

Grow with a world-class network

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

Genoa mentors are experts who raised over \$8 billion and manage \$65 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

Chairman
(\$56B 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
(\$56 bln AUM)

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∞ Meta




Davide Testuggine

Software Engineer
\$1.5T valuation

Guides on

- Building a lean startup
- Choosing the right technologies

Past experience

 **Snap Inc.** Software Engineer (\$11B val.)
 **facebook** Applied Scientist
 **Microsoft** Applied Scientist 2 (\$3T val.)

[MORE ↗](#)



Eric Wang

Co-founder and CEO
Undisclosed sale

Guides on

- Organisation strategy
- Startup economics

Past experience

 **zenjoy** VP, Global Ops, Business & Corporate Dev. (\$40M val.)
 **RBC** Business Dev. & Sr. Account Manager (\$250M val.)

[MORE ↗](#)



BIRKENSTOCK

Anastazja Kolcowa

Head of digital experience
\$11.5B valuation

Guides on

- Understanding your user journey
- Planning for digital channels

Past experience

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

[MORE ↗](#)



PRIOR LABS

Sauraj Gambhir

Co-Founder & COO at Prior Labs
\$1B acquisition by SAP

Guides on

- Contract negotiations
- Round negotiations

Past experience

 **ING** Investment principal (\$450M AUM)
 **RBC** Director - Venture Investing, M&A & Strategy, RBC Ventures (\$1,5T AUM)

[MORE ↗](#)




Luca Maestri

Ex-Chief Financial Officer
\$4.1T valuation

Guides on

- ✔ Building for capital efficiency
- ✔ Optimizing for sustainable growth
- ✔ Strategic asset allocation

Past experience

- NOKIA**
Chief Financial Officer (\$61B val.)
- xerox**
Chief Financial Officer (\$115B val.)
-  **GE**
CFO and VP (\$302B val.)

Luca Maestri is the Senior VP of Corporate Services at Apple, where he oversees key strategic functions, as information systems, and technological innovation. Previously, he served as Apple's CFO for a decade, driving a period of extraordinary growth. With over 30 years of international experience at global giants, Luca is an expert in scaling complex enterprises and managing large-scale financial and operational teams.

[MORE ↗](#)



John Berger

Founder & CEO
\$90M valuation

Guides on

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

Past experience

 **sunnova** Founder & CEO (\$1.5B val.)

[MORE ↗](#)



Pierre Voineau

Deputy Country Manager Belux
\$120B valuation

Guides on

- ✔ Managing a product team
- ✔ B2B business development

Past experience

 **STELLANTIS** Regional Director BENELUX (\$18B val.)
 **Renault Group** Product Director (\$10B val.)

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Joe Sherman

Co-Founder
\$386M valuation

Guides on

- ✔ Building data-driven solutions
- ✔ Managing early-stage technical teams

Past experience

 **ANDURIL** Mission Software Engineer (\$60B val.)
 **accenture** Associate Manager (\$110B val.)

[MORE ↗](#)



Luca Prasso

VR Daydream
\$4.65T valuation

Guides on

- ✔ How to design hardware
- ✔ How to learn from failures

Past experience

 **DREAMWORKS** Global Character TD Supervisor (3.8B val.)
 **Microsoft** Demo Artist (\$3T val.)

[MORE ↗](#)



Prasanna Sankar


Co-Founder of Rippling.com
\$16.3B valuation

Co-Founder of Rippling, currently valued at \$16.3 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
(\$3T val.)

