



FOUNDERS
FORUM
GLOBAL



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 2024



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Christel Heydemann
(Orange Group)



Sean Doyle (British Airways)
& Martin Migoya (Globant)



Ai-Da, the world's first
robot artist & her creator,
Aidan Meller.



INTRODUCTION

Our 19th edition of Founders Forum Global brought together the very best in global tech, including 450 trailblazing founders – 220 of whom have founded unicorn companies – 120 top CEOs, and 130 world-class VCs representing \$1.5 trillion AUM.

In a year when more than half the world’s population heads to the election polls, tech visionaries – representing 40 countries and over 60 industries – made new connections, discovered fresh ideas, and shared their insider insights on topics ranging from geopolitics and AI sovereignty to neurodiversity, web3, and sustainable food.

We heard founders share their stories of hyper-growth, brand building, and customer obsession. We learned about new breakthroughs in quantum, life-saving biotech solutions, and how to go from zero to 100 million subscribers on YouTube.

Plus, tech’s brightest entrepreneurial minds discussed how rapid advancements in AI are accelerating drug discovery, elevating spiritual intelligence, and transforming industries from media and music to healthcare and climate tech.

What are the world’s biggest tech trends to watch right now? Over 60+ interactive speaker sessions, five key themes emerged:

Kristen Segerstrale (Super Evil Megacorp), Shuo Wang (Deel), Hanno Renner (Personio), Juan Urdiales (Job&Talent) & Husayn Kassai (Quench.ai)

1
A New Frontier
Chatbots to Robots.

2
Media Storm
Truth, Creativity & Big Tech Goes to Hollywood.

3
Medicine & Moonshots
AI Drug Discovery & Quantum at Scale.

4
Changing Societies, Changing Worlds
From VC Investment to Neurodiversity.

5
Climate, Food & Our Future
Sharing Food & Pumping Carbon.

And there’s more! On top of six stages packed full of content – plus more signature FF sessions and showcases at our main day forum – we hosted flagship events across FF week, including our Chair and CEO Breakfast, Founders Angels Forum, FF Critical Industries, and our new Founders Longevity Forum, connecting best-in-class longevity tech founders with investors to supercharge innovation in this rapidly-expanding space.

Read on to scoop all the top insights

Alex Wood Morton (Fortune) & Nirav Tolia (Nextdoor)



Taylor Francis (Watershed) & Lance Ugglä (BeyondNetZero)



1 KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM FOUNDERS FORUM GLOBAL 2024



Lyor Cohen
[Youtube Music]



Assaf Rappaport
[Wiz]



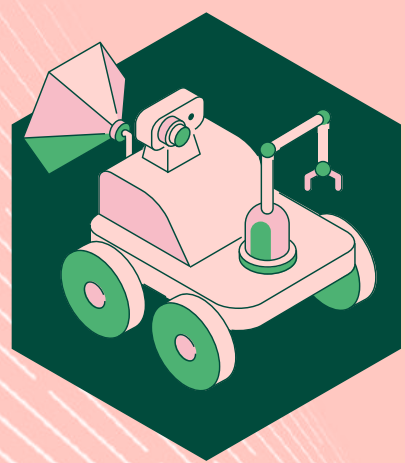
Shuo Wang
[Deel]



Left: Hemant Taneja
(General Catalyst)



Right: Arthur Mensch (Mistral AI)
& Alex Kendall (Wayve)



A NEW FRONTIER

Left: Poppy Gustafsson
(Darktrace) & Anne
Keast-Butler (GCHQ)



Right: May Habib
(Writer AI)



“Embodied AI is quickly becoming the next frontier of the AI space.”



Alex Kendall
Wayve



Michael Intrator
(Coreweave)

“This is a time of extraordinary change. There will be winners and losers, and leadership will play a critical role.”



Karim Beguir
Instadeep



Chatbots to Robots

We’re shifting from cognitive to embodied AI; from chatbots to robots. In this new era, robots, which understand the world around them and the implications of their decisions for themselves, will be the most prevalent way we interact with AI. Autonomous driving, where the hardware already exists, will be the first, large-scale deployment of embodied AI. Alex Kendall’s Wayve raised \$1.05b in May in the biggest European AI investment to date. Wayve’s AI Driver software equips vehicles with advanced human-like driving capabilities, adapting to its environment and explaining its actions in real-time.

To succeed, companies like Wayve must turn algorithmic advantage into data and distribution advantage. Capturing diverse and unique data points through partnerships, and having the flexible architecture to learn from various sources, will unlock scale. Eventually, making robotics possible at scale is going to have a larger impact on our lives than the smartphone, and completely change the way society interacts.

As we transition to real AI actors, trust and predictability will be key. Self-driving cars are safer than human drivers, but we hold them to a higher standard. We need to ground AI reasoning in facts, add explainability through features like in-context references, and keep humans in the loop.



Arise the Developers!

We’ve seen thousands of startups building generative AI applications on top of managed services, but the consequence is that everything looks the same. To differentiate and harness AI’s power across the entire economy, developers must be given greater independence and flexible tools and architectures to pour their own data and assets into specialised AI models.

Arthur Mensch’s Mistral AI, which raised €600m at a €6b valuation in June, builds customisable generative AI models for developers and businesses. Compared with Open AI, many of Mistral’s AI models are open-source. The goal is to make frontier AI ubiquitous and provide tailor-made AI to anyone that needs it. For companies, specialised AI models that are trained on their own data and create value in specific application areas bring huge advantages over larger, generalist models, and multimodal AI, where various data types – image, text, speech, and numerical data – are combined with multiple intelligence processing algorithms, will bring even higher performance.

“To unleash the power of AI across the entire economy, we need to empower developers to customise foundational models.”



Arthur Mensch
Mistral AI

Ali Niknam
(bung)





AI in Enterprise

To successfully implement generative AI, make it a strategic priority at executive level, assign a dedicated team, move quickly, test with users, and think about your competitive advantage. Some companies are even employing shadow assistants for their CEOs and executives who suggest AI interventions throughout the day.

The challenge is in systematising contextual business data trapped in silos and in employees' heads. First, understand what data you actually have and make sure it's well tagged. Then, combine organisational change with AI adoption programmes and foster both a top-down and bottom-up approach to get employees onside. AI isn't about replacing employees; it's about making them 10× more effective at what they do. Think about AI transformation as adding digital agents who work alongside your typical employees, boost productivity, and augment their work.

“We use AI to analyse millions of cyber incidents every day. There's no way we could continue to run our operations without it.”



Christel Heydemann
Orange



AI in Action

According to [The Tech Nation Report 2024](#), one in two UK tech companies are using AI to improve their existing product offering, while one in three have launched entirely new products. Across the world, AI is improving efficiency, disrupting industries, and reducing barriers for companies to start and scale. In healthcare, Johannes Schildt's [Kry](#) (Livi in the UK and France) is auto-generating medical notes, matching patients with clinicians, and removing administrative tasks so doctors spend more time with patients. Kry has raised more than \$700m and delivered 10 million appointments across Europe.

In banking, fintech startups are using AI for personalised financial advice, transaction monitoring, credit underwriting, and fraud detection. In aerospace, airlines are curating booking flows and merchandising, and leveraging predictive analytics to proactively replace parts before they fail. In education, Husayn Kassai's [Quench.ai](#) turns educational resources and content into an AI copilot to deliver personalised learning experiences. Organisations get access to unique insights about user knowledge gaps from conversational analytics to transform their content strategies.



Michael Acton Smith (Calm)
& Deepak Chopra
(The Chopra Foundation)

“Our mission is to empower the world to design and we see AI as a turbo-boost for that.”



Cameron Adams
Canva

Even in the realm of spiritual health, Deepak Chopra believes AI can serve as a health coach, research assistant, and guru by aggregating wisdom. Spiritual intelligence involves connecting with one's fundamental awareness beyond the conditioned, thinking mind. AI, he says, can help guide people towards spiritual intelligence through reflective inquiry and mindful awareness. The Chopra Foundation's [Never Alone](#) platform combines web3 technology, curated content, scientific research, and an AI chatbot to support people with their mental health 24/7.



