

# Grow with a world-class network

Discover the founders, investors, and experts who guide our students.

# Genoa mentors are experts who raised over **\$7.5 billion** and manage **\$100 billion** in assets combined.

Genoa mentors have joined our mission and are ready to help our students grow their startups by sharing their experiences and the key secrets behind their success.

Our mentors include a mix of young, successful founders, seasoned managers, and industry visionaries, offering students a wide range of perspectives.

Each mentor delivers a 1.5-hour class focused on a specific topic, followed by a 1.5-hour workshop that enables students to apply the knowledge directly to their startup.

Additionally, almost all mentors respond to student questions within 24 hours throughout the program. They offer one-on-one sessions whenever needed, ensuring students receive tailored advice and valuable introductions.

Students benefit from the support of over 100 experts at every stage of their venture.

The Executives in Residence at Columbia University are also part of the Genoa network and are available to answer student queries, alongside the faculty members.

In the following pages, you'll learn more about our mentors, their achievements, areas of expertise, and how they guide our students.



## SEQUOIA

### Douglas Leone

Global Managing Partner  
at Sequoia  
(\$88 bln under management)

Douglas Leone became Managing Partner at Sequoia Capital in 1997. Under his management, they invested in companies such as WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, Facebook, Zoom, and GitHub, among others. He made Sequoia the only U.S. fund successfully investing in the U.S., China, and India, while others struggled or remained U.S.-focused. This incredible string of successes earned him the reputation as a world visionary in the venture capital industry.

Guides on

- ✔ Using feedback for growth
- ✔ Mastering fundraising

Past experience

Life Long Career at Sequoia  
(\$88 bln AUM)

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## Meta

### Elizabeth Santoro

Product manager  
\$885 bln valuation

Guides on

- ✔ Talking to users
- ✔ User-centric teams

Past experience

Various roles at Meta and Student-Journalist at Northwestern University.

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## captions

### Dwight Churchill

Co-founder and COO  
\$250 mln valuation

Guides on

- ✔ Hypothesis experimentation
- ✔ Creating well defined OKRs

Past experience

**Goldman Sachs** Product (\$115 bln)  
**klaviyo** Product (\$8 bln)

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## BIRKENSTOCK

### Anastazja Kolcowa

Head of digital experience  
\$11.5 bln valuation

Guides on

- ✔ Understanding your user journey
- ✔ Planning for digital channels

Past experience

**adidas** Senior digital experience man. (\$43 bln)

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## YOUNITED

### François de Bodinat

CPO  
\$1.3 bln valuation

Guides on

- ✔ Product development
- ✔ Analyzing product data

Past experience

**ZL ZeroLight** CPO (\$60 mln)  
**amazon** Sr. marketing man. (\$1.5 tln)  
**DELL** Director of finance (\$50 bln)

[MORE ↗](#)



### Prasanna Sankar


Co-Founder of Rippling.com  
\$11.3 bln valuation

Co-Founder of Rippling, currently valued at \$13.5 billion. Rippling makes company manage payroll, HR, IT & spend in one place. Prasanna has been a founder of multiple companies over a decade and used to do a lot of programming contests while at college being ranked #1 in India at TopCoder. 2x Google Code Jam world finalist. 2x ACM ICPC world finalist.

Guides on

- ✔ Using feedback for growth
- ✔ Mastering fundraising

Past experience

 **Microsoft**  
Software developer at Microsoft (\$2.75 bln)

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### John Berger

Founder & CEO  
\$1.5 bln valuation

Guides on

- ✔ Leading a startup in energy
- ✔ US market entry

Past experience

Founder and CEO @SunCap Financial  
Founder & CEO @Standard Renewable Energy  
Co-founder & Managing Partner @Contango Capital Partners

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### Pierre Voineau

Managing director BENELUX  
\$42 bln valuation

Guides on

- ✔ Managing a product team
- ✔ B2B business development

Past experience

 **Renault Group** Product Director (\$55 bln)

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### Richard Mokuolu

Co-founder & CEO  
\$10 mln valuation

Guides on

- ✔ Story building for your MVP
- ✔ Building a product that people love

Past experience

 Senior market strategist and senior audit associate (\$130 bln)

