

FOUNDER & MANAGING PARTNER
VALOR VENTURES · ATLANTA

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Lisa Calhoun

Founder & Managing Partner, Valor Ventures

Ten years pioneering institutional AI venture in the American South.

In 2016, Lisa Calhoun built the first woman-led institutional venture firm in the US South. In 2017, she made her first AI investment — Funding U — before most of the market used the word. A decade and three funds later, she is one of the most active investors backing applied AI in the fastest-growing, most underpriced market in America.

WHY BOOK LISA

- A leading investor and authority on applied AI — founder of the South's first woman-led institutional venture firm (2016), a seed and pre-seed firm; a first-round investor in FinQuery, an Atlanta exit last year.
- Her counter-narrative: as LP dollars retreat to value (the top 30 funds took ~75% of 2024 VC fundraising), Lisa makes the case for true risk capital in the growth-on South — the fastest-growing US region: ~35% of US GDP, +4.3%/yr vs 3.6% nationally, 2.7M net domestic movers since 2020.
- Kauffman Fellow and President of Class 23; Atlanta Investor of the Year; Business Insider Top 30 US women seed investors. Stages include NASDAQ, SuperReturn, KPMG, the Kauffman Leadership Summit, WPO, and Venture Atlanta.

AI INVESTING SNAPSHOT

- 30+ AI and AI-driven B2B software companies across three funds — investing in AI since 2017.
- First AI investment — Funding U (2017): AI-driven student lending. Her first AI bet, made before AI was a category.
- 2025–26 pace, all Valor-led first institutional rounds: EasyAudit (agentic compliance), Evrim (AI economic intelligence for defense & finance), RueData (AI fleet & tire intelligence), Visalaw.AI (AI for immigration law).
- Practices what she funds: Valor runs on Vic, its proprietary AI platform. She doesn't just fund AI — her firm operates on it.

WHAT SHE TALKS ABOUT

- The great retreat to value — and the case for a return to true risk capital in the growth-on, risk-on South.
- Why the US South — a third of US GDP, 36% of the Fortune 500, the fastest-growing US region — is the real customer for applied AI.
- The new Southern wealth: industrial, energy, and agricultural family offices entering AI venture for the first time.
- Ten years early: the AI theses that looked contrarian in 2017 and obvious now — and running an AI-native fund where no one else was looking.

Elevate venture capital with Valor.

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