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TECHNOLOGY

# Florida firm lands investment to fund tourist space balloon flight



Space Perspective's balloon spends two hours of its six-hour flight floating 10,000 feet above Earth.

SPACE PERSPECTIVE INC.



**MATT SODERSTROM**  
Staff Writer, Orlando Business Journal  
a day ago

## Central Florida Tech Fund

Orlando, FL

A local company's plan to fly passengers to space on a balloon are on track to get up, up and away.

### Kirenaga Partners LLC

Space Perspective Inc. has closed a \$7 million seed investment round to fund early flights of its Spaceship Neptune, a space balloon capable of carrying passengers. The Kennedy Space Center-based company's investment includes investors from Florida, California and New York, announced Space Perspective.

### 'Unprecedented' space access

The capital will fund Space Perspective's upcoming test flights. In fact, the company plans its first test flight to lift off from the former Space Shuttle landing facility in first-quarter 2021. Space Perspective eyes 2024 for its first operational flights.

The space balloon will be able to carry a pilot, eight passengers and research payloads to the edge of space,

10,000 feet above the Earth. Co-CEOs Taber MacCallum and Jane Poynter founded the company in 2019.

“Our ability to make space accessible in unprecedented ways carries immense importance,” MacCallum said in a prepared statement. “We are grateful that this premier group of investors recognizes that space tourism has arrived and is a significant driver in the future growth of commercial spaceflight.”



Taber MacCallum  
SPACE PERSPECTIVE INC.

Tickets for the six-hour flight go on sale next year. The ticket price is not set, but it’s estimated to cost around \$125,000, Space Perspective spokeswoman Angelica Morrissey told *Orlando Business Journal*.

In addition, the company expects to grow its local workforce, though it’s unclear by how much, Morrissey said. On its website, Space Perspective has six open positions, primarily engineering roles.



Jane Poynter  
SPACE PERSPECTIVE INC.

**A \$1 trillion industry**

The growth of the space industry – expected to be worth \$1 trillion by 2040 – and Space Perspective’s distinctive approach stood out to investors.

Some of the capital came from investment firm Kirenaga Partners, co-headquartered in Orlando, and its Central Florida Tech Fund. This is the fourth investment by the Central Florida Tech Fund, which launched last year, Kirenaga Partner Jim Thomas told *OBJ*.

“We can’t even wrap our heads around how big the space industry will be from tourism to mining to space agriculture,” Thomas said.



Jim Thomas

JIM THOMAS

The investment round was led by Jackson, Wyoming-based Prime Movers Lab and Berkely, California-based Base Ventures. The investor group also includes well-known entrepreneur, author and speaker Tony Robbins, San Francisco-based 1517 Fund, San Francisco-based Schox, Orlando-based E2MC Ventures and New York-based SpaceFund Venture Capital.

Of course, investment capital deals like this can be critical for startups and early-stage companies. It funds companies as they scale up while also providing business expertise and industry connections.

That’s especially during the pandemic, Space Florida’s Tony Gannon said during a webinar hosted by venture

capital organization Florida Venture Forum.

“Early-stage companies need assistance and that vital capital is a necessity for them to survive in these tough times,” said Gannon, vice president of research and innovation at the statewide aerospace economic development agency.

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2	L3Harris Technologies Inc.	7,235
3	Holmes Regional Medical Center	3,800

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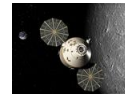
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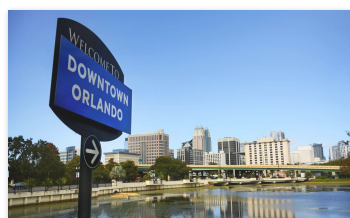
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