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### Francisco Ruiz

Partner head of energy & utilities  
\$249.2 mln revenue

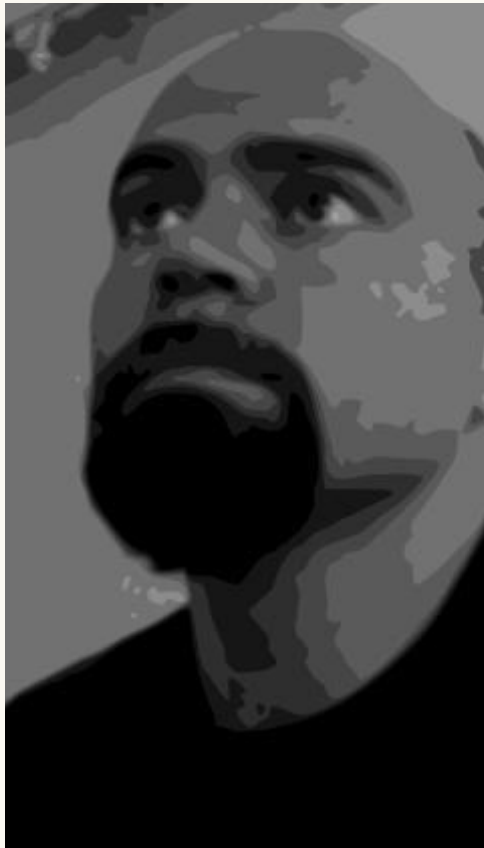
Guides on

- ✔ Building in the energy space
- ✔ Go-To-Market strategy

Past experience

 **NTT DATA** Director of consulting (\$2.47 tln)

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## COMPASS

### Ugo Di Girolamo

Software Engineer & Co-founder  
\$7 bln valuation

Guides on

- ✔ 0 to IPO foundations
- ✔ Product tips and secrets

Past experience

**X**  
Lead Engineer (\$44 bln)  
**Google**  
Software Engineer (\$1.65 tln)

Co-Founder of Compass, IPOed at \$7B. Compass pairs agents with world-class data, technology, and design, alongside unparalleled local knowledge. Ugo has also worked as a software engineer at Twitter, Google, and GE.

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## ENVERUS

### Thomas Sherman

Founder and CEO  
(Undisclosed sale)

Guides on

- ✔ Understanding user requests
- ✔ Identify your north start metrics
- ✔ Using user feedback

Past experience

Phd student @ Notre Dame

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## TINKA

### Geoff Heddle

CDO and exCPO at Cinch  
\$5 bln valuation

Guides on

- ✔ Building products in the digital age
- ✔ Navigating product development challenges

Past experience

Product director (\$5 bln)

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## McGuireWoods

### PJ Harris

Legal associate

Guides on

- ✔ Co founders agreements
- ✔ Share holders agreements

Past experience

Co-Founder  
 Negotiator  
Strategic Deals Team

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## NEXT<sup>14</sup>

### Francesco Boano

Chief technology officer  
\$50 mln valuation

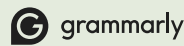
Guides on

- ✔ Using Data for Product Development
- ✔ Technology Strategy

Past experience

Genoa - Co-founder  
 Research Scientist  
(\$40.75 Bln)

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## Bei Zhang

Marketing Head A. at Grammarly  
\$13 bln valuation

### Guides on

- ✓ Mastering email marketing
- ✓ Analyzing marketing data
- ✓ Mastering SEO

### Past experience



Senior Associate (\$44 bln)

Bei, former Head of Analytics at Grammarly, excels in using strategy and data science for growth in various industries like SaaS, Fintech, and eCommerce. At Point Digital Finance, an A16Z portfolio company (\$265mln raised), he led growth efforts, building a diverse team and increasing revenue tenfold in a year.

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## Klarna

### Stefano Giaccone

Product lead  
\$7.85 bln valuation

### Guides on

- ✓ Leading a Product Team
- ✓ Retention Strategies

### Past experience

ICT Process senior specialist  
(\$60 bln) valuation

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## SYNOPSIS®

### Alessandra Costa

Senior VP corporate operations  
\$72 bln valuation

### Guides on

- ✓ Selling perfectly
- ✓ Effective communication strategies

### Past experience

VP of field engineering  
(\$70 bln)

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## Eric Wang

Co-founder and CEO  
\$80 mln raised

### Guides on

- ✓ Organisation strategy
- ✓ Start up economics

### Past experience

Vice President, Global Operations, Business & Corporate Development

Business Development & Senior Account Manager

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## Aaron Heth

Design Director, Co-Founder

### Guides on

- ✓ Designing the best user experience
- ✓ Choosing your design team

### Past experience

UX lead (\$12.7 bln)

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**Renault Group**

**Eric Feunteun**

COO Software République at Renault Group \$55 billions val.

