

**Intro** (00:00:01): Welcome to this limited series, exploring stories of innovation, patent protection and product commercialization in the state of Florida. This is James Di Virgilio in the summer of 2022, I moderated a series about Florida innovation in partnership with the Cade Museum, Florida House on Capitol Hill and the Florida Inventors Hall of Fame. I spoke with inspiring leaders, trailblazing the commercialization of transformative products across a variety of industries. Join us, as we delve deeper into the process of bringing innovation into the public square.

**James Di Virgilio** (00:00:38): It's uh, great to be here again on this series. It was so much fun last year. Thank you for joining us and thanks to our guest today, Paul Sohl. Really excited about this conversation as well. Paul is many things. He's currently the CEO of the Florida High Tech Corridor. In his past he was a Navy Rear Admiral and in addition to that, he also flew F18's and a bunch of other things, so we could spend other time channeling. But today we're gonna talk about his work with the Florida High Tech Corridor. That is a special initiative of three research universities, University of Central Florida, University of South Florida, and the University of Florida to unleash the potential of a 23-county region through research grants, industry clustering, stem outreach, S B I R facilitation, and much more. The corridor converges and catalyzes, the capacity of high tech innovation and bright minds across the region to generate a global ripple effect and advance the lives of the people in the community it serves Paul, welcome to the program.

**Paul Sohl** (00:01:39): James, thank you. And that's, that's a mouthful. I didn't know we did all that, but that sounds good.

**James Di Virgilio** (00:01:44): I'm glad you said that because I was going to ask you what is really happening with the Florida High Tech Corridor? Because there's so many buzzwords I just threw out there. Maybe you could make some more sense of what's really happening.

**Paul Sohl** (00:01:54): Yeah. So no. Sure. And, and that's exactly right. The, the, you know, as you think about, uh, Florida Inventors Hall of Fame and the Cade and, and USF and, and the magic that happens in the, in the corridor, that that's really what it's about. So a little bit, you know, with the corridor, it's 25 years old, we're on our 26th year. I came in two years ago and I think one of the things that just amazed me was a very "yes and" culture in Florida. And so if you think about what the corridor does and the magic of it, we, we really do wanna highlight, uh, inventors, small and medium size high tech, high growth firms. What we do is three words. We connect, we collaborate, and we convene. And I know those are sort of general terms, and I'm happy to dig into those. And what, especially, I think is unique about those, but that's, we're a regional 23 county, what I would consider an economic development powerhouse. And, and it really is about the magic of this region and, and what we can do to support the amazing creative, uh, forces, creative people that are, that are here in Florida.

**James Di Virgilio** (00:03:07): Now you began your stint as CEO at the beginning of the pandemic. Uh, what have the past few years been like with regards to development? You just mentioned that it's an economic development powerhouse. What has been happening in the past few years since you've, since you've started?

**Paul Sohl** (00:03:20): Yeah. So June of, uh, two years ago, June of 2020. So just over, uh, I'm into my third year now. And, and it was right at the beginning of, of COVID, I, I tend to be a, um, you tend to be a glass half full kind of a guy. Uh, so what that helped me with was to meet, I got a chance to meet a ton of folks over zoom very, very quickly. And that I, kind of joked with the team. I said, I'm gonna be on a

listening and learning journey for about 90 days. I'll have this place figured out, you know, typical Navy guy, uh, sure. No problem. And then realizing that, um, yeah, not so fast. And, and I look at it now, like this is gonna take me a decade to understand all the pieces that are here, right here in Florida right now, and, and what that means.

**Paul Sohl** (00:04:09): So that, that first year really did give me a chance to kind of explore. What I'm using 2022 to do is now get much further out in the region and really take time to go to the edges of the network, because every place I go, you get to, I have these "aha" moments and they will continue I think, for the next decade. Wow. I didn't know that. Wow. That's pretty interesting. Hey, what about this? Uh, and that's what, that's what I enjoy. We're a small team. We're funded by the state and by the two universities, University of South Florida and University of Central Florida. So I truly appreciate that. And that gives us a lot of flexibility.