Mike Fries (Liberty Global),
Christel Heydemann
(Orange) & John Thornhill
(Financial Times)

“Cyber security isn’t just a tech solution; it’s also about people, communities, and collaboration.”



Poppy Gustafsson
Darktrace



Cyber Wars

The global cyber security market is projected to reach \$425b in 2030. A decade ago, the only cyber security company with a market cap of more than \$10b was Check Point. Today, CrowdStrike and Palo Alto Networks are worth more than \$90b. In April, Darktrace announced a \$5.3b takeover by US private equity firm, Thoma Bravo. The industry has matured from reactive detection to proactive security, and geopolitical risks, the shift to cloud, and AI are driving booming demand.

Cybersecurity is a natural home for AI, given its ability to analyse huge swathes of data, spot anomalies, and make decisions fast. But AI is also being used by criminal enterprises, with their own product, marketing, and sales teams, to scale ransomware-as-a-service and unleash AI-powered email phishing campaigns that are now more prevalent and effective than ever before. Cybersecurity companies are using AI to fight AI, but bringing communities together, knowledge sharing, and building partnerships across private and public sectors is just as important.

Anne Keast-Butler
(GCHQ)



Shardul Shah (Index) &
Merav Bahat (Dazz)



George Lee (Goldman Sachs), May
Habib (Writer AI), Tey Bannerman
(McKinsey & Company) &
Rana Yared (Balderton)

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McKinsey
& Company

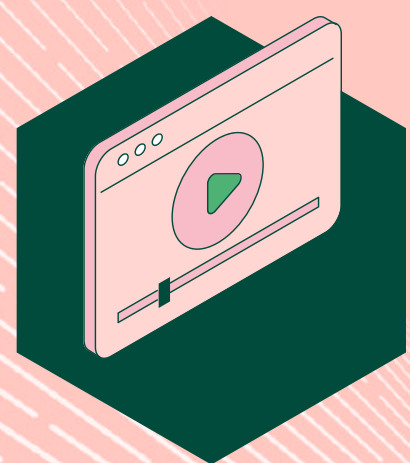


Left: Tom Graham
(Metaphysic) &
Matthew Vaughn (MARV)

Right: Caggie Dunlop
(Saturn Returns) &
Lilly Sabri (LeanwithLilly)



Clive Myrie (BBC), Tim Davie (BBC),
Dame Carolyn McCall (ITV) &
Kevin Mayer (Candle Media)



MEDIA STORM

Big Tech Goes To Hollywood

3.7 million new videos are uploaded to YouTube each day; 500 hours of video are uploaded each minute. As AI dramatically lowers the cost of content creation, young filmmakers will be able to produce feature film quality content for as little as \$10k. We'll see more movies produced for smaller, more targeted audiences. Fuelled by a new generation of creators on social media, we'll then see the once separate worlds of Hollywood and Big Tech converge. Eventually, Big Tech will consume all of entertainment – they've got the audience and channels; they just need the magic of storytelling.

“Hollywood’s time is up! Now it's time for the youth to take over and create new brands and IP.”



Matthew Vaughn
MARV

Joe Wicks
(The Body Coach)



Lyor Cohen (Youtube Music)
& Jin Jin (Concord/
Jinsing Music)



Amanda Slavin (LearningFREQUENCY), Aaron Etingen
(Global University Systems), Yat Siu (Animoca Brands),
Dr Stefan von Holtzbrinck (Holtzbrinck Publishing
Group) & Qudus Pativada (ASI)

AI + Creativity

AI is turbocharging creativity and disrupting traditional media. Tom Graham's Metaphysic is pioneering AI that generates realistic speech and synchronises lip movements for dubbing, avatar animation, and video conferencing. Creators can synthesise photorealistic faces and integrate them into a camera feed live and in post-production – with just a photo, you can create a movie star.

Mati Staniszewski's Eleven Labs converts text into natural AI voices instantly in any language. He's working with media organisations to turn news articles into audio and with publishers to narrate books with famous AI voices. Matthieu Rouif's Photoroom enables anyone to create studio-quality photos on an iPhone. Photoroom raised \$43m at a \$500m valuation in February.

Soon, actors in movies will be filmed for a few minutes before the rest is done by AI, and VR will turn audiences in cinemas into active participants. In video games, users will test, feedback, and remix games on the fly, fundamentally changing the product development process. As AI democratises entertainment, IP, image rights, and rules to protect individuals will be critical. In the same way we control our bodies in the physical world, we should retain control over the photo-realistic versions of ourselves in the digital realm.

"Creating content with AI is cheaper, faster, and definitely the future."



Tom Graham
Metaphysic

James Caan
(Hamilton Bradshaw Group)
& Grace Beverley (TALA)



Timothy Armoo (Fanbytes) &
Roham Gharegozlou (Dapper Labs), Lilly
Sabri (LeanwithLilly) & Jordan
Schwarzenberger (Arcade Media)



Consumers in Control

Authority in the media industry has shifted from the producers to the distributors to the consumers. In response, traditional media have embraced new technologies, invested in data, transformed their organisations, and tapped into streaming and TikTok to make sure they reach their target audiences and know how to serve them. To survive, they need to focus on their points of difference, be ruthless and clear about where to deploy capital, look for beneficial partnerships, and rewire the brains of corporate executives to focus on startup-style growth.

For digital influencers too, reaching new audiences and being authentic is key. The biggest opportunity for the biggest creators is to diversify their revenue and develop IP that can turn into brands (think PRIME for Logan Paul and KSI). At the same time, we're also seeing brands become creators to get closer to their customers. Starbucks launched Starbucks Studios in June to create original entertainment content that sparks conversations and deepens connections with its audience.



Tim Davie
(BBC)



Dame Carolyn
McCall (ITV)

Still, the human desire to gather in-person remains strong. Gen Z go to live events to meet and connect with new people and they say their trust in a brand increases following an in-person interaction. Live events are tapping into VR to become increasingly immersive and interactive. From exhibitions that bring you inside a Van Gogh painting to ‘kidult’ experiences engaging both children and adults, attendees are shifting from passive observers to part of the show. But the energy of live events is not (yet) transferrable to a fully digital environment.

Trust & Truth

Only 30% of the world has a free and fair press. In an age of AI-generated content, manipulation, and fake news, trusted media brands are becoming more important than ever. The BBC launched BBC InDepth to provide deeper analysis of world issues and BBC Verify to fact-check, verify video, counter disinformation, analyse data, and explain complex stories. The next step is to create special forces within the organisation and put more resources into pre-verification earlier in the production cycle.

Media organisations are partnering with AI startups on data analysis, dubbing, and remote editing, but they’re a long way off from selling their content catalogues to generative AI firms. Hallucination is a significant risk. For AI to be trustworthy, it can’t just pattern match and predict likely words; it needs to develop true understanding of the information it processes, be self-aware to catch its own errors, and reflect on whether the answer it’s giving is reasonable. AI might write Wikipedia entries one day, but we’re not there yet.

“Access to knowledge is hugely empowering for democracy. If you can build an AI system that people can trust, then we’re on track to helping people make better decisions.”

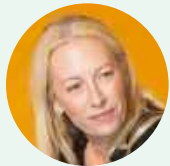


Jimmy Wales
Wikipedia

URL vs IRL

Web3 companies are already hosting immersive virtual events with thousands of people and attracting huge, engaged communities on the chain. Blockchain game, Notcoin, reached over 30 million users on Telegram in just two months. Once web3 applications get onto mobile devices, improve their UX, and involve major brands, we’ll see more people tapping into web3 communities.

“Young people have found communities online, and now they want to take that into the real world.”



