

****PRESS RELEASE****

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**eMERGE AMERICAS LAUNCHES *THE STARTUP STUDIO*
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CITY NATIONAL BANK**

--The program is specifically curated to help bridge the funding gap for minority founders in Florida.--

--City National Bank will furnish \$50,000 in grants for minority-founded startups participating in the program.--

--Program finalists will be matriculated into the eMerge Americas 2022 Startup Showcase program, forming part of the investor-startup matchmaking agenda at the eMerge Americas conference.—

Miami, FL - December 9, 2021-- [eMerge Americas](https://emergeamericas.com), a venture-backed platform focused on transforming Miami into the tech hub of the Americas, formally launched a program ideated to bridge the funding gap for minority founders entitled *The Startup Studio* in partnership with City National Bank of Florida.

According to numbers released by the U.S. Commerce Department's Minority Business Development Agency, minority-owned businesses are less likely to secure funding. Furthermore, for minority-led businesses that are able to secure funding, interest rates average significantly higher.

"We're intentionally modeling how community stakeholders can actively contribute to bridging the gender and diversity gap in venture capital in South Florida," said Melissa Medina, Cofounder and President of eMerge Americas. "We are thrilled to be working in partnership with City National Bank of Florida to facilitate connections and help foster an equitable tech and innovation ecosystem."

eMerge Americas and City National Bank will select 20 Florida-based early-stage startups with minority founders to participate in the curated five-week program, scheduled to commence the week of January 12, 2022, and ending the week of February 9th, 2022. The program will consist of thoughtfully curated weekly webinars hosted by industry leaders covering topics such as effective fundraising strategies, how to grow and scale, perfecting a business pitch, among other topics. At the conclusion of each weekly webinar, 4 different startups will give 3-minute pitches.

The top 5 startups will be chosen to participate in a closing event during the week of February 16th, 2022. Ultimately, there will be three startups selected to win a grant: 1st place will receive a \$25,000 grant, 2nd place will receive a \$15,000 grant and third place will receive a \$10,000 grant - all furnished by City National Bank.

Additionally, the three finalists will be fast-tracked into the curated eMerge Americas 2022 Startup Showcase, a multi-week high potential program - at no cost - which will culminate in a grand finale pitch competition in front of leading venture capitalists, corporate enterprises, government officials, and global media outlets at the annual eMerge Americas conference on April 18-19, 2022 in Miami Beach, FL. All selected startups will be allocated prime space on

the 2022 conference expo floor as an anchor tenant of the investor-startup matchmaking agenda.

"Miami and South Florida have made strides toward becoming an international hub for technology and innovation, and we need to help ensure minority-led startups can access capital and unlock business opportunities," City National Bank Chief Strategy Officer John Paul Paradisi said. "The Startup Studio will take full advantage of the global platform that eMerge Americas has built over time to provide promising minority-owned companies with grant funding, business guidance, and mentorship opportunities."

To apply to The Startup Studio in partnership with City National Bank, submit your application [here](#). The deadline for applications is January 7, 2022.

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About eMerge Americas

eMerge Americas is a venture-backed platform focused on transforming Miami into the tech hub of the Americas. The eMerge signature event, launched in 2014, is a global tech conference held annually at the Miami Beach Convention Center, attracting more than 16,000 attendees from 40 countries and over 3,900 unique participating organizations. In addition to the annual conference, eMerge organizes and hosts year-round executive summits, innovation challenges, startup pitch competitions, masterclasses, webinars, as well as publishes venture activity and investment insights reports. For the last decade, eMerge has served as a catalyst for innovation and investment across the Americas, working at the forefront of building the South Florida entrepreneurial and tech ecosystem. Visit www.emergeamericas.com for more information.

About City National Bank

Headquartered in Miami, City National Bank (CNB) is the financial institution to which Floridians have turned for more than 75 years. With more than \$21 billion in assets, CNB is one of the largest financial institutions based in the state. City National Bank is a subsidiary of Chilean bank, Banco de Credito e Inversiones (Bci), and remains a South Florida-based community bank with local decision-making. City National Bank is rated 5 stars "Superior" by BauerFinancial. CNB was voted Best Community Bank, Best Business Bank, Best Bank for Commercial Real Estate, Best Bank for Jumbo Loans, Best Private Bank and Best Foreign National Mortgage Lender by the readers of the Daily Business Review. CNB was also named Business of The Year 2019 by the South Florida Business Journal. CNB offers a diversified portfolio of financial products and services from Miami-Dade County to Central Florida.