**James Di Virgilio** (00:04:48): Now, what does it look like, uh, from the funnel? Let's talk about what happens here, right? Economic development can mean a lot of things. You just mentioned, your, you have a pretty wide footprint. What does this mean for the entrepreneur in Florida? How does this help them? What does this mean for someone who's not related at all to innovation, but maybe is downstream. It's a restaurant in a certain city. It's a, it's, it's a tourism board. How does this really affect the state of Florida?

**Paul Sohl** (00:05:11): Yeah. So great, great question, James. Couple of, couple of thoughts. Um, one is the idea of what innovation really means as far as economic development goes. And if you look at the history of this country, I mean all the way to our founding fathers and you understand the magic of invention, it's built into our constitution. And so it's in our DNA. I think as a country, as, as a creative nation, that's here developing solutions, tackling big problems. And then that ripple effect as that, as we build these companies, we take these ideas and build these companies. And then you, you look at the magic of the region with all the supporting elements that help, um, you can't, you can't just have an idea and go, oh yeah, I'll turn this into something that's gonna, you know, cure cancer. You need all these other pieces. So with the three big universities and the 14 state colleges and the private universities and the K through 12 that all feeds into the economic development of the region.

**Paul Sohl** (00:06:27): I am not by trade, and the na--, they don't teach economic development in the Navy. So I will continue to learn that piece. What I do know is where we're focused as a corridor with these amazing people that are supporting this podcast. When you and I first got to meet up at the Cade and I got to understand about the Cade prize and the things that are going on there solving real world challenges. This isn't about techno--, the last thing I'll say, and then, then I want to, I told James, I'll tell you I won't come up for air, unless you tell me to, uh, the, the, one of the magical things I see is technology with a purpose. This isn't deep research, the, our niche is not in the area of, of sort of deep research. Our niche is in the area of connecting the smaller, medium sized entrepreneurial programs to research, and then growing those businesses so that our own folks see themselves in, in technology. And so to your point, that helps restaurants, that helps other organizations that helps schools that helps, that helps us, uh, I think in general.

**James Di Virgilio** (00:07:36): Can you give us an example of, of a company or, or an idea that has gone through the process? You sort of just mentioned.

**Paul Sohl** (00:07:43): Yeah. So, so I'll, I'll highlight for you and, and I'll, and I'll take it all the way back to one of the first discussions I had at, uh, at USF and the professor and the name escapes me, and I'm horrible with names, but I, but I think of him as the mosquito guy. So I got a chance to watch, um, a professor and a couple of students who benefited from matching grants. And that's one of our, one of our programs is we're not just out there going, Hey, um, you know, Hey, you talk to you, this will, this will work. We have resources. We're very blessed with state and university resources. So what, so here's, here's the challenge back for Floridians that remember Zika? Um, there was a challenge of identifying when Zika mosquitoes were coming into the state and, and what he found was the way we figured that out was a very manually oriented way to do things.

**Paul Sohl** (00:08:38): You'd collect them manually. You'd look at 'em and try to piece together what, which one of 7,000 types of mosquitoes well, fast forward. And the story is fabulous. Fast forward. You get two students in that, in that researcher in there and funding for matching grants, and they devise this thing that you, you can put out there, capture a mosquito, stop him in time, take a picture of him, send that picture through AI. So use artificial intelligence and identify one of 7,000 variations of a mosquito species of a mosquito, um, in 30 seconds. And they're, and they're doing it. And then you think, and so I asked him, I said, where's the interest? He goes, honestly, India is one of the places. So you think of a worldwide solution on the diseases carried by mosquitoes and what this could do. I, there, there are endless stories like that, and it, and it focuses on that boundary breaking piece. And that's in the collaboration world. One of the things we stand for is, is boundary breaking collaboration.

