PitchBook
a Morningstar company

EMERGING TECH RESEARCH

Vertical Snapshot: Space Tech

Capital moves to the factory floor

2026

REPORT PREVIEW
The full report is available through the PitchBook Platform.

Contents

Institutional Research Group

Ali Javaheri
Senior Research Analyst
ali.javaheri@pitchbook.com

Caleb Wilkins
Data Analyst

pbinstitutionalresearch@pitchbook.com

Published on August 25, 2026

Executive summary

Space tech has moved from a technology-validation cycle to a procurement, production, and capital structure cycle. Government demand underwrites production across launch, sensing, communications, and orbital mobility. Industrial capacity matters more than technical novelty. Capital has moved toward companies that can turn qualified hardware, contracted demand, and launch access into repeatable delivery.

Space tech companies raised $11.3 billion across 244 deals in H1 2026, passing the $10.1 billion invested across 433 deals in all of 2025—a value milestone, not a volume surge. H1 deal count annualizes to roughly 490 deals, an increase from 2025. The median deal size rose to $14.5 million from $7 million, and the average deal size to $70.5 million from $37.8 million.

The market also matured and spread geographically. Venture-growth and late-stage financings took 87.4% of H1's value. North America held the largest share at 56.1%, but Europe hit a series record of $2.4 billion, or 21.1% of value. Asia followed at 20.2%. The largest deal accounted for about 10% of the value, and the top five accounted for about 34%. By space tech standards, H1 was broad, even as capital favored proven companies.

Five forces defined this cycle. Defense demand became a commercialization engine. Launch supply was abundant in aggregate but scarce for many third-party customers. Industrialization was the binding constraint. Public listings reopened an exit path and imposed public market discipline. Debt, export-credit finance, sovereign capital, and capacity contracts widened the capital stack beyond venture equity.

We restated and rescoped the historical series from the April 2025 edition. The correction removes Anduril Industries, a defense-primary company, from our space tech coverage and lowers several historical totals.

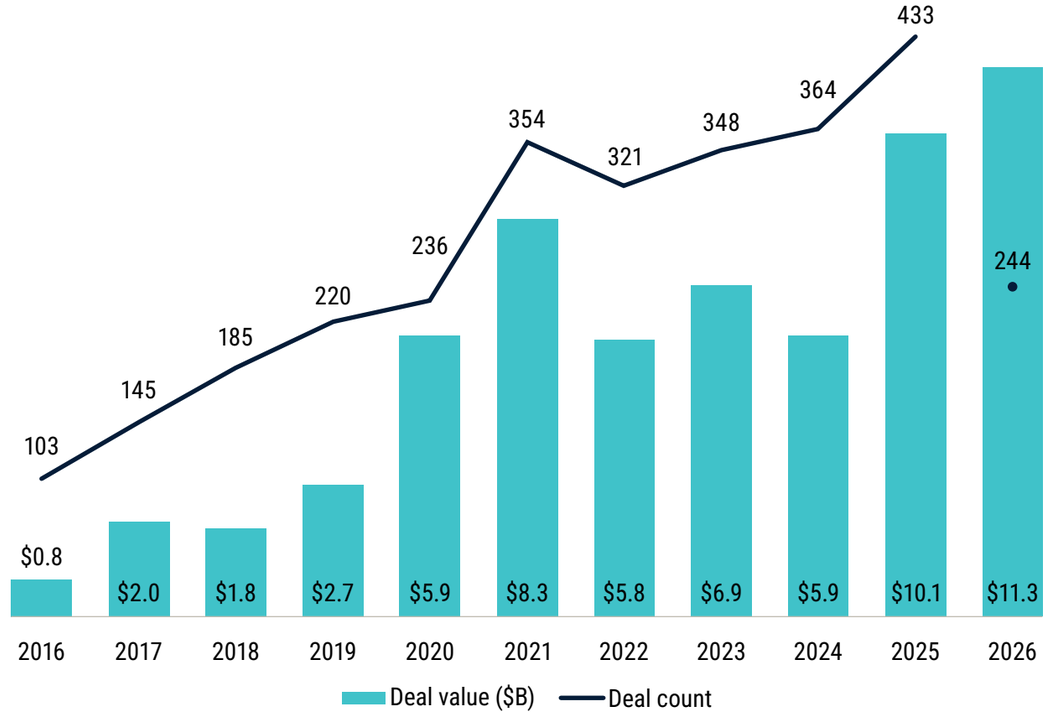
Space tech landscape

1. Terrestrial
2. Orbital
3. Exploratory

Head to the PitchBook Platform to view the complete space tech taxonomy and company list, as well as the terrestrial, orbital, and exploratory market maps.

