

From the Austin Business Journal:

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# We're No. 1: Austin snags top honor in startup city ranking

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Owing to its entrepreneurial bent, the quality of its labor pool and its booming population, Austin has been ranked by CNBC as the best place in the nation to launch a startup.

The Texas capital was followed by Provo, Utah; Washington, D.C.; Denver; Charlotte, North Carolina and Houston.

Conspicuously absent from the top 20: the San Francisco Bay area and New York City, both noted hotbeds for startup activity.

That might give some readers pause, given the major influence of both on the technology world and startups more generally.

**CNBC** interviewed Jason Ballard, co-founder and CEO of Austin-based sustainable home-improvement store TreeHouse Inc., and highlighted the company's growth. "As a community, Austin is just very supportive of new



MICHAEL THEIS/STAFF

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and interesting things," he said.

That sentiment probably is a familiar one for most Austin businesses. ABJ's comprehensive analysis from earlier this year showed the city is the best place in the national for small business, while a June report found Austin is the country's preeminent haven for tech startups. What's more, the 2016 edition of the Kauffman Foundation's annual report on nationwide entrepreneurship said Austin remains one of the best places for growing companies.

However, Austin also notably lags behind Silicon Valley and the Big Apple when it comes to access to capital and some business people have complained of late that city regulations are stifling innovation.

For its inaugural ranking, CNBC considered 20 factors, from regulatory climate to the skill of its workers, in the nation's 107 largest metros and pulled data from government and private sources.

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