**James Di Virgilio** (00:09:41): There's been some staggering numbers and reports out, especially in the past couple of years on just how much innovation is going on in the state of Florida, depending on your viewpoint. It could seem like many people across the country still really don't know how innovative the state of Florida is, or it could be that you realize you're living in a place that is turning out more innovations per capita, maybe than anywhere else in the country. What has it been like for you to observe this? And, and do you feel like the brand as Florida being an innovative state or innovation state is starting to maybe catch on?

**Paul Sohl** (00:10:13): Yeah. Um, the answer to your last question. Yes, I think it is. Now my own experience. And, and we, as I, as I retired from the Navy three years ago and, and my wife who's from California, we had a four year tour in Jacksonville and she said, Hey, in three to five years, I want to be back in Florida. Said, okay, cool. Let's figure out how to do this. And then I was blessed enough to have this opportunity, the fir-- my first impression of Florida, very "yes and" very, um, growth mindset, very people are very interested in, in what's going on in other parts of the, their own community and other parts of technology. And you could see it because you saw people, whether it's the researchers themselves or the kids in grade school, working robotics, very interested in what everybody else was doing.

**Paul Sohl** (00:11:06): And I, and I thought that was sort of amazing. The, the other thing I think that I saw initially, and this can sometimes be a bit of an Achilles heel, the number, the kinds of vertical technologies that are here. It's, it's not just one or two that often you'll see in, in other regions, you might find additive manufacturing somewhere or biotech somewhere or environmental somewhere here. Oh my gosh, you've got, you've got tourism hospitality. You've got, and the technology that goes with that, with the entertainment piece, you've got FinTech, you've got learning sciences and human performance. You've got everything that goes, goes on with space. You've got logistics. And I know

people say logistics tech. Yes. Tons of it. You've got farming, uh, and ag tech, uh, connect. So you've got UF connected with robotics and AI to develop the next set of farming technologies that will, that we, Hey, there's one things we saw on COVID right. How fragile our food system is. And to be able to do that at the ground level. I think that's what really is probably the kicker for me is you can do it all right here. We do undersea stuff. We do surface stuff. We do surface logistics. We do air and we do space. It it's all here. It just blows me away.

**James Di Virgilio** (00:12:40): And it certainly does seem like that. And then that is what leads me to this question. Obviously, my background is in finance, it seems like amongst the entrepreneurial community in the state of Florida, the, the number one gripe is there's not a lot of funding here. So a lot of companies will have to find themselves either flying out to Silicon valley or someplace where there's more venture capital, uh, or they leave eventually in their opinion, in the state of Florida, what is going to be done, or what do you think is going to happen when it comes to funding for new projects in the state of Florida?

**Paul Sohl** (00:13:09): Yeah. So now you're gonna ask me to look into a crystal. Actually I have a crystal ball here. Sometimes I make my decisions with, with that thing. Um, uh, this it's a really good, it's a really good point, James and it's, and it's something that I had heard early on, and I heard a, a spectrum of answers, uh, everything from, if you've got a, if you've got a good idea, the funding will happen. Um, the other was the challenge with funding is if they aren't, if the investor isn't located here, it's harder to make the connection. Um, it's probably somewhere in the middle because as you know, in that entrepreneurial journey, and this is kind of how I think about it, um, the right, it, it can be the smallest amount of money if it's not at the right place at the right time for that entrepreneur, that can sort of mean death, uh, of that idea.

**Paul Sohl** (00:14:09): And so what we're focused on from a corridor perspective is really the early pieces. So when we talk about grants SBIRs and STTRs, and, and things like that, it isn't a lot of money for businesses, but it can mean the difference between successful idea making the next step or, or not. And I know the grant world, and that's one of the powerhouses of the corridor is being able to leverage that power of going after grants. And I'll tell you breaking news on the podcast we put in for an NSF, uh, regional innovations engines grant. And we found out we passed the first phase yesterday. So we are invited to apply from a corridor Florida view to talk about coastal resilience and climate. Um, that's, that's monstrous in my mind of highlighting Florida and, and, you know, we're at the epicenter of environmental challenges. So I'm, I'm, I'm beyond proud of the team that went out kind of across the state in about 30 days to do that. And those, and that's the boundary breaking collaboration that we wanna talk about. And that, that we, that we stand for, I think, is the corridor and, and the region.