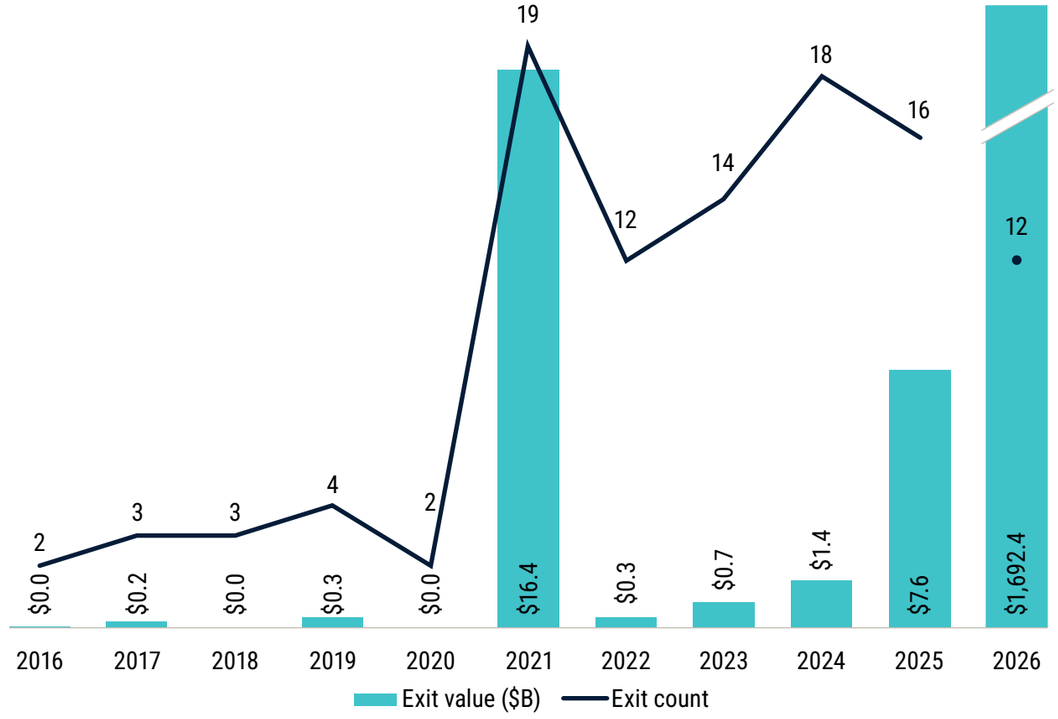
VC activity

Space tech VC deal activity



Source: PitchBook • Geography: Global • As of June 30, 2026

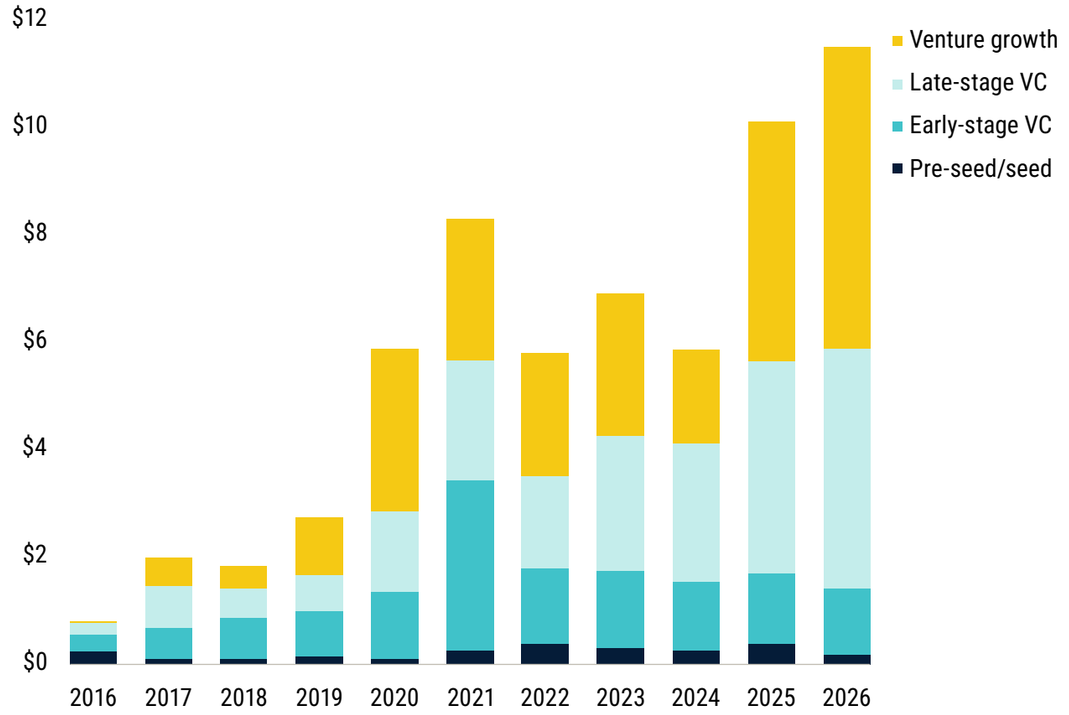
Space tech VC exit activity



Source: PitchBook • Geography: Global • As of June 30, 2026

