallest AI, Supermemory, Composio, TinyFish, and Insforge.

"Now we can officially call ourselves a global community," he wrote in announcing the lineup.

The list maps neatly onto the modern developer stack, and several names carry weight beyond branding. Stripe is the payments backbone for much of the internet; Superhuman is a well-known productivity email tool. The newer entrants sit squarely in the AI-infrastructure wave.

Composio builds a "skill layer" that lets AI agents plug into thousands of outside tools and APIs without custom integration work, and raised roughly $29 million in a 2025 Series A led by Lightspeed.

TinyFish, which makes enterprise web agents that navigate complex sites and pull structured data, has raised about $47 million. Smallest AI develops ultra-low-latency voice models for enterprise call centers.

One Partner Has a Direct Arizona Thread

Supermemory, which offers a universal "memory" layer that lets AI applications retain and recall context across sessions, was founded by Dhravya Shah, a former Arizona State University student who built the project

out of a weekly side-project habit before raising around $3 million in seed funding backed by Google AI's Jeff Dean and Cloudflare's chief technology officer, among others.

For a Phoenix-rooted community, landing a founder who came up through ASU underscores how tightly the local talent pipeline now connects to the national one.

Kalaiselvan has been deliberate about serving founders, not just coders. His Momentum program pushes participants past the code layer toward customers and product decisions. One builder who went through it described being forced to talk to customers for the first time, take blunt feedback, and refocus on real product value rather than technical elegance for its own sake.

The next phase, by his own account, is talent. Having run hackathons, hacker houses, and pitch competitions, Kalaiselvan wants DevLabs to become a bridge between the builders it has trained and the companies hunting for them, and to make that matchmaking a sustainable line of business.

The logic is straightforward: a community that develops builders into founders and watches them win competitions ends up holding a vetted talent pool worth turning into infrastructure.

For all the programs and partner logos, Kalaiselvan closed his public account on a personal note, telling readers to figure out what they love and avoid comparing themselves to others. It is a modest sign-off for a community now claiming global reach, and a reminder that DevLabs grew out of persistence more than any single breakthrough.

Much of that narrative comes from Kalaiselvan's own telling. What is independently clear is that the companies he named are real players in the builder economy, and at least one traces back to Arizona.

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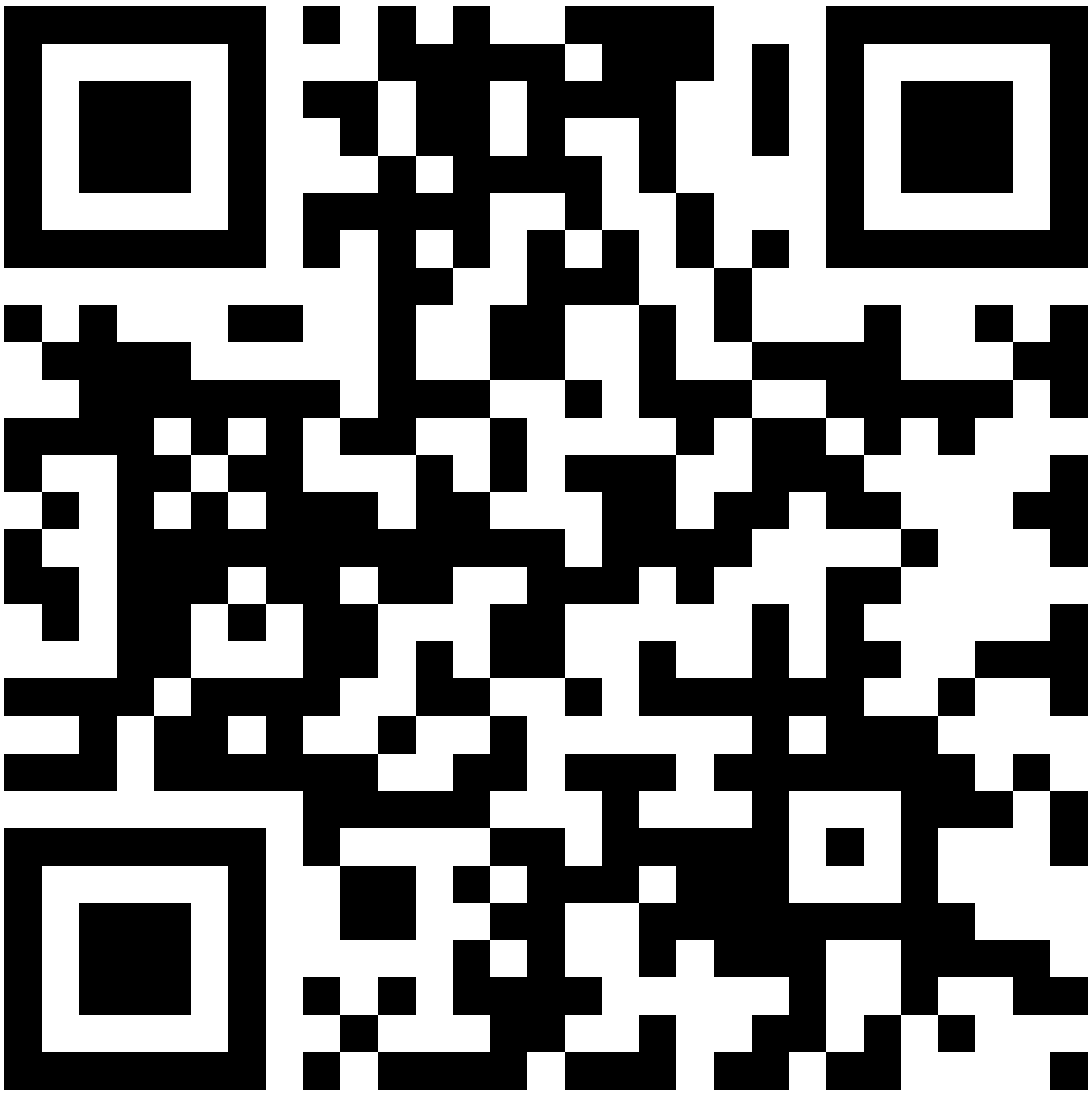

Pillar Partners

PHX FWD

Founder-led software community uniting Arizona builders through events, peer groups, and startup-focused resources.

AZ PROPTECH COLLECTIVE

A community uniting real estate, construction, and tech innovators to shape Arizona's built environment.

MAC MISSION ACCELERATION CENTER SOUTHWEST

Accelerating defense and aerospace innovation through founder support, workforce development, and mission-aligned industry partnerships.

PHOENIX Rising FINTECH

A community of fintech and payments professionals driving innovation while supporting each other's growth.

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