**James Di Virgilio** (00:15:24): Yeah. Yeah, for sure. And I'm gonna keep asking Paul questions here for the next 10 minutes or so. And if you yourself have a question in the audience, feel free to type that into the chat, and we'll ask those around 12:30 to Paul as well. I think a good proof of how well a concept works, Paul is to imagine if it's not there anymore. What would happen if it's not there anymore? So if all of a sudden, the Florida high tech corridor and you as a CEO ceased to exist tomorrow. Yeah. And you kind leaned on this just with your answer here, but let's go a little further into it. What, what, what would happened, what would be missing? What would, what would be the, the sort of, you know, waterfall effects that would not be good, obviously.

**Paul Sohl** (00:15:59): Yeah. So now, now you're asking and I'm, and I'm, I'm very humble at number one, the opportunity. And I think humility is important when you think about organizations because the corridor itself, I'll, I'll highlight one thing I learned James, and that, that is we don't do things for organizations and for people, we do things with them. This is a partnership thing, no matter how we approach it, it has got to be. And, and I learned that early on from, from, uh, a guy Eddie Morton here at lift Orlando and the power of "with" the power of teams, because I think the last thing anybody needs is another organization to come in and say, hi, we're here to help. That's not what we, that's not what we stand for. So I, I hope what we're building is a teaming organization, um, that, that works with others in honor, of, and in support of entrepreneurs and inventors.

**Paul Sohl** (00:17:03): Um, probably the biggest thing that would happen right now is half of our rev-- or half of our money that we invest is in called matching grants research. So this is where up to 150,000 per project, both at UCF and USF, I can partner with small and medium sized companies that want to do applied research that want to do, it's the mosquito guy, right? It's like, I've got this idea. I, I need some lab space. I get the lab space. Now I need some money on top of that. Hey corridor, can you help out? Yep. All we need is, is high tech and does it involve students? Okay, cool. Let's go and be able to do that. And again, small amounts of money, but that can mean the difference between, eh, I, sorry, I guess I just didn't have money and actually doing something. So those kinds of stories that we have, if you look back in our history of the investments that we made, that would stop and, and that, and it's not just, and this is again where that sort of uniqueness about small amounts of money.

**Paul Sohl** (00:18:01): Um, these three big universities, UF, USF, and UCF. These are hundreds of millions of dollars of research. And you might think, well, what's another little drop in the bucket, Paul. Where I see it is we're within 50 feet of the work. And that's where the best ideas come from. We're connected with small companies, we're connected with those ideas. And so we can deci-- we can say, Hey, here's some funds to be able to do that. So that would be the first, that'd be the first thing. The other thing I, I think James is I think more into the future of what does the corridor of the future kind of look like. I go back to connect, collaborate, and convene. We can pull people together from a regional level. We have a call Tuesday, uh, first and third Tuesdays where we talk to the 23 counties and all the different, it's kind of an ad hoc call, but the best, the best description of it was captain, uh, Tim Hill, who was former, uh, CEO of TSD.

**Paul Sohl** (00:18:58): And he said, Paul, the magic of, or the, the thing I love about the corridor and the calls, it's a safe environment for local organizations to have regional discussions. And I think that's one of the challenges in Florida is it tends to be re super focused on, you know, counties and cities. And, and I get it that, that, that is the way things develop. And then what we might lose if the corridor did kind of go away was a regional, um, in-- integrator, uh, under we understand kind of those things that are out there. I mean, when I first heard about the Cade it was the Cade prize and I go what's that? And then you get to dial in and see that. And then Cade gets connected with Terry Wellingham in Tampa and the foundation from community driven innovation. And then that connects with, with, uh, you know, other groups around here that's that's, to me, kind of the magic of what happens and where I think our niche is.

**James Di Virgilio** (00:20:02): So essentially if you're an early, early startup with an idea and, and the Florida high tech corridor is not there with funds, perhaps my idea to do something research based. I, I have to go through the grant process that exists, perhaps nationally. I have to attempt to find money in

the budget from my university, which may not be there because it's committed already to the projects. And if I can't get that 10 or 15 or 20 grand, essentially what you're saying is maybe I just don't work on that idea.