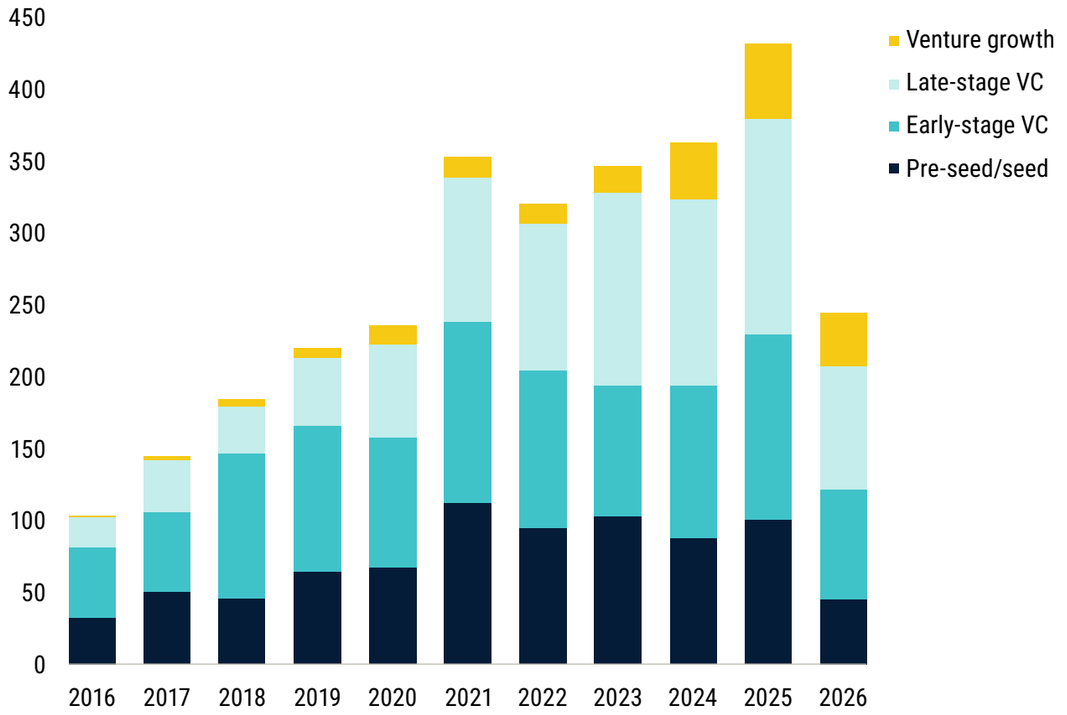
Note: Y-axis uses Log10 scale for readability.

Space tech VC deal value ($B) by stage



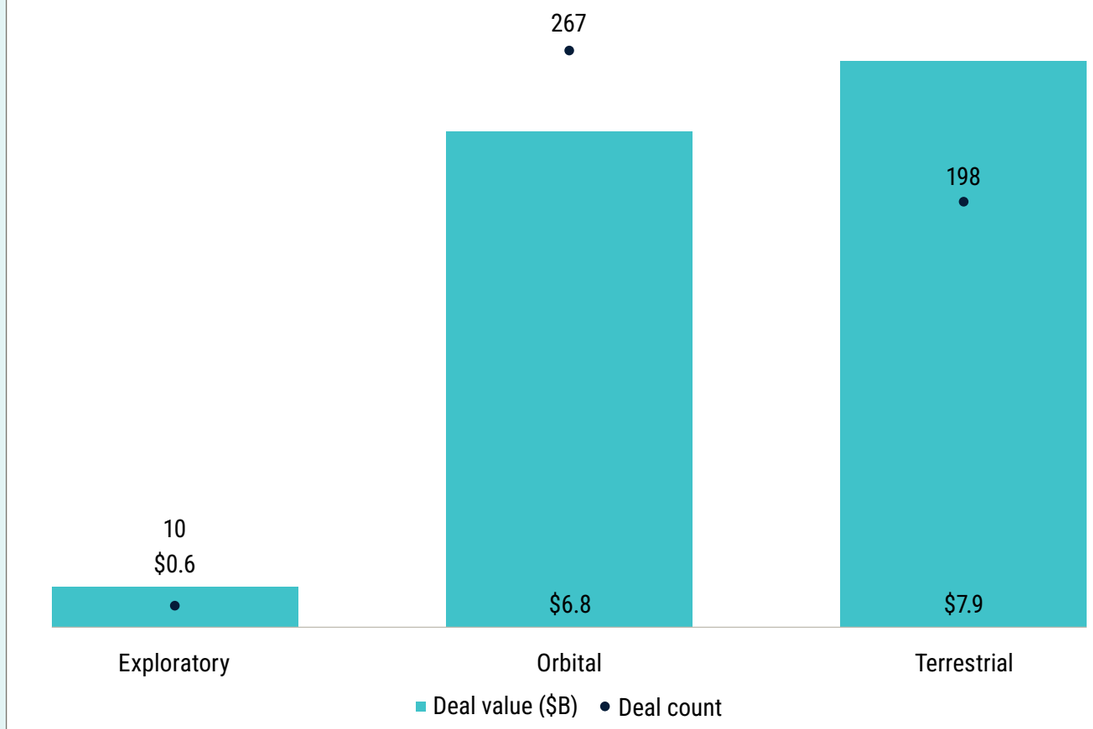
Source: PitchBook • Geography: Global • As of June 30, 2026

