



ASSOCIATED INDUSTRIES OF FLORIDA  
SERVICE CORPORATION

SPACE FLORIDA



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### Enclosure

[Connex Florida Why Join + FAQs 04.2020](#)

## **AIF in Partnership with Space Florida & FloridaMakes Accelerates Critical Connections Between Florida Manufacturers & Businesses During COVID-19 Pandemic**

**Tallahassee, Fla.** – The Associated Industries of Florida (AIF) in partnership with Space Florida and FloridaMakes today announced the deployment of an online database for Florida’s small to large manufacturers to engage in the marketplace. The online database, [Connex Florida](#), started as a disaster risk mitigation effort in the aftermath of Hurricane Irma and is proving to be a critical tool to streamline connections between Florida manufacturers and businesses in need of their products during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Recognizing a critical need for Florida businesses during the unforeseen COVID-19 pandemic, this partnership between AIF, Space Florida and FloridaMakes will allow more than 20,000 Florida manufacturers to connect with public/private organizations through a platform for this essential exchange,” said AIF President and CEO Tom Feeny. “As Florida’s official affiliate of the National Association of Manufacturers, we thought this was the best way we could do our part in helping manufacturers across the Sunshine State have the opportunity to compete for business by connecting them through this database to other Florida businesses in need of their much-needed materials and supplies.”

In Florida, manufacturers are identified as essential critical infrastructure who bear a unique responsibility during a crisis to continue operations that, in turn, contribute to overall sustainability of Florida’s communities. As such, AIF, Space Florida and FloridaMakes have begun compiling a database on industrial assets, capabilities and capacities that can be drawn upon at this time of critical demand.

“Space Florida is delighted to offer its support to mature the industrial base of Florida for a robust recovery, and to better equip our supply chain to respond crisply to future crises,” said Space Florida President and CEO Frank DiBello. “This capability will be a major competitive advantage for Florida.”

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“We are proud of our partnership with AIF and Space Florida on the Connex Florida database,” said FloridaMakes CEO Kevin Carr. “It is imperative that we have a functioning industrial base as we respond to the COVID-19 emergency, including innovative solutions to help our supply chain here in Florida and across the nation. Together, all three organizations represent a cross-section of manufacturers of all sizes across the state for which this tool is tailored to meet their needs by collecting their capabilities and capacities to efficiently connect them to businesses in need of their supplies.”

Connex Florida is a statewide manufacturing supply chain, workforce and R&D connection solution offered free of charge to manufacturers, educational institutions, and those performing manufacturing R&D in Florida. To request access to the platform visit [Florida.MfgConnex.com](https://Florida.MfgConnex.com), or for more information view [PDF](#) or contact [Connex@FloridaMakes.com](mailto:Connex@FloridaMakes.com).

Connex Florida is also designed to be interoperable with the Manufacturers Marketplace that was developed by AIF and the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), as well as the COVID-19 Response Tool. All of these databases are available at no cost during the pandemic to help streamline critical connections within the supply chain.

The COVID-19 Response Tool is accessible both locally and nationally and searchable by government and industries to aid in streamlining critical connections between manufacturers/suppliers and organizations seeking to purchase much-needed materials and products, such as masks, personal protective equipment (PPE), medical devices and component parts. Suppliers are being added daily. To access the COVID-19 Response Tool visit [COVID-19.ManufacturersMarketplace.US](https://COVID-19.ManufacturersMarketplace.US).

The Manufacturers Marketplace is the U.S. supply chain connection solution built in partnership with NAM, manufacturers from across the country, and many other leading state and national manufacturing organizations. If you are a manufacturer, you can register at [ManufacturersMarketplace.US](https://ManufacturersMarketplace.US) and be granted free access during the COVID-19 pandemic by emailing [Response@ManufacturersMarketplace.US](mailto:Response@ManufacturersMarketplace.US).

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### **About AIF**

Known as “The Voice of Florida Business” in the Sunshine State, Associated Industries of Florida (AIF) has represented the principles of prosperity and free enterprise before the three branches of state government since 1920. A voluntary association of diversified businesses, AIF was created to foster an economic climate in Florida conducive to the growth, development, and welfare of industry and business and the people of the state. For more information on AIF, please visit [AIF.com](https://AIF.com) and follow [@VoiceofFLBiz](https://twitter.com/VoiceofFLBiz).

### **About Space Florida**

Space Florida was created to strengthen Florida’s position as the global leader in aerospace research, investment, exploration and commerce. As Florida’s aerospace and spaceport development authority, we are committed to attracting and expanding the next generation of space industry businesses. With its highly trained workforce, proven infrastructure and unparalleled record of achievement, Florida is the ideal location for aerospace businesses to thrive – and Space Florida is the perfect partner to help them succeed. For more information on Space Florida, please visit [Spaceflorida.gov](https://Spaceflorida.gov) and follow [@SpaceFlorida](https://twitter.com/SpaceFlorida).

**About FloridaMakes**

FloridaMakes is a statewide, industry-led, public-private partnership operated by an alliance of Florida's regional manufacturers associations with the sole mission of strengthening and advancing Florida's economy by improving the competitiveness, productivity and technological performance of its manufacturing sector, with an emphasis on small- and medium-sized firms. It accomplishes this by providing services focused on three principle value streams: technology adoption, talent development, and business growth. As a National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP), an agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce, approved Center, FloridaMakes is the official representative of the MEP National Network in the State of Florida. For more information about FloridaMakes, please visit [FloridaMakes.com](http://FloridaMakes.com) and follow [@FloridaMakes](https://twitter.com/FloridaMakes).