Julia Hartz
Eventbrite

Nicolas Cary
(Blockchain.com)





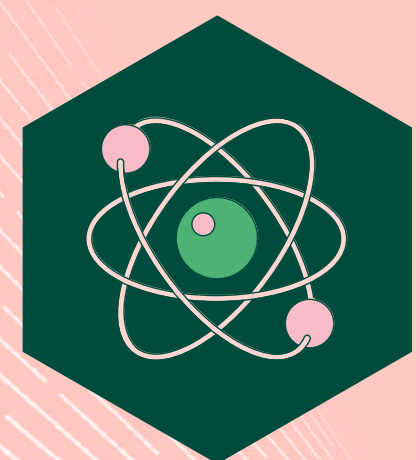
Left: Dr David Agus
(Ellison Institute of Technology)



Right: Martin Migoya (Globant) &
Sean Doyle (British Airways)



Lord Nick Markham (Cignpost
Diagnostics & ExpressTest), Thomas
Clozel (Owkin) & Lara Lewington
(BBC)



MEDICINE & MOONSHOTS



Open data collection can also draw vital insights from the real-life experiences of patients. It was analysis of large data sets from post-mortem brain samples of people with and without Alzheimer’s disease which revealed evidence that viruses, particularly herpesviruses, may play a role in Alzheimer’s disease biology. More recently, data collected on the impact of the covid vaccine in the US led to FDA approval for vaccinations for pregnant and breastfeeding women.

Katherine Ryder (Maven Clinic) & Tania Boler (Elvie)



Tanay Tandon (Commure) & Hemant Taneja (General Catalyst)

"By scaling moonshots, we can become co-creators of the future, rather than victims."



Anousheh Ansari
XPRIZE

"AI will be to biology what calculus was to physics. It has the potential to be foundational and allow us to understand and create something that is truly predictive."



Daphne Koller
Insitro



Dr. Data

Our current health data is siloed and difficult to access. With AI, we can turn medical records into structured data sets and make healthcare more effective and tailored to each individual. Data is critical in preventative care; wearables, tracking, and AI-powered health coaches. And everyone should own their own health data in a portable, shareable format, like a QR code.

Martin Varsavsky (Overture/Prelude Fertility), May Habib (Writer AI), Mudassir Sheikh (Careem) & Pierre-François Thaler (EcoVadis)



Drug Discovery + AI

Daphne Koller’s Insitro is building a different kind of drug company using AI. Through the power of machine learning and data at scale, Insitro integrates in vitro cellular data produced in the lab with human clinical data to decode the complexities of biology and unlock new medicines covering neuroscience, oncology, and metabolism.

Many healthcare treatments still follow a one-size-fits-all approach. With AI in drug discovery, scientists can understand precise disease subtypes and can unlock precision therapeutics that tackle the underlying biology of specific patient populations. Still, testing for precision medicine and scaling up treatments to the point of care takes time and is expensive. Collaboration between big pharma, biotech, and regulators will be critical.

Naveen Jain
(Viome)



XPRIZE was created to commercialise space activities and is now applying the same concept across healthcare, energy, deeptech, and climate tech, with seven active competitions and three \$100m+ prizes. 895 patents have been filed by competing teams in more than 173 countries. XPRIZE taps into its brain trusts – groups of global experts with domain expertise – to identify critical problems to focus on, barriers to overcome, and policy changes needed to create tangible roadmaps for the future.

Charles Gorintin
(Alan)



Fuelling Moonshots

To create a company that can change the world, ask the right questions, challenge assumptions, and focus on solving big problems with radical solutions. Timing is important and the path to success is paved with failure. Embrace it, learn from it, and move on quickly. The faster you can identify what doesn't work, the sooner you'll find what does. The recipe for a \$100 billion company is to help 1 billion people live better lives – focus relentlessly on improving people's lives and the money will follow.

Guy Podjarny
(Snyk)





Quantum Revolution

The global market for quantum technology could reach \$173b by 2040, with breakthroughs in quantum computing, communication, and sensing set to transform the way we understand the world around us. In January, Ilyas Khan's Quantinuum raised \$300m at a \$5b valuation to transform quantum computing from theoretical to commercial. In April, Jeremy O'Brien's PsiQuantum secured \$617m from the Australian Government to build the world's first commercially viable quantum computer.

The quantum world is shifting towards more predictable timelines to achieve impactful use cases and scale, ripening the case for VC investment. In the meantime, quantum startups are taking a multi-pronged approach to fundraising, tapping into traditional VCs as well as larger institutional investors, sovereign wealth funds, and government funding.

A major barrier to faster progress is talent – McKinsey & Company estimates that less than half of quantum jobs will be filled by 2025.

“Any government intervention or national strategy needs to be focused on error-corrected, utility scale, quantum computing.”



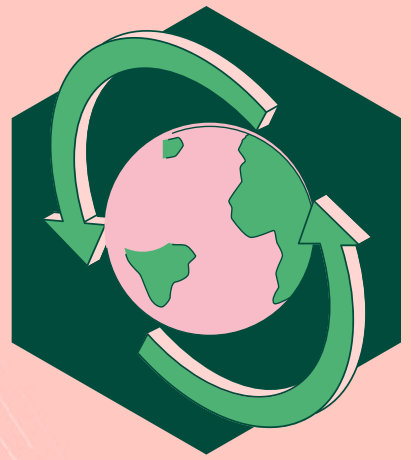
Jeremy O'Brien
PsiQuantum

Thomas Clozel
[Owkin]



Sebastian Weidt (Universal Quantum),
Jeremy O'Brien (PsiQuantum), Andrew Griffith
(UK Government), Carmen Palacios-Berraquero
(Nu Quantum) & Ilyas Khan (Quantinuum)





CHANGING SOCIETIES, CHANGING WORLDS

Julia Hoggett (London Stock
Exchange) & Taavet Hinrikus
(Plural/Wise)



Euan Blair (Multiverse) &
Noel Quinn (HSBC)



Bernard Liautaud (Balderton), Nicole Quinn (Lightspeed Venture Partners), Stephen Nundy (Lakestar), Hermann Hauser (Amadeus Capital Partners) & Noor Sweid (Global Ventures)



European VC Investment

European venture capital firms are achieving stronger returns and prioritising impact. Between 2018 and 2022, net annual returns for European VCs hit 31% compared with 25% in the US. Of the €53b in venture capital investment raised by European tech startups in 2023, a third was raised by positive impact startups that directly address one or more of the UN SDGs.

There's still a lack of mega-rounds compared with the US, but European AI startups are raising big sums even at an early stage. VCs are backing both AI-enabled startups and AI-native startups disrupting entire industries, but they're cautious about hype and FOMO when making AI investment decisions. VCs also see big potential in emerging markets with infrastructure needs and greenfield opportunities for disruptive AI plays in areas like healthtech, agtech, and supply chains.

“European venture capital is now producing better average returns than the US.”



Hermann Hauser
Amadeus Capital Partners

Total European IPO issuance fell by more than a third in 2023, and VCs need to get creative to find alternative routes to liquidity for LPs. Some are experimenting with continuation funds to allow LPs to sell their assets to new buyers or roll their investments into a new fund. Others argue that future funds could be tokenised to give LPs liquidity whenever they want it.

Exit Options

Fortunately, there are increasing options for companies to access liquidity while staying private for longer. In the UK, PISCES will soon create the first regulated crossover market between private and public markets, allowing private companies to create liquidity events and more easily diversify their cap table by providing a broader group of investors an intermittent opportunity to buy those companies' shares.

Even so, many late-stage companies are preparing for an IPO in the next 18-24 months. To best prepare for an IPO, build the right board and corporate structures, get your data in order, set up reporting processes, focus on capital efficiency and profitability, and ensure you have healthy, diversified revenue streams. An IPO is a milestone on your journey; not the destination. Think through the aspirational lens of being a big public company from inception – that will help you build well and be ready for a public listing.



Shuo Wang (Deel), Hanno Renner (Personio) & Juan Urdiales (Job&Talent)

“We have probably the most ambitious reform agenda for financial markets anywhere in the world.”



Julia Hoggett
London Stock Exchange

Clif Marriott (Goldman Sachs), Julia Hoggett (London Stock Exchange), Taavet Hinrikus (Plural/Wise)





Sam Chaudhary
(Class Dojo)



Nicholas Hawker (First Light Fusion),
Emad Mostaque (Stability AI), Johan Brand
(Kahoot!) & Nick Jones (Soho House)



Neurodiversity in Entrepreneurship

Up to 20% of the global population is estimated to be neurodivergent. To support neurodiversity in organisations, prioritise psychological safety, celebrate different ways of thinking, and let people know it's okay to challenge ideas. Culture starts with language, and changing language around neurodiversity is an important step to shifting perspectives and understanding neurodiversity as an inherent trait, not an illness. Tailoring the workplace environment to support sensitivities to light and sound is helpful, but neurodiverse people don't want to be treated so differently – career satisfaction is just as important to neurodiverse people as anybody else.