Space tech VC deal count by stage



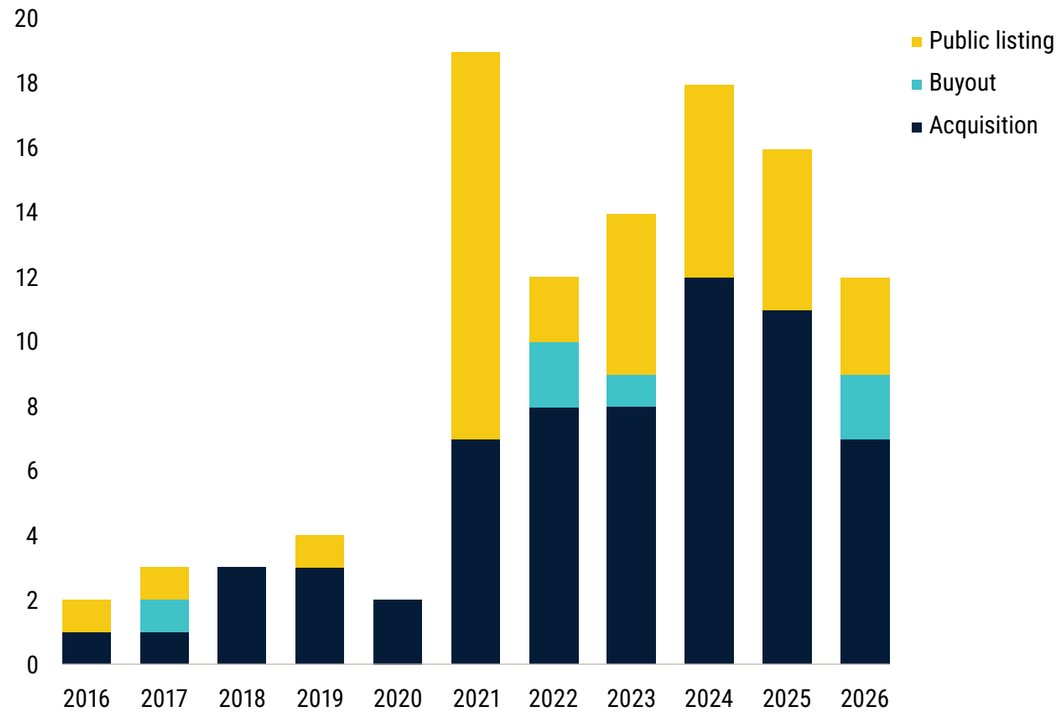
Source: PitchBook • Geography: Global • As of June 30, 2026