Guides on

- ✓ Sales simulation
- ✓ Proposal Preparation
- ✓ Deal closing

Past experience

Life long career at Renault (\$55 bln)

Former COO of Renault Group with 25 years of experience in the automotive industry. Leading breakthroughs such as Electric Vehicles, Energy business, Customer satisfaction, and now leading Software transformation in collaboration with the ecosystem. He is also very active as a VC advisor or board member in various startups such as Shift4Good and Integrals Power.

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**Salomon Aiach**

General partner  
\$40 mln under management

Guides on

- ✓ Investor call simulation
- ✓ Creating FOMO and managing the NOs

Past experience

EARLYBIRD Principal France (\$100 bln)

Acquisition (\$885 bln)

Goldman Sachs Product (\$115 bln)

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**Talis**

**Cecilia Manduca**

Principal  
\$400 mln under management

Guides on

- ✓ Fundraising in Europe
- ✓ Partner call simulation

Past experience

Vollaware® Business Development Manager (\$5 mln)

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**PaleBlue**

**Scott Dodson**

Chief Growth Officer  
\$2.3 mln in revenue

Guides on

- ✓ Growing a B2B product
- ✓ SaaS growth mechanisms

Past experience

gamesys group Head of marketing (\$2 bln)

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**SÜDTIROL BANK**  
Smart, caring, independent

**Francesco Lato**

Founding investor  
\$234 mln valuation

Guides on

- ✓ Overcoming team building blockers
- ✓ Choosing the right financing option

Past experience

Cercosistemi.com Founder

Talent Garden Co-founder

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**Vittorio Viarengo**

VP Cross-Cloud  
\$85 bln valuation

Guides on

- ✔ Power of storytelling
- ✔ Managing large teams
- ✔ Effective communication

Past experience

**ORACLE**  
VP of development (\$307 bln)  
**McAfee**  
CMO (\$4.9 bln)

Vittorio has held prominent roles such as CMO at McAfee (\$14 billion) and VP of Product Development at Oracle (\$381.11 billion). Blending entrepreneurship and engineering excellence with creativity and pragmatism, he has navigated the complexities of both his own startups and multi-billion-dollar giants like Oracle, McAfee, and VMware (\$61.52 billion).

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**COMPASS**

**Lycurgo Vidalakis**

Tech lead  
\$7 bln valuation

Guides on

- ✔ Building your MVP
- ✔ Selecting the right engineering team

Past experience

 Assistant Project Manager at Pinfarina (\$60 mln)

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**Andres Blazquez**

CEO at Genoa CFC - 777 Partners  
\$12 bln under management

Guides on

- ✔ Aligning growing teams on vision
- ✔ Managing team conflicts

Past experience

**Fanatiz** Board Member at Fanatiz  
 Board Member at Sevilla FC

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**Paolo Marengo**

Founder

Guides on

- ✔ Managing engineering teams

Past experience

 Director

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**Sauraj Gambhir**

Investment principal  
\$450 mln under management

Guides on

- ✔ Contract negotiations
- ✔ Round negotiations

Past experience

 Director - Venture Investing, M&A & Strategy, RBC Ventures (\$205 bln)

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## stripe

### Flavia Oliveira

Enterprise account executive  
\$65 bln valuation

#### Guides on

- ✓ Growth management
- ✓ Managing enterprise clients
- ✓ Customer success fundamentals

#### Past experience



Global account manager  
(\$118.11 bln)

Digital Enterprise Account Executive at Stripe (\$65 billion). Stripe powers online and in-person payment processing and financial solutions for businesses of all sizes. Flavia is responsible for driving sales for Stripe's best customers. She previously worked at Citibank (\$118.11B), where she was promoted three times in three years.