Similarly, neurodiverse founders face challenges in adapting to different contexts, but thinking differently is what makes them successful. Emad Mostaque says his autism allows him to have a big RAM, design complex AI systems, and lead product research teams. His aphantasia, characterised by an inability to visualise images in the mind, is common among researchers at Stability AI working with generative AI, which allows them to finally see what they think. Around 20% of his researchers have aphantasia, despite it being present in less than 1% of the population.

Lord Daniel Finkelstein (The Times), Luciana
Berger (UK Government) & Baroness Martha
Lane Fox (British Chambers of Commerce)

Nick Jones credits his dyslexia with helping him simplify things when building Soho House and communicating to his team. Neurodiverse founders, he says, can thrive by leaning into their points of difference, filling the gaps by delegating to people with complementary skills, and providing context to help others understand their ways of thinking.

“For me, it's absolutely been a good thing to be diagnosed with autism. I understand myself much better and that’s allowed me to communicate with other people better.”



Nicholas Hawker
First Light Fusion



Community Power

Sam Chaudhary’s ClassDojo took a more curated approach, tapping into communities of early-adopter teachers in schools to spread the word about their products and test new ideas. Today, ClassDojo is a global community of more than 45 million teachers, kids and families. Rather than recruiting dedicated researchers, ClassDojo hired a coach to train everyone in the business to do customer research. Now, during onboarding, new recruits meet with regular users (and non-users) of the app, and one of the primary jobs of the ops team is to organise and carry out customer interviews. The list of customer interviews happening every week gets published in the whole team slack channel, where anyone can join a customer interview that's happening.

“Balancing human empathy with data is the magic to creating a customer-obsessed culture.”



Marcia Kilgore
Beauty Pie



CLIMATE, FOOD & OUR FUTURE

Tessa Clarke (Olio) &
Timo Boldt (Gousto)



Left: Taylor Francis (Watershed) &
Lance Uggla (BeyondNetZero)

Right: Greg Jackson
(Octopus Energy)





Mark Pincus (Zynga) & David Hornik (Lobby Capital)



Noor Sweid (Global Ventures), Islam Shawky (Paymob), Dr Marwan Al Zarouni (Dubai Department of Economy and Tourism) & Abdulmajeed Alsukhan (Tamara)

"Our current food system is by far the biggest cause of biodiversity collapse and the second biggest cause of greenhouse gas emissions."



Henry Dimbleby
Leon

"The more renewables we build, the cheaper and more abundant and dynamic our electricity system becomes."



Greg Jackson
Octopus Energy

Food For Thought

Our food system is causing soil degradation, deforestation, water pollution, and accounts for more than a quarter of global greenhouse gas emissions. To drive change, we need regulation to incentivise sustainable supply chains and help shift consumer preferences, and we need to champion businesses producing alternative proteins and fighting food waste.

Around a third of all food produced goes to waste, accounting for 10% of global CO2 emissions. If food waste were a country, it would be the third largest emitter after China and the US. Consumer food waste is the biggest culprit. 70% of food waste in the UK comes from the home, compared with 16% from manufacturers, 12% from hospitality, and 2% from the retail industry.

Tessa Clarke's Olio connects a community of 8 million people globally with their neighbours so they can give away spare food and household items, rather than throwing them away. Olio has helped share 174 million portions of food, saved 26 billion litres of water, and avoided 196,000 tonnes of CO2 emissions. But altruistic messages around saving the planet don't necessarily drive consumer purchasing. To trigger large-scale behaviour change, Olio tweaked their messaging to focus first on the personal and community benefits of reducing waste, before sprinkling sustainability on top.

Energising the Future

We need to move at pandemic-style speed to decarbonise by 2050, and game-changing innovations in clean energy will enable the transition. Sam Adlen's Space Solar is developing space-based solar power, putting solar panels in orbit to provide clean, scalable, and affordable energy to earth 24/7. David Kingham's Tokamak Energy has raised \$250m to develop the technology to deliver fusion energy in the 2030s.

With population growth, electrification, and the explosion of data centres and AI, global energy demand is expected to rise at a faster rate over the next three years. While the cost of renewable energy has plummeted – solar and battery costs fell by 80% in the past decade – to unlock clean energy's full potential, regulation is needed to topple the monopolies of the incumbents and make it easier for new companies to connect with national energy grids.



Eamon Jubbawy (Isometric)

“Climate is going to be the epic market for technology over the next 30 years.”



Taylor Francis
Watershed

Peter Reinhardt
(Charm Industrial)

Peter Reinhardt’s Charm Industrial uses plants to capture CO₂ from the atmosphere, convert biomass into a stable, carbon-rich liquid, and pump it deep underground, into the same rock formations that have stored crude oil and gas successfully for hundreds of millions of years. Charm has raised more than \$120m and removed more than 7,000 tonnes of CO₂ from the atmosphere.



Kate Henningsen (Infogrid), Sam Adlen
(Space Solar), David Kingham (Tokamak
Energy) & Enass Abo-Hamed (H2GO Power)



Carbon Impact

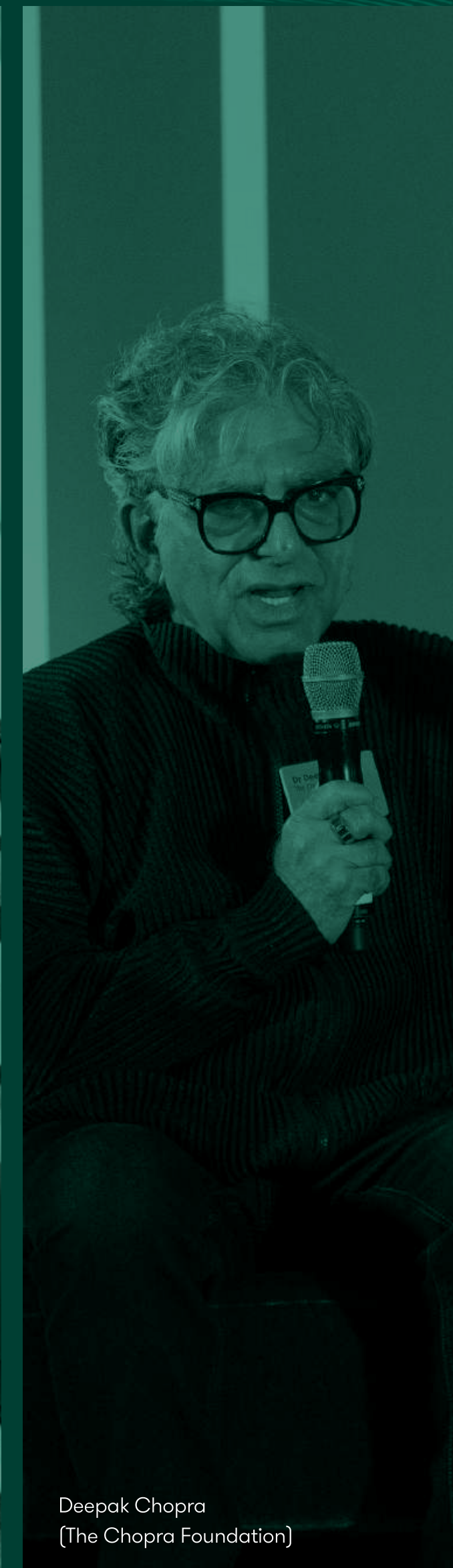
As reporting on carbon emissions becomes mandatory, companies are moving beyond spreadsheets and external consultants and integrating carbon tracking into their business operations. Still, there’s work to be done. Over half of companies are now disclosing at least some of their Scope 3 emissions, although only 10% report comprehensively across all emission scopes. For large retailers, reducing carbon is about fine-tuning supply chains. For tech companies, it’s about the energy powering their data centres.

