

## **Fincantieri Expands Its Innovation Network: New Innovation Antenna Launched in South Korea, a Thriving Ecosystem of 2,000+ Scaleups**

*Recognized among the world's top innovation ecosystems and with a strong foothold in the shipbuilding sector, South Korea has attracted more than \$71 billion in scaleup investments to date, committing 2.7% of its GDP to support the growth of its innovation economy.*

**Seoul, South Korea – July 2, 2025** – As part of the *open innovation* strategy launched last year, **Fincantieri** announces the opening of its Innovation Antenna in South Korea, supported operationally by [Mind the Bridge](#). The initiative marks a key milestone in Fincantieri's open innovation strategy and reinforces the Group's commitment to international collaboration on advanced maritime technologies.

The announcement was made during the [Scaleup Summit Seoul 2025](#), co-organized with Mind the Bridge, in the presence of Italy's Ambassador to South Korea, **Emilia Gatto**, and Fincantieri's top management.

Following the successful opening of its first Innovation Antenna in Silicon Valley last October, Fincantieri has identified South Korea as its next global innovation hub. The country's thriving ecosystem, particularly in shipbuilding, robotics, and automation, makes it a strategic destination for the Group's innovation efforts.

Located in the heart of Seoul's tech district, the new Antenna will enable direct connections with the local innovation ecosystem, including startups, research centers, and industrial players. As highlighted in the newly released ["Tech Scaleup South Korea 2025 Report - At the Frontier of Hard Tech"](#) report by Mind the Bridge, South Korea is on track to overtake Japan and position itself as the third largest innovation hub in Asia, after China and India.

The increasing relevance of dual-use innovation (technologies that serve both civilian and defense applications) is highlighted in the new ["Dual Use Technologies: The Strategic Frontier of Innovation – 2025"](#) report, also released at the launch event. The report, produced by Mind the Bridge in collaboration with Fincantieri and Crunchbase, provides a comprehensive analysis of VC funds globally with an explicit investment focus on dual-use and defense-tech startups.

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### **Report 1 / SOUTH KOREA'S INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM**

With **2,127 scaleups** and over **\$71.6 billion** raised, **South Korea ranks among the world's top 16 "Star" ecosystems**, according to the newly released report ["Tech Scaleup South Korea 2025 Report - At the Frontier of Hard Tech"](#) by **Mind the Bridge**.

- The country reports a **scaleup density of 4.1 per 100,000 people** and **2.7% of GDP invested in innovation**—one of the highest levels globally.

Public policies such as **Super Gap Projects** and deep-tech incentives have fueled the emergence of **2 unicorns and 400+ startups**, facilitating commercialization and IPO access.

- **Seoul**, with 1,555 scaleups and over \$50.7B raised, is now a “Nova Star” on **MTB’s Innovation Ecosystem Life Cycle Curve**—on par with global hubs like Boston, Singapore, and Texas.
- South Korea ranks **4th globally in robotics market value** and **1st in robot density**, with a **\$2.2B national plan to deploy 1 million robots by 2030** across industry, healthcare, and public services.
- With **99.7% of Korean trade moving by sea**, the country’s port infrastructure is a strategic priority: Busan is undergoing a \$10B expansion and Incheon will become the first fully automated smart port.

## Report 2: SOUTH KOREA’S DUAL-USE SCALEUPS AND DEFENCE-TECH

South Korea is home to **462 dual-use scaleups**, which have collectively raised over **\$8.3 billion**, according to the new report “[\*Dual Use Technologies 2025 Report - The Strategic Frontier of Innovation\*](#)” developed by Mind the Bridge in collaboration with Fincantieri and Crunchbase. The report — officially presented at the Scaleup Summit Seoul — maps the global dual-use landscape, identifying more than **17,600 startups operating across both civilian and defense domains in NATO** and allied countries, and highlights several key emerging trends.

- Dual-use scaleups across NATO and allied countries increased by **16% year-on-year**, now accounting for **27% of total scaleups** in the region. **55% of newly created scaleups** in the last 8 months operate in dual-use sectors.
- Total funding raised by dual-use scaleups globally surpassed **\$1.2 trillion**. In the defense-tech sector (including dual-use), **\$70.8B** was raised from October 2024 to May 2025—**+27% year-on-year**. **Approximately 70% of new scaleup funding** in NATO and allied countries between October 2024 and May 2025 was directed toward companies developing **dual-use** technologies.
- **Energy, security, and surveillance** are growing verticals, while health, sustainability, and mobility are also increasingly seen as strategic dual-use domains.
- On average, pure defense-tech scaleups raise **\$80M**, dual-use **\$66M**, and purely civilian tech startups **\$50M**, highlighting higher capital intensity and barriers to entry.
- The **U.S. hosts 50% of global dual-use scaleups**, while Europe is catching up fast with growing hubs in the UK, France, Germany, and Israel. APAC growth is being led by **Japan, South Korea, and Australia**.

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### Fincantieri

Fincantieri is one of the world’s largest shipbuilding groups, the only one active in all high-tech marine industry sectors. It is leader in the construction and transformation of cruise, naval and oil & gas and wind offshore vessels, as well as in the production of systems and component equipment, after-sales services and marine interiors solutions. Thanks to the expertise developed in the management of complex projects, the Group boasts first-class references in infrastructures, and is a reference player in digital technologies and cybersecurity, electronics and advanced systems. With over 230 years of

history and more than 7,000 ships built, Fincantieri maintains its know-how, expertise and management centres in Italy, here employing over 11,000 workers and creating around 90,000 jobs, which double worldwide thanks to a production network of 18 shipyards operating worldwide and with over 22,000 employees.

[www.fincantieri.com](http://www.fincantieri.com)

## **Mind the Bridge**

Mind the Bridge is a global open innovation platform, providing services and products to corporates and local startup ecosystems. Headquartered in Silicon Valley with offices in Barcelona, Seoul, Tel Aviv, New York and Milan. It has been working as an international bridge at the intersection between startups and corporates since 2007. Mind the Bridge scouts, filters, and works with 10,000+ startups a year supporting global corporations with open innovation initiatives that translate into curated deals with startups (POCs, procurement, investments, and/or acquisitions). It also provides corporates with advisory services and benchmarking on innovation strategies and structures. Mind the Bridge developed MTB Ecosystem, an AI-powered open innovation matching platform for innovation ecosystem hubs and corporates. Mind the Bridge, in collaboration with the International Chamber of Commerce, annually hosts the 'Corporate Startup Stars' awards, recognizing the most startup-friendly global corporates, and the 'Startup Ecosystem Stars,' which highlights public and private organizations—at municipal, regional, national, and transnational levels—that support innovation within their ecosystems.

For more info: <http://mindthebridge.com> | @mindthebridge

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