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## oerlikon

### Boris von Bieberstein

Senior VP, Middle East Business  
\$2.54 bln valuation

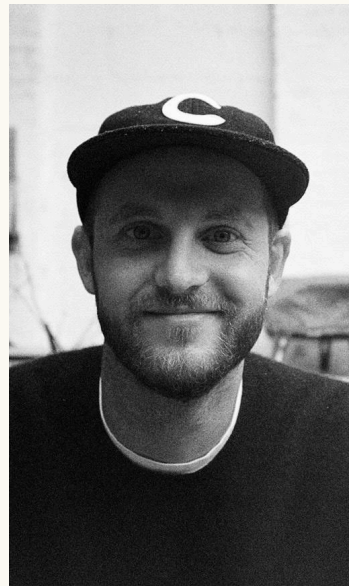
#### Guides on

- ✓ Understanding B2B customers
- ✓ Data Collection and Integration
- ✓ Finding your ICP

#### Past experience

**SIEMENS** Head of Product - Gas Turbines & Generators  
(\$130 bln)

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## Measured

### Tommy Treadway

Head of design at Measured  
\$10 mln valuation

#### Guides on

- ✓ Building your brand
- ✓ Making your product stand out

#### Past experience

**Rho** VP of Product Design  
(\$400 mln)

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### JohnPaul Bennett

Director of corporate sales  
\$2.1 bln valuation

#### Guides on

- ✓ Mastering the sales process
- ✓ Customer success and retention

#### Past experience

**PLEDGE IT** Director of customer success  
(\$8 mln)

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### Pancrazio Auteri

Investor and mentor

#### Guides on

- ✓ Feature design and prioritization
- ✓ Retaining your first customers

#### Past experience

Head of Product of multiple start ups

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## Google

### Alessandro Cannas

Product manager at Google  
\$1.65 tln valuation

Alessandro is a Product management manager at Google (\$1.65 trillion) leading Gemini Product Marketing. Prior to this role, Alessandro worked as a product marketing manager in Italy on the Grow with Google team, designing digital learning programs for small and medium businesses.

Guides on

- ✔ Building products for the masses
- ✔ AI product development
- ✔ Building B2B products

Past experience

 Marketing Research Intern at Procter & Gamble (\$400 bln)

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## 1517

### Danielle Strachman

Founder and general partner at 1517  
Backed by Peter Thiel

Guides on

- ✔ Operations Management Essentials
- ✔ Pitching the Right Investors

Past experience

 Founding Member and Program Director

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### Jacquelyn Heth

Co-Founder & UX research consultant

Guides on

- ✔ Using data for product development
- ✔ Technology strategy

Past experience

 UX Researcher (\$885 bln)  
 Senior UX Researcher (\$3 trln)

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## FarShore

### JC Garrett

Chief executive officer  
\$25 mln revenue

Guides on

- ✔ Building a lean startup
- ✔ Choosing the right technologies

Past experience

Life long career in at Farshore.

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### Massimo Vanzi

Committee member

Guides on

- ✔ Solving Customer Problems with AI
- ✔ Finding the Right AI Development Team

Past experience

 Board Member (\$135 mln)  
 Founder

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## Stepful

### Edoardo Serra

Co-founder and CTO at Stepful  
 \$100 mln valuation

#### Guides on

- ✓ Finding the right Co-founder
- ✓ Evaluation methods for co-founders

#### Past experience

🍏 Software engineering (\$3 trln)

After working at Apple for 9 years, creating Siri in Italian and then scaling the entire international team of Siri engineers from 8 to over 100 people in 5 different geographies. Now Edoardo has left Apple to create Stepful, a startup that helps people without financial means to become nurses. Considered one of the most talented Italian technical founders in the world, his venture is already valued at 100 million in just two years since its creation.

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
### Ilyas Frenkel


Fractional CMO  
 \$1mln valuation

#### Guides on

- ✓ Identifying customer pain points
- ✓ Perfectly launching

#### Past experience

 Head of Growth Marketing  
 @Wunder Capital  
 (\$500 mln)

 Growth marketing manager  
 (\$3.76 bln)

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## turntable

### Ian Tracey


CEO & Co-Founder  
 \$15 mln valuation  
 (Backed by Github Founder)

#### Guides on

- ✓ Product testing
- ✓ Finding your early users

#### Past experience

**stripe** Tech lead (\$50 bln)

 Software engineer (\$23 bln)

 Software engineer (\$49 bln)

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### Maxwell Ampong

Investor in West Africa

#### Guides on

- ✓ Pricing and measuring revenue
- ✓ Investor relationship building
- ✓ Structuring the right vesting scheme

#### Past experience

Strong connection with all the large companies operating in West Africa.