**Paul Sohl** (00:20:29): That it's, it's very possible. And, and I, and that sounds a little, uh, like we're thumping our chest and, and we're not because there are other organizations that help, but I, we kind of joke. Sometimes it's difficult to find which one of 150 doors do I need to go knock on at a university to find out. And that's that connection piece. And in, James, where I see the connection for the corridor, it really is about three things. And this came from the group, the connection has to be trusted. Um, there has to be an element of trust. It can't just be an email. Hey, go talk to this person. I don't know what's gonna happen. It has to be informed. Both organizations need to understand the other, Hey, I'm entrusting this idea, this young person with a company or something like that, I'm, I'm entrusting them.

**Paul Sohl** (00:21:20): And then it has to be informed. I know if I place it over here, that they will be taking care of, not that they're gonna do things for folks, but that they're gonna be taken care of. And then finally, for me, especially, um, that connection has to be inspiring. I have to be inspired otherwise, I'm, I've got too many connections to make, and I'm just not sure where to go. So whether it's, you know, whether it's Stephanie up that, uh, up at the Cade and, and her team up there, and then be able to walk through and see that, or it's the Orlando science center, or it's Stephanie Miller out at the MicaPlex at Emory riddle. Um, all those things in my mind are the growing network of networks of incredibly passionate people, um, that want to see those ideas succeed.

**James Di Virgilio** (00:22:08): What's the level of awareness of the Florida high tech corridor amongst those that might need its services?

**Paul Sohl** (00:22:14): Yeah. So, um, boy, if I wish I had that data, you know, and I, and I'm, and I'm not sure I don't, I don't have it. Um, certainly, uh, it's, it's getting better and we're measuring it really, it's a lag metric with people connecting with us and saying, Hey, we heard about the corridor and that's not just inside Florida. I'll tell you with Dr. Amy Beard, who's on our team who got a catalyst grant from the small business administration last year. And then, and then immediately took those funds and put 'em into UF, USF UCF, and F I T, um, inside the state that recognition is growing. I think also outside the state, a quick example, department of energy last year needed a regional convener. That's what they called it. And I said, well, that's in our name. Let's go do that. To be able to bring in students from around the country to use technologies from the department of energy, to then take those technologies and solve one of the, one of the giant problems, you know, the UN 17 goals, those kinds of things.

**Paul Sohl** (00:23:17): Well, it was, it was a bit of a rush to get this done. We were the convener for the Southeast, including Puerto Rico, the, the, the, uh, uh, the teams that came in to solve some of these problems were awesome. The third place team came from Miami. Um, so that was great. And that was nationally. Uh, so that was awesome. And we just got word from DOE they, they would like, uh, the high tech quarter to be that convener again. And now with time to plan, who knows what we can do, uh, we'll have all kinds of, I mean, this, this is really, again, you're unleashing those ideas, uh, in incredibly creative people. Um, so, so I see us getting more of that recognition, which I think will then flow to this idea of Florida as a true sort of center of innovation, a region of innovation and, and what we can do in the future.

**James Di Virgilio** (00:24:14): It is now 12:30. If you have questions, go ahead and put those into the chat. And we can ask those directly to Paul. Uh, Paul, I have one more question and perhaps more, depending on what happens with the Q and A, uh, but for this one, I love to know context and I love to know what's out there relative to what's happening in Florida. Do other states have something similar to the Florida factory?

**Paul Sohl** (00:24:33): Yeah. Yeah. They, they do. Um, and, and I'll share with you kind, one of the things, um, perhaps I'd pulled it from the Navy, I'd rather, I'd rather steal a good idea than kind of create one on my own, cuz I'm, I, I don't, I've been, I've been slapped around a little bit saying Paul you're creative. I don't consider myself creative, not like the creative geniuses we have here in Florida. And so I wanted to go out and study other, other corridors, other regions. And so you step into things like team Neo in Northeast Ohio, which took Ohio and, and launched it into, um, into the manufacturing of the 21st century world. You've got BioSTL, uh, which took St. Louis with, again, these, these giant sort of organizations of like-minded folks to really bring technology to a region. Um, you've got launch Tennessee, which is, again, they're all different, they're all funded different.

