

# Missions & Visions

# MORRISON FOERSTER



Ori Solomon

A partner in the corporate department and co-chair of the emerging companies and venture capital practice, Ori Solomon joined San Francisco-based Morrison & Foerster when it opened a Boston office earlier this year. Solomon, who represents venture capital funds in a range of transactions and provides general corporate representation to a wide variety of companies, recently sat down with Lawyers Weekly to discuss the last few “whirlwind” months.

**Q: Morrison & Foerster recently established an office in Boston, which you helped open earlier this year. What drew you to the firm?**

**A:** It was a natural fit for me to come here. MoFo is an international law firm with a leading presence in all the areas in which I practice. The firm offered a really strong platform for my work with life sciences and technology companies, as well as venture capital funds and emerging companies.

**Q: How is the firm’s Boston office doing today?**

**A:** In a word, fantastic. It’s hard to believe it has already been eight months. The Boston office is really a natural extension of all the firm’s practice groups across the other offices and has effortlessly and seamlessly integrated with the rest

of the firm. All of the firm’s resources have been made available in a manner that allowed me to quickly transition and take advantage of the amazing infrastructure at MoFo.

**Q: I understand you relocated to Boston from New York about eight years ago. How has the startup scene evolved since then?**

**A:** Boston has always been a hotbed for innovation and a home to some of the brightest minds. We don’t have to look very far for talent, with Harvard, MIT and all the other schools in the area. Numerous innovative businesses have started here and there is a strong capital flow into the area.

The state and local governments

**A:** The activity has been truly overwhelming. In 2018, U.S. VC activity crossed \$100 billion for the first time since 2000 and surpassed the all-time high. We are on pace to meet or exceed those numbers for 2019, depending on how the fourth quarter plays out. I have a lot of deals that started percolating in late August, so the fourth quarter is shaping up to be extremely active. And Boston is right in the middle of it all.

**Q: What do you predict is on the horizon for Boston in this space?**

**A:** Things are going to continue to thrive, particularly in the two areas where MoFo is strongest: life sciences and technology. We are going to see continued growth

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have also done a lot of very smart things from a policy perspective over the last 10 to 15 years that have incentivized companies to start here, move here or expand in the area, which has created a tremendous amount of demand for legal services that MoFo can provide.

**Q: How does Boston’s tech scene compare to other hotspots today?**

**A:** There is talk about up-and-coming areas, including Austin, Portland and Seattle, but Boston is a special place. The size of the ecosystem is so much greater here with all of the universities and hospitals, which is nearly impossible to replicate in other locations. None of the other hotspots have the quantity or density of industry participants that Boston has today.

**Q: Last year, venture capital funding in the United States reached the highest levels since the dot-com boom. What’s the activity like in Boston?**

across those industries, with more activity and a compounding of the network effect with more and more established players in the area.

What happens when a startup is acquired is that the scientific founders, entrepreneurs and management teams find all sorts of other interesting ideas, launch new businesses and re-invest, starting the cycle over again. There is nothing I love more than speaking to an early stage company and helping them navigate through the process, from the rough idea of a business plan to the formation of an entity to getting funding and then building every aspect of the business. We expect to continue to be very busy here in Boston.

BOSTON LOCATION

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