TTM space tech VC deal activity by segment



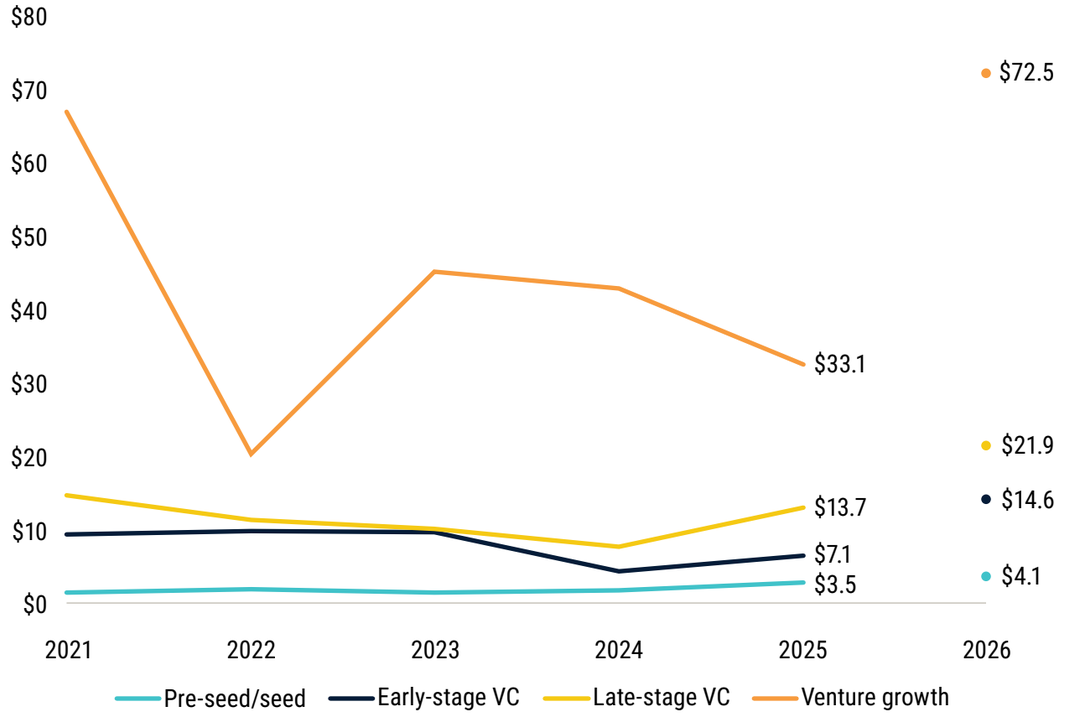
Source: PitchBook • Geography: Global • As of June 30, 2026

Space tech VC exit count by type



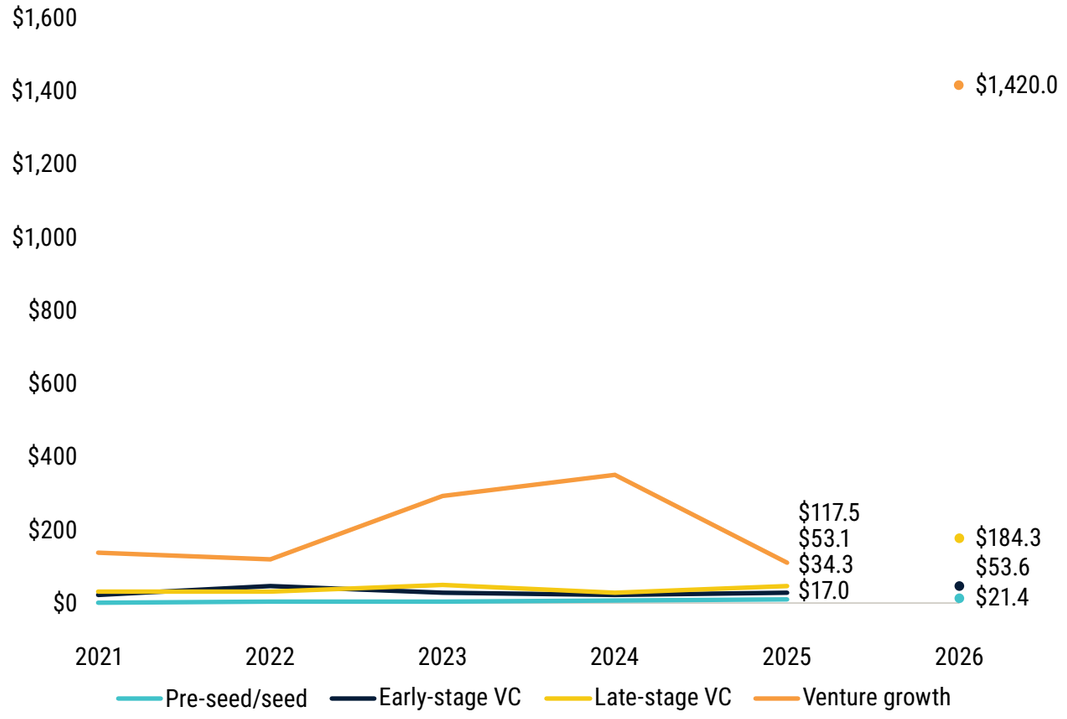
Source: PitchBook • Geography: Global • As of June 30, 2026