A carbon removal industry capable of delivering gigaton-scale removals at net-zero levels could be worth up to \$1.2 trillion by 2050, but three to ten times more carbon removal capacity is needed to reach that level. No single carbon removal method will get to that scale. Instead, companies are innovating in different ways, combining capex-heavy baseload solutions like direct air capture with dispatchable solutions that are opex-heavy but can scale quickly when needed.

2 SIGNATURE FF SESSIONS & SHOWCASES



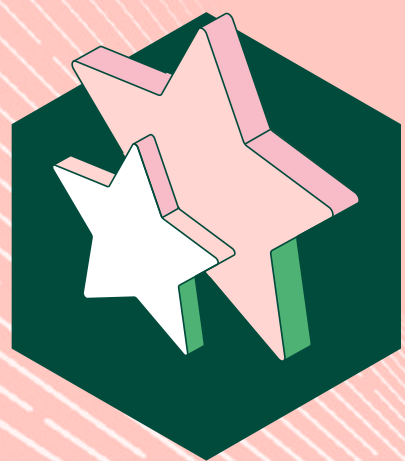
Michele Romanow
(Clearco)



Deepak Chopra
(The Chopra Foundation)



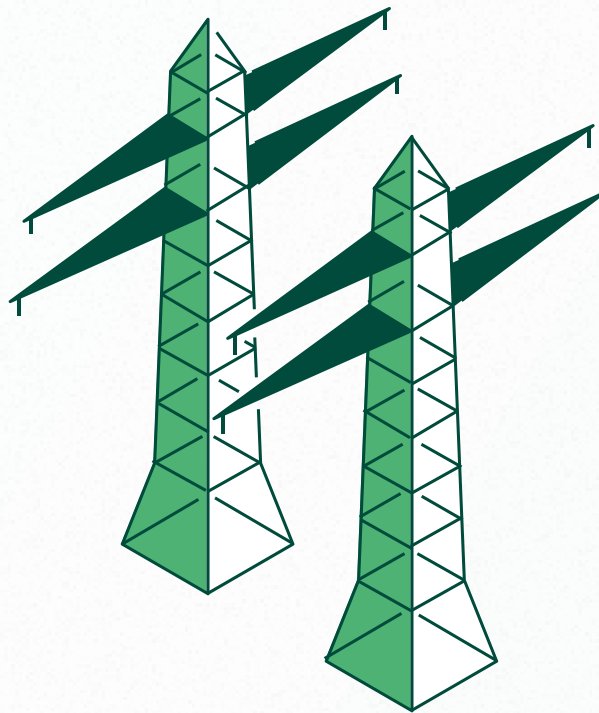
Mark Read (WPP), leading the team in
our AI Agents Workshop.



RISING STARS

Proxima Fusion

Lucio Milanese’s Proxima Fusion is a groundbreaking fusion energy startup pursuing the clearest path to grid deployment. Proxima Fusion's goal is to build a first-of-its-kind fusion power plant by the mid-2030s, based on technology pioneered with the W7-X stellarator at the Max Planck Institute for Plasma Physics in Germany. Building on Germany's \$1.5b investment in W7-X, Proxima Fusion is working with energy companies and key technology suppliers across Europe to make its clean energy vision a reality.



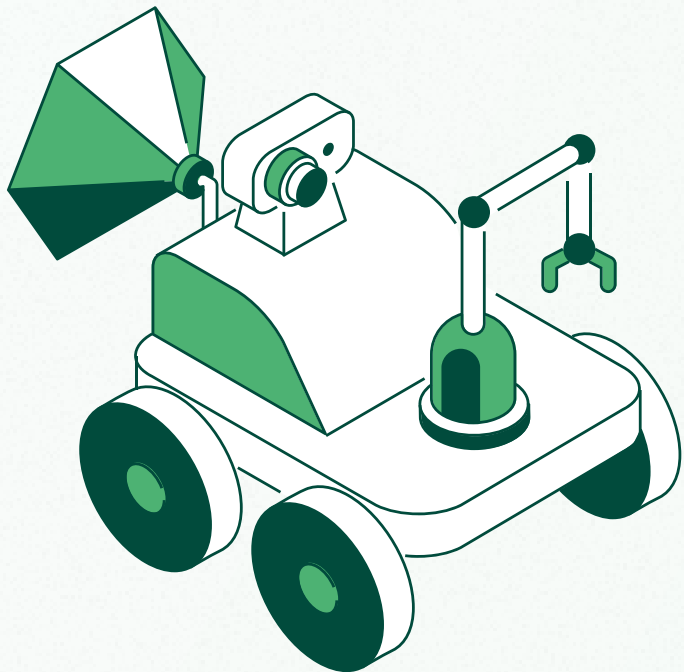
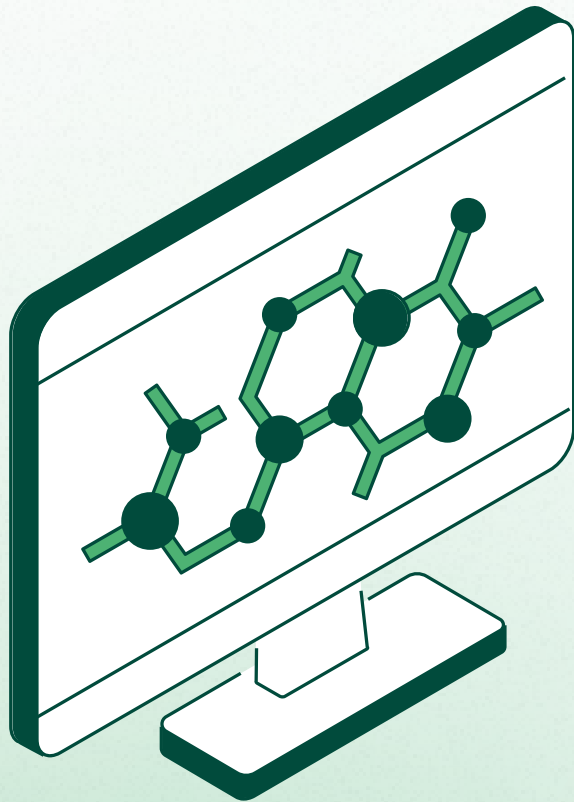
Lucio Milanese
(Proxima Fusion)



Rosalyn Moran
(Stanhope AI)

Stanhope AI

Neuroscientist, Rosalyn Moran, has spent 20 years researching the human brain, cognition, neurobiology, and AI algorithms. With Stanhope AI, she’s bringing Active Inference to market as a novel framework for autonomous decision-making. Her goal: to build true intelligence with critical human explainability and reliability.



Overland AI

Byron Boots’ Overland AI is a Seattle-based startup building off-road ground vehicle autonomy for defence. Overland AI raised \$10m in a Seed funding round led by Point72 Ventures in May. Now, Byron is looking to transform land operations by delivering the most advanced and dependable ground autonomy solutions to date.

Byron Boots
(Overland AI)





Thaleron

Jorgen Tveit’s Thaleron is driving the energy transition with a new, cheaper mechanical energy storage solution under the sea. He’s engineering miniature ‘planets’, which spin at supersonic speeds beneath the ocean surface to store renewable energy for periods of low solar and wind activity.

Jorgen Tveit
(Thaleron)



Sakana AI

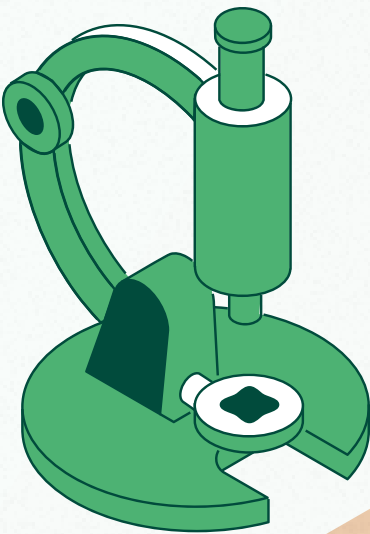
Imagine foundational AI models that evolve by themselves. Ren Ito’s Sakana AI is developing the machinery to automatically generate foundational models for user-specified requirements. Its core research focus is in applying nature-inspired ideas, such as evolution and collective intelligence, to create new foundational AI models.