**Paul Sohl** (00:25:38): And yet I think they all have some, some themes in there that, that we can learn from. Launch Tennessee is a state funded organization, but they tie in eight innovation ecosystems. Again, you're not. And what I learned from them is don't try to homogenize the place don't try to, and, and I'm not doing that for the corridor, for sure. Each of those innovation ecosystems that are out there are unique and our job is not to put 'em in a blender, spin 'em around and go, here you go. This is the core. That is not it. We are honoring those individual ecosystems in the, in the beauty and creativity that are there right now, and then helping them in some way develop. So for example, if they have companies that have never applied for a grant before we have a, we're working with orange county in an industry diversification world and going after grants for clusters here in orange county, um, to be able to get people connected with those companies to do those grants so that you can cuz they'll be competitive, they've already won some I, I mean, so they're, that's, that's out there right now for sure.

**Paul Sohl** (00:26:52): So those are just a couple that Michigan's got some great stuff. Um, what it, what I love about what national science foundation is doing is they're re-- they're realizing that regional innovation engines are important throughout the country. Innovation can't just occur in those classic areas that you think about. It has to occur, I'm, I'm a Midwestern kid. My parents grew up on farms. I get more excited about ag tech. When I first got here than anything else. My dad worked for John Deere for 26 years. I mean, those kinds of things I think are, are amazing.

**James Di Virgilio** (00:27:29): And you mentioned funding, uh, funding wise, there's a lot of different ways to fund these and you also alluded to it earlier, but just for clarity purposes, how is the Florida high tech corridor funded?

**Paul Sohl** (00:27:39): Yeah. So started out really, and it's kind of in our DNA. So 26 years ago, or so a decision was made between UCF and USF and some other folks from the state. Um, and so it started out kind of as a line item in the state budget, um, that continues. So I am funded specifically through USF and UCF and our third co-chair is UF. So that triangle, if you will, are my, is my leadership guidance and that's where our funds come from and, and the flexibility because I'm not a member organization. Right. So I don't have to go after and, and have a whole development team. And we're, and that's perhaps what keeps me up at night too, because, Hey, how long is this gonna last? And oh, by the way, that's

why we're leveraging those funds because for 25 years, and, and this will sound judgmental. And I don't mean it to be for 25 years, we used state funding to do some great things, but we weren't leveraging those funds. Like I think we can. And like, I think the team is starting to do right now. Being able to leverage that stuff is, is really, really important because the needs of Florida and the ideas that are in Florida are absolutely worth it. They're worth fighting for, uh, to be able to, to be able to do that.

**James Di Virgilio** (00:29:07): Yeah. We could have a fascinating discussion on a different, uh, show one day about government sponsored initiatives and maybe how difficult it is and the success or failure of them funding, private innovation, how that works. Yeah. But for now, I'm gonna give you a question from Paul, Paul to Paul, to Paul here, uh, great presentation, he says, and he would like you to pull out your magic 8 ball that I know you have there with you and tell us that's right. Shake it up. Tell us where you see the far to high tech corridor far into the future, perhaps 10 or 20 years down the road. What does maybe this look like?

**Paul Sohl** (00:29:38): Yeah. So, um, and I'm gonna talk about it from a perspective of not the corridor as an organization, but the corridor as a region and, and where I see that 10 or 20 years. And if I had to sort of look and, and Paul, thank you for that. I knew that question was no, I did it. Thank you for Paul and I are both. I'm looking over here and I'm going, yeah, he's a pilot, typical pilot question. Um, here, here's what I see. Um, I think we're young in our own journey of eco-- of ecosystem building. I think we're just now beginning to like, look over the fence and see, Hey, what's going on at Manatee Sarasota, what does 26 west do? What does, you know, how are they involved in first robotics or first Lego league with, with Daish Bagley? And how does that work?