Median space tech VC deal value ($M) by stage



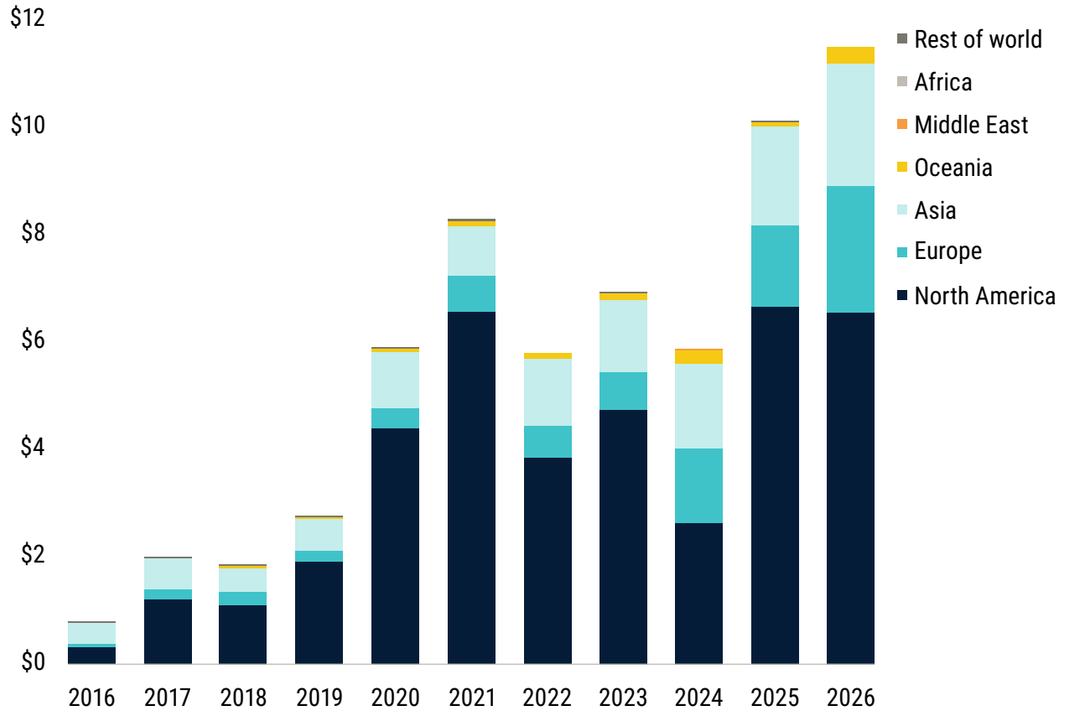
Source: PitchBook • Geography: Global • As of June 30, 2026

Median space tech VC pre-money valuation ($M) by stage



Source: PitchBook • Geography: Global • As of June 30, 2026

Space tech VC deal value ($B) by region



Source: PitchBook • Geography: Global • As of June 30, 2026

H1 2026 space tech heatmap by subsegment

Segment	Subsegment	TTM total deal value ($M)	TTM total deal count	YoY deal value growth	YoY deal count growth
Exploratory	Celestial resources	$43.1	5	-66.2%	-44.4%
	Interplanetary propulsion	$5.8	2	-67.0%	-33.3%
	Space habitation	$512.1	3	0.0%	0.0%
Orbital	Human spaceflight	$254.8	10	252.8%	0.0%
	In-space manufacturing	$568.4	15	275.9%	87.5%
	Satellites	$4,329.4	184	169.0%	41.5%
	Space debris & tracking	$207.6	18	437.9%	125.0%
	Space infrastructure	$1,452.1	39	36.3%	8.3%
Terrestrial	Commercial space launch	$3,580.9	85	94.9%	21.4%
	Geospatial intelligence	$2,512.9	60	-31.1%	-3.2%
	Positioning, navigation & timing	$537.4	11	126.9%	0.0%
	Satellite communications	$1,265.9	42	130.0%	20.0%

Source: PitchBook • Geography: Global • As of June 30, 2026

Funding reached $11.3 billion across 244 deals in H1, above full-year 2025's $10.1 billion. Deal count tells a different story: H1 annualizes to roughly 490 deals, up from 433 in 2025. The market wrote larger checks into later-stage companies without a matching lift in transaction volume.

Segment mix

Terrestrial remained the largest segment by value at 55.5%, though its lead narrowed from 59.7% in 2024. Orbital took 39.7% of the value and 58.6% of the deal count. The divergence is meaningful but moderate: Terrestrial companies raised larger checks, and orbital companies closed more deals.

Exploratory rose to 4.7% of value from about 1% in prior years, but the Vast Space round drove most of the increase. The segment does not yet show broad-based acceleration.

Stage migration

Capital kept migrating to the latest stages. Venture growth took 49.8% of H1's value, and late-stage VC 37.6%, or 87.4% together. Early-stage VC fell to 11.1% from 22.2% in 2024. Pre-seed/seed fell to about 1.5%.

The top-round list reinforces the shift. Series D, E, and F financings dominate. These companies need capital for factories, inventory, testing, launch reservations, and vertical integration. Late-stage concentration reflects industrial requirements as much as investor risk preference.