Ren Ito (Sakana AI)

Ovo Labs

A leading expert on female fertility, Melina Schuh has pioneered studies of human eggs and uncovered why fertility declines with age. With Ovo Labs, she’s launching new therapeutics that boost egg quality to improve IVF success.



Melina Schuh
(Ovo Labs)





Roger Lynch
(Condé Nast)



Archie Norman
(Marks & Spencer, Signal
AI, Global Counsel)



Pierre-François Thaler
(EcoVadis) & Sharon White
(John Lewis)

MEET THE CEO

All the biggest-name CEOs in one room!
Our signature Meet the CEO session gave top tech founders the opportunity
to meet with the CEOs of the FTSE's leading multinational companies.



Shai Weiss
(Virgin Atlantic)



Noel Quinn
(HSBC)



Dame Carolyn McCall
(ITV)



In our Tech Hub, powered by Globant, pioneering founders showcased a curated selection of the world's most innovative and never-before-seen tech, from VR gloves and cargo drones to heartbeat lockets and the latest anti-aging devices.





Powered by Founders Health, our Longevity Lounge offered diagnostic and treatment sampling for healthspan-focused founders.

Founders Forum Live gave the wider world a glimpse of the action. On the AITi Broadcast Stage, broadcasted live by Bloomberg, we heard from top podcasters, media influencers, multi-billion dollar unicorn founders, and the world’s first robot artist!

[Click here](#) to watch all our recorded live sessions!

Left, from top to bottom

Ai-Da is a performance artist, designer, and poet with a twist. With her creator, Aidan Meller, in tow, she kicked off proceedings, revealing how she draws and paints using her robotic arm and cameras in her eyes powered by AI.

Martin Varsavsky (Overture/Prelude Fertility), Alison Darcy (Woebot Labs), and Jack Zhang (Airwallex) then shared their founder stories with Robert Weeber (AITi Tiedemann Global).

Marina Hyde and Richard Osman reflected on the latest TV and media trends on a special live episode of the hit podcast, The Rest is Entertainment.

Right, from top to bottom

Mark Bergen (Bloomberg) spoke to the trailblazing founders of three UK startups to watch, innovating across fintech, health, and semiconductors: Phillip Belamant (Zilch), Nadine Hachach-Haram (Proximie), and Sir Colin Humphreys (Paragraf).

Deepak Chopra (The Chopra Foundation) discussed human evolution, intelligence, and wellbeing on a live episode of the High Performance Podcast with Damian Hughes and Jake Humphrey.

Niklas Zennström (Atomico) and Robert Vis (Bird) discussed the art of disruption and building value-based businesses.



3 MORE FROM FF WEEK



Matthew O'Donohoe
[CAA Sports International]



Kevin Ryan
[AlleyCorp]



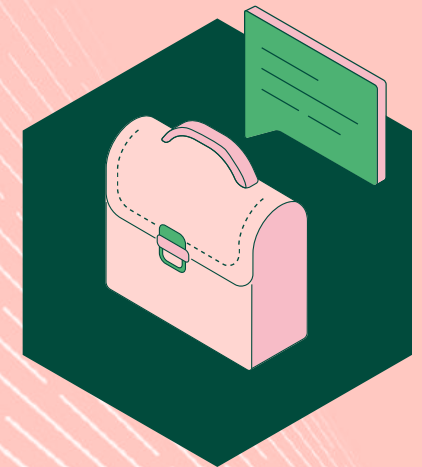
George Osborne [Robey Warshaw /
Former Chancellor of the Exchequer] &
John Micklethwait [Bloomberg]



Christian Horner
[Red Bull Racing]



Jane Hartley
[US Ambassador to the UK]



CHAIR & CEO BREAKFAST

Mariella Frostrup (mfha),
George Osborne (Robey Warshaw /
Former Chancellor of the Exchequer),
Lord Peter Mandelson (Global Counsel)



Left: Maurice Lévy (Publicis Groupe),
Nicolai Tangen (Norges Bank
Investment Management)

Right: Polling our
audience at the annual
FF Global Chair & CEO
Breakfast



Our 2024 Chair and CEO Breakfast, co-hosted with Google, united 150 global leaders, CEOs, and unicorn tech founders to discuss the next frontiers of innovation and how technology can be used to address the world's biggest challenges.



Lord Karan Bilimoria (Cobra Beer)
& Lord Anthony St John
(Strand Hanson)

“Business wants to see a government committed to reducing the risk for investors of recommitting to the UK.”



Lord Peter Mandelson
Global Counsel

Technology is impacting geopolitics more today than you’ve ever seen before.



Nicolai Tangen
Norges Bank Investment
Management

The West Faces Major Security Challenges...

Technology is at the centre of every conflict between the world’s superpowers – in weapons, pharmaceuticals, semiconductors, AI, and quantum. For the first time since the Industrial Revolution, the West may not get to some of the key determining technologies first.

The implications are huge. Failure in Ukraine would encourage China to ramp up its activities in the South China Sea, where any kind of conflict would dwarf what we’ve seen so far. Meanwhile, the Israel-Hamas War could be the most radicalising moment since the invasion of Iraq.

...And Technology & Innovation Will Be Key.

In this geopolitical context, building strong innovation ecosystems that support security in the West is critical. But Europe today risks becoming a museum as innovation is held back by over-regulation and a fear of failure. Instead, we need pro-innovation policies and deeper pockets of capital to fuel the growth of Europe’s startup scenes, and Europe must focus on its strengths, like Sweden's engineering prowess and Denmark's pharmaceutical expertise.

Likewise, the UK must prioritise creating a pro-investment business environment to compete on the global stage. This means tackling tax, regulation, labour market reform, and trade unions head-on. There will be tensions, but change is necessary to lift the UK out of the economic mire, keep wealth creators in the country, and boost defence.

Brent Hoberman CBE
(Founders Forum Group)



Stephan Pretorius (WPP)
& Dr Jöelle Barral
(Google DeepMind)

Leaders Must Adapt to This New Age of AI...

In a time of machines, leaders must lean into what makes us human. As a CEO, be relentless in talking about AI and integrating it into your organisation, but prioritise communication and simplicity of purpose. Combine empathy and kindness with toughness and decisiveness to drive change.

To drive forward innovations in AI, Google DeepMind has dedicated research and engineering teams spanning the whole spectrum, going from foundational to applied research and products. Researchers looking at the most foundational questions work in a focused environment where they can aim high, have space to explore, experiment, and learn. In parallel, distinct teams continuously improve specific AI models, working at pace in a highly structured environment.

“Generative AI is not just about productivity; it’s at the very core of businesses across many industries, from materials science to drug discovery.”



Dr Jöelle Barral
Google DeepMind

...And Prepare Their People For What’s to Come.

AI will affect 40% of jobs around the world. In the UK, up to 8 million jobs are at risk. CEOs must plan ahead and bring functional heads together to understand how different business areas will be impacted, which costs are saved by AI, and how that money can be reallocated.

Already, a Chief People Officer is a critical hire. Consider remuneration and incentive planning for the AI-skilled employees in the highest demand. Also, if your company is not offering retraining and reskilling programmes now, you will be left behind.

Aviva launched The Aviva Foundry in the UK in 2023, supporting local businesses, students, and their employees to develop digital skills and transition into one of five key roles – Software Developer, Business Analyst, UX Designer, Digital Product Owner, and Test Engineer – and is now opening up new programmes across company locations.



Debbie Weinstein (Google),
Dame Amanda Blanc (Aviva),
Lord Stephen Carter (Informa)
& Rishi Khosla (OakNorth)

“Businesses will succeed as a consequence of AI, but we need to plan for its impact on people.”



James Caan
Hamilton Bradshaw Group



Pev Hooper (CVC Capital Partners),
George Osborne
(Robey Warshaw /
Former Chancellor of
the Exchequer)

Martin Hoffmann (ON)





FOUNDERS ANGELS FORUM

Oskar Hartmann (Hartmann Holdings /
Angels Accumulator)



Left: Brainstorm breakout led by Martin
Varsavsky (Overture/Prelude Fertility)

Right: Michele Romanow
(Clearco)



10 INVESTING TIPS FROM TOP ANGELS



Paola Bonomo
(Italian Angels for Growth)

Ling Ge
(Tencent)



Our second annual **Founders Angels Forum** – co-hosted with Oskar Hartmann, Founder of the Accumulator Angel Fund and Arete Angel Index – convened over 100 of Europe's leading angels who shared their success stories, discussed deal flow, and revealed their top angel investing tips.