**Paul Sohl** (00:30:35): And then how does that connect with Ocala county and semiconductors? And, and then how does that connect with space? Because if you go to the space, I haven't even started there. I haven't gone there yet. You go to the space coast, that place nearly vaporized when the shuttle went away. I mean, it nearly did. Now think about it. You've got four private companies there, and it's so much more than launch. They're built one, web's building satellites. We're, we're, we're, we're building the, the manufacturing in space. Those things that will take us to the moon and to Mars. And it's, it's all right here. That sounds like, well, Florida can be isolated, can do it all. We can't do it all ourselves. And that's why we truly reach out to the rest of the country for an understanding of, of that piece. I see that what I see are these networks of networks, more, more closely connected so that the speed of innovation can really happen, you know, at speed and at scale.

**Paul Sohl** (00:31:37): And, and right now it's, it's, it's clunky, but we're young. We're, we're, you know, you know, Sandy Shugart, the former president of Valencia college. And he was really a part of the triangle up in North Carolina. He said, Paul, don't forget, we're young down here. They, they started in the late fifties and it took 'em time. So I, I absolutely believe, and I can see it where we'll be, whether it's 10 years or 20 years, I'm not so sure, but I, and I also see the high tech corridor connected with the other corridors in Florida. Uh, and I think the NSF grant, I think that thing will be an amazing kind of piece to this. So it's a, the ability to get connected and, and sort of operate at speed and scale like that.

**James Di Virgilio** (00:32:26): That makes sense. Yeah, just the natural growth of something that if it's successful, it's gonna become more integrated, more intertwined, more necessary, uh, faster resource deployment and management, as you mentioned,



**Paul Sohl** (00:32:36): It's the connective tissue. You just highlighted it, that we, we it's, it's this sort of growing of connective tissue and, and how are they connected? And at the end of the day, it's people it's, it's not, it's not organizations, it's it's people. And, and it's those key leaders that can think about a, again, it's not, it's not Orlando against Tampa, against Miami, against, you know, the panhandle. It's not that it's like, just understanding. So the corridors still, you know, we're still young at our own listening and learning journey for sure. That's gonna take, that's gonna take a decade for me. I'm a slow learner. It's gonna take me a decade. Uh I'm and, and by then things will have changed, which is kind of cool too.

**James Di Virgilio** (00:33:24): Right? Yeah. That's the beauty of it. So Allison asks, how can we help? How can those help to work with you? As you mentioned to work with you, we're not just asking how we can help, but what can be done for those in the state of Florida who are listening to this or watching this later, what can they do to get involved?

**Paul Sohl** 00:33:39 Yeah. So, uh, here, I'll say two things. One is, you know, and that's a great question, Allison, so thank you. Um, get, I, I would say get connected with us now, if you're in the 23 counties, you're already in the corridor. I mean, that's where you're, you're already here. So I'm sure at the end of this thing, the, my, my email will be there. It is something we've been looking at hard because we know we have a lot to learn about things that are out there. And I think we have a lot to offer, to work with folks to be able to do that. So if you go to our website, we revamped that thing. We're really trying to make it easy for people to see kind of, Hey, who am I and where would I, where would I connect.

**James Di Virgilio** (00:34:22): Paul, It's been wonderful having you on this discussion. Of course, we're outta time. It's been great. Our second time together here, uh, discussing things which has been wonderful. I'm gonna turn it now over to Liz for the wrap up, but of course, again, our guest today was Paul Sohl, the CEO of the Florida high tech corridor and former F 18 pilot.

**Paul Sohl** (00:34:39): Thanks, James. Pleasure.

**Outro** (00:34:45): Radio Kate is produced by the Cade museum for creativity and invention located in Gainesville, Florida. This episode is part of a virtual series conducted in partnership with the Florida house on Capitol hill and Florida inventor's hall of fame. The radio Cade theme song was produced and performed by Tracy Collins and features violinist Jacob Paulson,