Space tech VC deal activity

Period	VC deal value ($B)	VC deal count
2020	$5.9	236
2021	$8.3	354
2022	$5.8	321
2023	$6.9	348
2024	$5.9	364
2025	$10.1	433
H1 2026	$11.3	244

Source: PitchBook • Geography: Global • As of June 30, 2026

Regional mix

Europe produced the clearest new geographic signal, hitting a series record of $2.4 billion and 21.1% of H1 value. Asia followed at $2.3 billion and 20.2%. North America still led at $6.3 billion, though its share fell to 56.1% from 65.9% in 2025 as Europe and Asia gained.

Europe's gain rests on large rounds for companies such as ICEYE and Isar Aerospace, as well as stronger sovereign demand. This is more than a geopolitical narrative. It now appears in both absolute value and market share.

Deal size and concentration

The median deal value reached $14.5 million in H1 2026, up from $7 million in 2025, and the average rose to $70.5 million from $37.8 million. The gap between median and average points to a right-skewed distribution, but no single round defined H1.

Private valuations should split more sharply by revenue quality. Funded production backlog, capacity reservations with deposits, and recurring service contracts should command premiums over studies, memorandums of understanding, and unexercised contract ceilings.

Most recent quarter

Q2 2026 repeated the value-versus-count pattern. Terrestrial led with $3.2 billion across 49 deals, orbital took $2.1 billion across 71 deals, and exploratory took $35.5 million across three deals.

Space tech VC deal activity by segment in H1 2026

Segment	Deal value ($B)	Deal value share	Deal count	Deal count share
Terrestrial	$6.3	55.5%	95	38.9%
Orbital	$4.5	39.7%	143	58.6%
Exploratory	$0.5	4.8%	6	2.5%

Source: PitchBook • Geography: Global • As of June 30, 2026

Note: The subsegment categories will not perfectly sum to the top-line numbers because some companies fall within multiple subsegments and are not counted twice in the overall space tech totals.

Share of space tech VC deal value by stage

Stage	2021	2024	2025	H1 2026
Pre-seed/seed	3.1%	4.2%	3.7%	1.5%
Early-stage VC	38.1%	22.2%	13.0%	11.1%
Late-stage VC	27.2%	43.7%	39.0%	37.6%
Venture growth	31.6%	29.9%	44.2%	49.8%

Source: PitchBook • Geography: Global • As of June 30, 2026

Subsegment activity

Commercial space launch, satellites, geospatial intelligence, and space infrastructure led H1 value. The terrestrial figures below are normalized to the $6.3 billion segment total, which removes overlap from companies tagged to multiple terrestrial subsegments. We do not sum raw subsegment tags as the segment total.

Commercial space launch reversed our prior assumption of a durable rotation away from launch. Satellites remained the largest activity center at 99 deals. Space infrastructure passed its full-year 2025 value during H1 2026. Human spaceflight stayed depressed despite the earlier narrative reframe.

Fewer seed rounds, bigger checks

Seed equity took about 1.5% of H1 value, a series low, while the median seed deal size hit about $4.1 million, a series high. Annualized seed value was roughly flat with 2025. That points to fewer larger, more selective rounds rather than a collapse in capital.

Government programs can also act as de facto first money. SDA HALO, Commercial Lunar Payload Services, NRO commercial solutions programs, and the European Space Agency Launcher Challenge fund technical progress before a company raises a large institutional seed round. That dynamic depresses seed equity share without necessarily reducing company formation.

Space tech VC deal value by region in H1 2026

Region	Deal value ($B)	Deal value share
North America	$6.3	56.1%
Europe	$2.4	21.1%
Asia	$2.3	20.2%
Oceania	$0.3	2.6%

Source: PitchBook • Geography: Global • As of June 30, 2026

Fewer seed rounds, bigger checks

Seed share is at a series low, while the median seed check size is at a series high. The market is selecting fewer companies and funding them more heavily. The SpaceX alumni thesis in the "Outlook" section describes one mechanism that could raise deal count. The weak SpaceX aftermarket is the main risk to that mechanism.

Capital formation beyond venture equity

Venture totals increasingly understate the capital entering space companies. PLD Space used a European Investment Bank loan, a source available because European policy now treats domestic launch capacity as strategic infrastructure rather than a commercial bet. Eutelsat OneWeb and Space42 drew on export-credit finance, which prices against contracted revenue and so becomes available only once a constellation has committed customers. Vast Space combined equity and debt, a structure that funds long-lead hardware without the dilution an all-equity round of the same size would require. Qatar Investment Authority and GIC supplied sovereign and strategic capital, bringing balance sheets that tolerate longer horizons than a 10-year fund structure can accommodate. Starlab Space used credit facilities, bridging the gap between milestone-based program payments and the working capital a station build consumes between them. Public equity opened another source once listings reopened, giving later-stage companies an alternative to private rounds and giving private investors a visible valuation mark to price against.