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## underwrite me


### David Rivier

Chief product officer  
 \$77m valuation


#### Guides on

- ✓ Product led growth
- ✓ Retention strategy and techniques

#### Past experience

 Product manager (\$1.75 bln)

**BARCLAYS** Senior manager global Innovation (\$27 bln)

 Business & product manager (\$8.5 bln)

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**WORLD FUND**

**Danijel Visevic**

Founding Partner at Worldfund  
\$350M AUM

Guides on

- ✓ Building a global brand
- ✓ Communication with different stakeholders

Past experience

**Project A** Director of communications  
(\$1bln under management)

Danijel Višević is a General Partner at World Fund. He is a recognised climate tech thought leader, policy professional and journalist by vocation. Before co-founding World Fund, he was Director of Communications at Project A Ventures, co-founder of Zetra Project and Krautreporter. Danijel was also co-responsible for the audio-visual appearance of Angela Merkel for nearly half a decade.

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**instacart**

**Santiago Martí Olbrich**

Senior software engineer  
\$6.4 bln valuation

Guides on

- ✓ Product execution secrets
- ✓ User centric testing

Past experience

Former founder

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**Wharton**  
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

**Oliver Spalding**

VP at Wells Fargo strategic capital  
Lecturer at Wharton School

Guides on

- ✓ Feature design and prioritization
- ✓ Financial forecasting with unit Economics
- ✓ Cash flow management

Past experience

**atomico** Venture Builder  
(\$750 mln under management)

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**seenons**

**Dax van Poortvliet**

Expansion manager  
\$3 mln in revenue

Guides on

- ✓ Choosing the right market
- ✓ Market entry strategies

Past experience

**VAN POORTVLIET** Strategy & innovation lead

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**Davidhorn**

**Sigrun Nilsen Rodrigues**

Chief marketing officer

Guides on

- ✓ Building the perfect community for your brand
- ✓ Effective growth on social networks

Past experience

**Microsoft** CMO @ Microsoft Norway  
(\$2.75 bln)

**Ardoq** VP of Marketing (\$700 mln)

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### Thaddeus Anim-Somuah

Global Se. Ma. Sustainability  
\$19 bln valuation

#### Guides on

- ✓ Managing complex projects
- ✓ Prioritization techniques

#### Past experience

 Engineering Manager  
Projects  
(\$165 bln revenue)

Thaddeus Anim-Somuah is Global Senior Manager Sustainability at Philips, Supervisory Board Member WorldVision Netherlands and Board Member Future Energy Leaders at World Energy Council. He also has held several other board and advisory positions at nonprofits, engineering organisations, universities and startups.

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## onetrust




### Guido Torrini

CFO at OneTrust  
\$5 bln valuation

#### Guides on

- ✓ Market research
- ✓ Feasibility analysis
- ✓ Competitor analysis

#### Past experience

 CFO (\$13 bln)  
 General Man. (\$600 bln)  
 Finance Dir. (\$50 bln)

Torrini is the CFO at OneTrust and brings over 20 years of experience building finance teams for large technology companies such as Dell and Cisco. Most recently, Torrini served as the CFO for Gympass valued at 2.4Bn, and CFO of Celonis (13Bn. Valuation), a late-stage process mining technology company that tripled revenues and quadrupled valuation in less than two years during his leadership.

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## TESLA


### Andrea Esposito

Program Manager at Tesla  
\$738 bln valuation

#### Guides on

- ✓ Managing tech-business teams
- ✓ Resolving team conflicts

#### Past experience

 Senior market strategist and  
senior audit associate (\$130 bln)

Andrea works as a supply chain program manager at Tesla Energy, covering all the raw materials needed to develop and produce superchargers. He holds an MS in Supply Chain Management from MIT and an MS in Mechanical Engineering from the Polytechnic University of Turin. In his previous work experience, Andrea covered a variety of roles in the manufacturing operations of the Italian branch of GE Aerospace, Avio Aero.

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# Executives In Residence (EIR)

EIRs from Columbia Business School provide expertise, advice, mentoring, coaching, as well as other support services to our student founders.



