University Endowments Eye More Private Equity, Venture Capital and Crypto

Expect more college and university endowments to invest in private equity and venture capital moving forward. That was one takeaway from a conversation with leaders of TIFF Investment Management, a firm that advises nonprofit organizations, including higher-education institutions.

The schools that saw the largest returns in fiscal 2021, a record year for university endowments, profited most from private equity and venture funds, said Kane Brenan, TIFF's CEO, and Jess Portis, head of member portfolio management and services. That's inspiring more college endowments to find ways to get a piece of the action. Private equity and venture capital accounted for just 2.3% of asset allocation in endowments between $25 million and $50 million, according to the National Association of College and University Business Officers-TIAA 2020 "Study of Endowments." Meanwhile, endowments over $1 billion relied on those alternative investments for a quarter of their asset allocations.

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TIFF Investment Management

April 26, 2022

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