Nonequity capital follows de-risking. Lenders and export-credit agencies want contracted demand, qualified assets, or state-aligned programs, which reinforces late-stage concentration. It also introduces refinancing, covenant, and maturity risk that venture deal data never shows.

Space tech VC deal value and concentration metrics

Metric	2025	H1 2026
Median deal value ($M)	$7.0	$14.5
Average deal value ($M)	$37.8	$70.5
Largest deal share	25.5%	10.3%
Top three share	31.8%	24.4%
Top five share	36.9%	34.5%

Source: PitchBook • Geography: Global • As of June 30, 2026

Space tech VC deal activity by segment in Q2 2026

Segment	Deal value ($M)	Deal count
Terrestrial	$3,198.8	49
Orbital	$2,105.9	71
Exploratory	$35.5	3

Source: PitchBook • Geography: Global • As of June 30, 2026

Space tech VC deal activity by subsegment in H1 2026

Subsegment	Segment	Deal value ($M)	Deal count
Commercial space launch	Terrestrial	$3,236.0	46
Satellites	Orbital	$2,590.4	99
Geospatial intelligence	Terrestrial	$2,055.4	32
Space infrastructure	Orbital	$1,237.4	23
Satellite communications	Terrestrial	$882.2	16
Space habitation	Exploratory	$500.1	3

Source: PitchBook • Geography: Global • As of June 30, 2026

Space tech VC deal activity by subsegment in H1 2026 (continued)

Subsegment	Segment	Deal value ($M)	Deal count
Positioning, navigation & timing	Terrestrial	$520.4	7
In-space manufacturing	Orbital	$320.0	4
Human spaceflight	Orbital	$204.8	7
Space debris & tracking	Orbital	$129.6	9
Celestial resources	Exploratory	$30.2	2
Interplanetary propulsion	Exploratory	$5.8	3

Source: PitchBook • Geography: Global • As of June 30, 2026

References

1: "Amazon Leo Mission Updates: 375+ Satellites Now in Orbit After Successful Atlas V Launch," Amazon, Amazon Staff, July 2, 2026.

2: "Space Development Agency Makes Awards to Build 72 Tracking Layer Satellites for Tranche 3," Space Development Agency, December 19, 2025.

3: "Space Development Agency Awards $3.5 Billion in Contracts for Missile-Tracking Satellites," SpaceNews, Sandra Erwin, December 19, 2025.

4: "Space Force Awards Up to $3.2 Billion for Golden Dome Interceptor Prototypes," SpaceNews, April 24, 2026.

5: "Impulse Space, Relativity Join NSSL Phase 3 Lane 1 Contract," Aviation Week, July 9, 2026.

6: "2025 Orbital Launch Attempts by Country," Payload, Douglas Gorman, January 6, 2026.

7: "SpaceX Shatters Its Rocket Launch Record Yet Again — 165 Orbital Flights in 2025," Space.com, Mike Wall, December 31, 2025.

8: "SpaceX, China Drive New Record for Orbital Launches in 2025," SpaceNews, Jeff Foust, January 3, 2026.

9: "SpaceX Increases Falcon 9 Launch Prices to $74M — Rideshare Now $7,000/kg," SatBase, February 28, 2026.

10: "Apex — Productized Satellite Platforms," Apex, n.d., accessed August 11, 2026.

11: "K2 Space Raises $250M to Scale Mega Class High Power Satellites," SpaceDaily, Clarence Oxford, December 14, 2025.

12: "Iceye Raises 1 Billion Euros to Expand SAR Satellite Systems," SpaceNews, June 9, 2026.

13: "SpaceX, China Drive New Record for Orbital Launches in 2025," SpaceNews, Jeff Foust, January 3, 2026.

14: "SpaceX Stock Sinks Below $135 IPO Price for the First Time," CNBC, July 15, 2026.

PitchBook provides actionable insights across the global capital markets.

Additional research:

Moonshot: The Next Stage of the Lunar Space Economy

Download the report here

SpaceX Update: What the IPO Reveals and What to Watch For Next

Download the report here

PitchBook Insights is an online compendium of in-depth data, news, analysis, and perspectives that shape the private capital markets.

PitchBook subscribers enjoy exclusive access to a comprehensive suite of private market insights, including proprietary research, news, data, tools, and more on the PitchBook Platform.

Nizar Tarhuni
Executive Vice President of Research and Market Intelligence

Paul Condra
Global Head of Private Markets Research

James Ulan
Director of Emerging Technology Research

Report created by:

Ali Javaheri
Senior Research Analyst

Caleb Wilkins
Data Analyst

Jenna O'Malley
Senior Graphic Designer

Learn more about PitchBook's Institutional Research team.

Click here for PitchBook's report methodologies.