**Alfred Drewes**

**Expertise:**

Private Equity, Public Company CFO, C-suite Leadership, Consumer Products, Emerging Markets

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**Juan Alaix**

**Expertise:**

C-suite Leadership, Corporate Governance, General Management, Healthcare

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**Gary Appel**

**Expertise:**

Private equity, Entrepreneurship, Investment Banking

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**Alessandro Carlucci**

**Expertise:**

C-suite Leadership, Corporate Governance, Consumer Goods, Sustainability, Latin America

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**Niren Chaudhary**

**Expertise:**

C-suite Leadership, Corporate Governance, Consumer Goods, Private equity

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**Sharda Cherwoo**

**Expertise:**

C-suite Leadership, Consulting, Business Strategy, Private Equity, Technology & Digital Transformation, Corporate Governance

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**Toos Daruvala**

**Expertise:**

Strategy/Organization, Consulting, Leadership of Financial Institutions

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**Neale Godfrey**

**Expertise:**

Entrepreneurship, Finance, Marketing, Writing & Publishing

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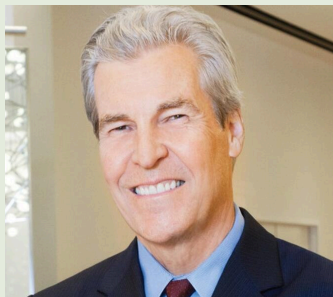


**Jesse Greene**

**Expertise:**

U.S Tax and Energy Policy, Corporate Governance and Strategy, Risk Management, Education, Development of Leadership Skills

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**Terry Lundgren**

**Expertise:**

C-suite Leadership, Corporate Governance, Retail, Fashion

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**Alissa Hsu Lynch**

**Expertise:**

Consumer Marketing, Digital Transformation, Healthcare, Corporate Governance, Leadership Development

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**Douglas Maine**

**Expertise:**

C-suite Leadership, Entrepreneurship, Private Equity, International Business, Corporate Governance and Strategy, and Family-owned Businesses

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**Eduardo Mestre**

**Expertise:**

Pharma Biotech, Cleantech, Healthcare, Retail, Enterprise, and Residential Real Estate.

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**Surya Mohapatra**

**Expertise:**

Healthcare & Global Health, Technology, Strategy & Corporate Governance, Start-ups & Non-profits

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**Vasant Prabhu**

**Expertise:**

Franchising, Foodser vice, Real Estate Entrepreneurship, and Structuring Deals

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**Joyce Roché**

**Expertise:**

C-suite Leadership, Corporate Governance, Marketing, Retail, Luxury Goods, Customer Goods

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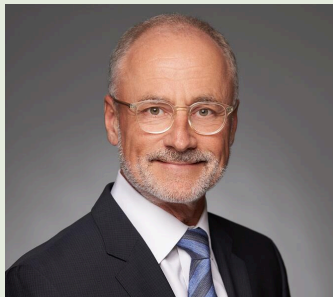


**Josh Sapan**

**Expertise:**

C-suite Leadership, Corporate Governance, Media/Global Entertainment/Broadcasting, Writing/Publishing

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**Joe Timko**

**Expertise:**

Strategy Consulting, Technology & Software, Operational Transformation, People Development, Decision-Making and Behavioral Economics

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**Len Sherman**

**Expertise:**

Entrepreneurship, Business Strategy, Product Development and Customer Experience

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**Scott E. Shapiro**

**Expertise:**

Real Estate, Entrepreneurship, Nonprofit Governance

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**Peter Tollman**

**Expertise:**

Strategy Consulting, Operational Transformation, Business Strategy, Healthcare

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**Peter Knitzer**

**Expertise:**

C-suite Leadership, Marketing, Product Development, Risk Management, Corporate Governance, Start-ups, and Business Strategy

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# Our mentors created and impacted the best companies in the world.

Where our mentors worked in:

Google   T E S L A  Microsoft ORACLE®

stripe   grammarly  skype™  Skyscanner

 Pinterest Talis  YOUNITED SEQUOIA  anthemis

Molten  WORLD FUND >\_ EARLYBIRD GFC PHILIPS

 RIPPLING Klarna Renault Group  instacart Goldman Sachs

COMPASS A C T O N   red alpine | Empowering Game Changers hoxton ventures

XAnge  J.P.Morgan McKinsey & Company Deloitte. BCG

BANK OF AMERICA  BARCLAYS  pwc Morgan Stanley

GENOA



FOUNDER SCHOOL