1

Bet on founders with a vision

If you love the founder's passion and drive, trust that they'll find the winning formula, even if they pivot along the way. Don't get caught up overanalyzing.

3

Play to your strengths

Every angel has unique superpowers, whether it's growth hacking, marketing expertise, or opening doors to key customers. Focus on where you can make the biggest impact. Remember, the founder decides how to leverage your expertise.

2

Build your brand as a value-add investor

Successful angels don't just provide capital. They build a reputation for going the extra mile to help their portfolio companies. The more value you provide, the better deal flow you'll attract.

4

Be selective and double down

Don't pride yourself on the number of investments you make. Instead, focus on being super valuable to a smaller number of companies. Concentrate your portfolio, make bigger bets with conviction, and really get to know your investments.

5

Invest with a clear head, not a heavy heart

It's easy to get emotionally attached to your investments. But to win, you need discipline. Be ready to sell, buy, or walk away based on logic, not sentiment. Recycle capital into new investments.

6

Define your portfolio strategy

Decide whether you're making a few concentrated bets or spreading investments across more startups to capture the outliers. Match your approach to your risk appetite and the value you can provide.

7

Leverage your network

Angel investing is a team sport. Build a trusted group of fellow angels to exchange deals, leads, and insights with. The stronger your connections across the ecosystem, the more plugged in you'll be.

8

Prioritise trust

Your relationship with founders is paramount. Invest in open communication and always act with integrity. Be the angel they want to keep close, not avoid.

9

Focus on the long game

Liquidity can be elusive in angel investing. Don't expect quick returns. The real payoff comes from backing the next breakout successes. Stay focused on finding and fueling future stars.

10

Specialise in what you know

The more you specialise, the more you'll excel. Carve out a niche, whether it's a hot sector or your local market. Build a reputation as the go-to angel in your space.

Sara Drinkwater (Common Magic) &
Kevin Ryan (AlleyCorp)



Chris Adelsbach
(Outrun Ventures)

Chris Adelsbach
(Outrun Ventures)



“If you want to make off-market returns you have to go into un-commoditised asset classes, and angel investing is one of the few places you can do that.”



Matt Robinson
Accel

Taavet Hinrikus
(Plural/Wise)



“Two things matter in being a good investor: you making good choices and the companies choosing you.”



Kevin Ryan
AlleyCorp

“Angel investing for financial returns is not enough; you have to add value alongside capital.”



Rupa Popat
Araya Ventures

Sam Endacott (firstminute capital),
Matt Robinson (Accel) &
Rupa Popat (Araya Ventures)



Matt Robinson
(Accel)



Maurice Beckand Verwee
(Curiosity VC)



FOUNDERS LONGEVITY FORUM

Stasa Stankovic (Cambridge University)
& Martin Varsavsky (Overture/Prelude
Fertility)



Left: Dr Amy Killen
(Humanaut Health)

Right: Dr Alex Zhavoronkov
(Insilico Medicine)





Ronjon Nag
(R42 Group)

Our first full-day event dedicated to longevity! Our **Founders Longevity Forum**, delivered in partnership with Longevity.Technology, brought together the brightest minds in the space – founders, CEOs, VCs, family offices, thought leaders, and more – to supercharge innovation in a sector predicted to reach \$600b by 2025.

“This is potentially the biggest market ever for investors: everyone who’s ageing, which means every living human.”



Andrew Steele
Writer & Scientist



Ageing Is Not Inevitable

It’s our greatest humanitarian challenge. By targeting the hallmarks of ageing, from senescent cells to malfunctioning mitochondria, longevity drugs can slow down or reverse the ageing process, and treat diseases – like cancer, heart disease, and dementia – caused by the same biological drivers that cause all aspects of ageing.

Phil Newman
(Longevity.Technology)



Already, rapamycin is making mice live up to 60% longer. TAME is exploring whether popular diabetes drug, Metformin, can slow down ageing in humans. GLP-1 drugs, used for diabetes and weight loss, have shown strong longevity benefits. Eventually, we’re going to have medicines that treat multiple diseases at once.

AI is also playing its part in accelerating drug discovery and shifting the longevity space from diagnostic solutions to therapeutics. Alex Zhavoronkov’s Insilico Medicine, for example, ran the first human trial of a drug designed by generative AI. Its multi-modal AI, PreciousGPT, synthesises and interprets data from different cell lines and tissues to enable scientists to run pre-clinical research at minimal costs.

Andrew Steele





Vaccines, Clocks & Moonshots!

There's an explosion of new longevity startups tackling ageing in different ways. Turn Biotechnologies is developing mRNA medicines that induce the body to heal itself by instructing specific cells to fight disease and repair damaged tissue. Agemica is working on a vaccine for ageing. Mitrix Bio is pioneering mitochondrial transplant to reverse ageing by up to 30 years. Mitochondria are like the energy packs of our cells – as we get older, they get weaker. Mitrix Bio grows young mitochondria in a bioreactor, wraps them in a special coating with receptors to target specific organs, and puts them back in our bodies.

There are startups focused on biomarkers and ageing clocks. TruDiagnostic measures your biological age and the pace at which you're ageing through epigenetic data analysis. GlycanAge measures your age and your response to life changes based on glycan profiles. NeuroAge lets you test your future risk of Alzheimer's using genetics, blood tests, and lifestyle data. Naveen Jain's Viome analyses activities in your oral microbiome, gut microbiome, and cells using RNA sequencing.

Then there are the moonshots. Scientists are making human embryo models from stem cells, replacing aged body parts with youthful, genetically identical versions, and transplanting living organs from one species to another. BE Therapeutics is developing technology to engineer functional brain tissue to replace tissue impaired by age-related damage. Tomorrow Biostasis is offering whole-body cryopreservation, with the hope to one day return dead bodies back to life.

Dr David Luu (Hearty/Longevity Docs)
& Naveen Jain (Viome)

“Our at-home full body intelligence test gives you comprehensive health insight; tells you exactly which foods you should eat and why; which nutrients your body is lacking; and we custom-make supplements with the ingredients you need every month to reduce your biological age.”



Naveen Jain
Viome

Dr Tamsin Lewis (Wellgevity),
Michael Geer (Humanity Inc) &
Bhuvan Srinivasan (Ultrahuman)

Hannah Went (TruDiagnostic) &
Nikolina Lauc (GlycanAge)



Todd White
(VitaDAO)



Trillion-Dollar Investment Case

The cost of chronic diseases caused by ageing will reach \$47 trillion globally by 2030, while slowing down ageing to increase life expectancy by just one year is worth \$38 trillion. New longevity therapies will cost a tiny fraction of the amount countries will save on healthcare, and so it will be an economic imperative to ensure access to longevity drugs for anyone that needs them.

And yet, the current annual budget for the US National Institute on Ageing is around \$4b. Of that, just a small proportion goes to ageing biology, even though age-related diseases cause 70% of American deaths. Most longevity tech investments comes from family offices and funds with longer-term perspectives. There's activity at early stage, but normal VC horizons make it tough for longevity startups.

VitaDAO is a community-owned collective offering an alternative approach. By making use of IP-NFTs, which store IP information encrypted on the blockchain, VitaDAO allows scientists to tokenise their IP and research projects and access a liquid market and funding earlier, without the burden of VC rounds or lawyer fees. VITA token holders choose which research they want to support, contribute to governance decisions, and participate early in the development process. Since 2021, VitaDAO has deployed more than \$4.2m, funded 22 research projects, and spun-out two companies.

Joanna Bensch
(Longevity Centre)



“We’re seeing stronger companies with better talent pitching at better valuations.”



Judith Mueller
Trinity Square Capital



Widening Access

Longevity clinics are pushing the envelope with experimental therapies. Amy Killen’s Humanaut Health plans to open 100 clinics across the US in the next three years. But to widen access to longevity therapies, cost of treatment needs to come down, and more physicians need training to work with complex biomarkers.

Existing supplements have their limitations – you need to take multiple pills for different results, their efficacy is limited without lifestyle changes, and it’s tough to track their impact. But the supplement format is one of the best ways to impact the largest number of people in the world at the lowest possible cost. Timeline produces supplements containing its proprietary nutrient, Mitopure Urolithin A, which acts on several hallmarks of ageing.

Ultrahuman, the world's fastest-growing wearable health and self-quantification company, is widening access through digital longevity. Its products include the Ultrahuman Ring AIR, a sleep-tracking wearable; Ultrahuman M1, a continuous glucose monitoring platform; Ultrahuman Home, a home health device that monitors environmental markers that affect health; and Blood Vision, a preventive blood testing platform.

However, to really move the needle and broaden the impact of longevity technology at scale, we need a big PR effort to communicate the economic case to policymakers and effect regulatory change to get new drugs approved faster. In the meantime, regulation-light, special economic zones, like Vitalia, could become global centres of medical tourism and longevity.

“Our goal is to make longevity medicine and health optimisation available to the masses.”



Dr Amy Killen
Humanaut Health

STARTUP PITCHES

Mattias Bernow
(Cellcolabs)



Cellcolabs

Mattias Bernow’s Cellcolabs specialises in industrial production of high-quality Mesenchymal stem cells that have the ability to self-renew. Its mission: to prevent and cure diseases by making high quality stem cells available and affordable.

Bruno Balen
(Ani Biome)



Ani Biome

Bruno Balen believes the winning longevity drug won’t be a molecule but an algorithm. At Ani Biome, they’ve built an integrated ML infrastructure to tackle mental, muscular, and immunological longevity through the gut. Their clinically-proven bioactives, AgeBiotics, are offered through a personalised subscription model.

Simon Sakhai
(Jung+ Longevity)



Jung+ Longevity

Simon Sakhai is on a crusade to liberate human longevity. Jung+ Longevity translates the latest scientific advancements in ageing research into products and technologies that can slow ageing and extend healthy lifespan for the masses. Its Total Longevity System allows individuals to set longevity goals, track their progress, and access different products that target the underlying causes of ageing.



Robin Mansukhani
(Deciduous Therapeutics)

Deciduous Therapeutics

Senescent cells are characterised by irreversible damage and an inflammatory secretome, and are a key driving force behind many age-related diseases. Robin Mansukhani's Deciduous Therapeutics is developing novel medicines that can selectively restore the body's own immune system to remove these pathological senescent cells and treat several classes of age-related diseases. Their in vivo data shows that these medicines can resolve both metabolic and fibrotic disorders.

Kevin Slawin
(Ponce Therapeutics)

Mogling Bio

When we get old, the organisation of the internal structures of blood cell forming hematopoietic stem cells become disordered. This leads to impaired production of blood and immune cells, can cause leukaemia and other blood diseases, and might limit lifespan. Hartmut Geiger's Mogling Bio is developing new pharmacological approaches to rejuvenate old stem and immune cells and fix this problem.



Hartmut Geiger
(Mogling Bio Inc)



Ponce Therapeutics

Kevin Slawin's Ponce Therapeutics reunites the team that founded Bellicum Pharmaceuticals and took it public in 2014 with a \$161m IPO. Ponce Therapeutics is creating science-backed anti-aging products focused on a novel senotherapeutic platform including proprietary senolytic peptides, gene therapy, and senomorphic small molecules. Its first product, Yuuth, is a skin rejuvenation cream, which restores the youthful balance of aged or senescent and young cells in the skin, turning the clock on your skin back to its youthful exuberance.

Marie Brattberg
(Recorded Future)



Left: Dr Lucy Mason
(Capgemini Invent)

Right: Karl Eze
(Point Zenith)



FF CRITICAL TECHNOLOGIES



Louis Mosley
(Palantir)

At our inaugural FF Critical Technologies, defence industry leaders discussed cutting-edge technologies and how to navigate the future of defence and innovation.

“We are in an AI arms race. If our adversary builds state-level capabilities before we do, then the world we know will change dramatically.”



Louis Mosley
Palantir



Arms Race

AI has ignited a new kind of arms race. If we want to maintain our way of life, achieving nation state level capabilities in AI is critical. AI development needs speeding up; not slowing down, and countries that fail to keep up in AI defence capabilities risk falling dangerously behind. With rising geopolitical tensions and grey zone competition in Europe between democracy and autocracy, there's never been a more crucial time to unite founders, investors, and key stakeholders to collaborate on defence and critical technologies.



Sam Adlen
(Space Solar)



Structural Change

To stay ahead, creating the right incentives and procurement processes to enable public-private collaboration in defence tech is key. VC money is flowing into the sector, but structural challenges make achieving outsized returns for investors and successful exits for founders difficult.

In the US, for example, defence budgets have shrunk since the end of the Cold War and the industry has consolidated, resulting in a handful of large established contractors operating on razor-thin margins with their profit margins capped. This makes them unattractive acquirers for startups. The industry needs clearer paths to procurement, and companies need to be able to earn profits comparable to those in the commercial tech sector. Only the prospect of a Google or Microsoft in defence will unlock the most significant chunks of capital.





Ethical Minefields

Investors are increasingly focused on ensuring the ethics of the companies they back align with their own values. For defence tech companies especially, clearly communicating and adhering to an ethical framework is key in attracting both investment and talent. Ethics should be built into intelligence products; not bolted on. There are real fears about surveillance states, but security doesn't need to come at privacy's expense. Providing intelligence agencies with ethics-driven technology can enhance both security and privacy.

Eliot Higgins
(Bellingcat)



Hacker Potential

Cybercrime will cost the world \$12 trillion by 2025. One in six New York teenagers have attempted to hack someone, while one in 10 young people in Europe have engaged in hacking or other nefarious activities online. But those hackers of today could be the defence assets of tomorrow. Defence is in a battle for top tech talent, and it's vital to steer technically-skilled youth towards using their talents for good.



Jen Sovada
(SandboxAQ)

“It’s clear that we’re now in a grey zone confrontation in Europe, with democracy and autocracy competing against each other.”



Eric Slesinger
201 Ventures

Eliot Higgins' Bellingcat has pioneered the use of open source research methods to investigate subjects of public interest, from the shooting down of flight MH17 over eastern Ukraine to police violence in Colombia. By analysing information online – following digital traces of information in online communities, collecting data in a consistent way in real-time, and creating data-driven insights – open source intelligence can also be a key capability in combating cyber threats.

Bellingcat is now working with schools and universities to teach open source investigation skills to students. The ultimate goal is to build investigative hubs at universities and connect them to local NGOs and schools to give young people hands-on experience in finding and verifying information.

"We can't sit back and think that an 11-year-old using a smartphone as their primary source of information is something harmless. We need to teach them how to make judgements on that information."



Eliot Higgins
Bellingcat



4 OUR PARTNERS



OUR PARTNERS







Special thanks also to:



5 STAY IN TOUCH

STAY IN TOUCH

Our upcoming events

We host our flagship forums across three continents, uniting scaled founders, top investors, CEOs, and global thought leaders to tackle the world’s most pressing questions.



FF EUROPE
BERLIN
8-9 October 2024



FF ASIA
SINGAPORE
April 2025



FF NORTH AMERICA
NEW YORK
14-15 October 2024



FF
GLOBAL
10-12 June 2025



FF MEASA
DUBAI
7-9 February 2025

If you’re interested in attending one of our events, or partnering with us, reach out to theteam@ff.co

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Our Newsletter

Founders News — FF’s curated community newsletter — is our fortnightly roundup of the latest startup stories and insights from trailblazing entrepreneurs, top investors and corporate leaders.

[Click here](#) or scan the QR code to subscribe



Elon Musk
(SpaceX/Tesla/Twitter)



June Sarpong (Diversify),
Euan Blair (Multiverse) &
Tom Hulme (Google Ventures)



Events & Networking				
Education				
Services				
				
				
Investment				
Philanthropy				
Content				



As our community grows, Founders Forum Group continues to expand via incubation, investment, acquisition, and partnership.

We welcome collaborations with individuals, organisations, and governments who share our mission in promoting entrepreneurship and *driving positive change through technology.*