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Salomon Aiach


General partner
\$40M under management


Guides on

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

Past experience

 **EARLYBIRD** Principal France (\$100B val.)

 **Meta** Acquisition (\$1.5T val.)

 **Goldman Sachs** Product (\$115B val.)

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Alessandra Costa

Senior VP corporate operations
\$92B valuation

Guides on

- ✓ Selling perfectly
- ✓ Effective communication strategies

Past experience

 **cadence** VP of field engineering
(\$70B val.)

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Alessandro Cannas

Product Marketing Manager
\$4.65T valuation

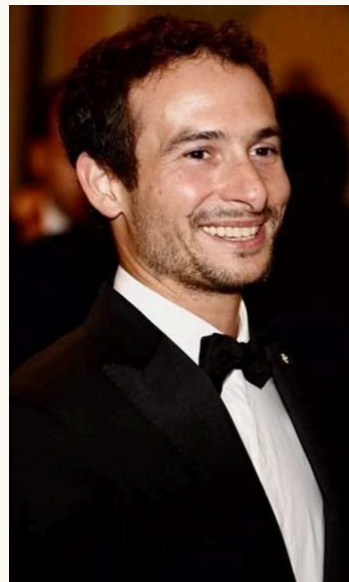
Guides on

- ✓ Building products for the masses
- ✓ AI product development

Past experience

 **P&G** Marketing Research Intern
(\$343B val.)

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Stefano Giacone

Product lead
\$15B valuation

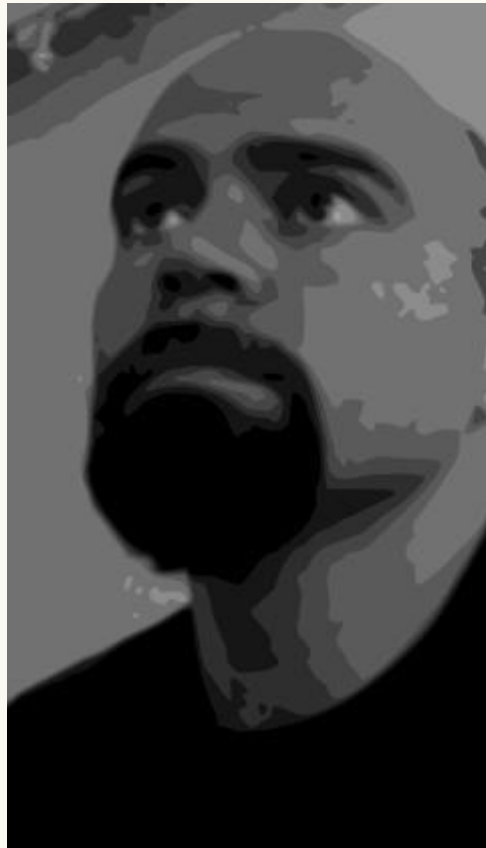
Guides on

- ✓ Leading a Product Team
- ✓ Retention Strategies

Past experience

 **STELLANTIS** ICT Process senior specialist
(\$18B val.) valuation

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COMPASS

Ugo Di Girolamo



Software Engineer & Co-founder
\$7B valuation

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.

Guides on

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

Past experience

-  Lead Engineer (\$44B val.)
-  Software Engineer (\$4.6T val.)

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ENVERUS



Thomas Sherman

Nodal Renewable Forecasting - CRCL Solutions

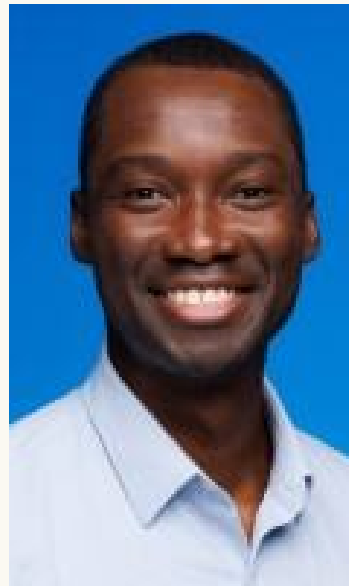
Guides on

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

Past experience

-  Founder and CEO (Undisclosed sale)
-  Phd student @ Notre Dame

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PARTSIMONY


Richard Mokuolu

Co-founder & CEO
\$10M valuation

Guides on

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

Past experience

-  Senior market strategist and senior audit associate (\$302B val.)

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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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DV&M

Maxime Laurent

Corporate M&A Associate
at Dunning Vallejo & MacDonald LLP

Guides on

- ✔ Incorporate the startup in the US
- ✔ Structuring for investor readiness

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Eric Feunteun

CEO at Diam Bouchage
\$620M valuation

Guides on

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

Past experience



Chief Operations Officer (\$10B val.)

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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Chafik Belhaoues

Founder
\$4.5M valuation

Guides on

- ✓ How to build tech software
- ✓ How to prioritize product features

Past experience

 **Scaleway** CTO (\$60M val.)

 Lead DevOps Engineer (\$1.9T AUM)

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Francisco Ruiz

Partner head of energy & utilities
\$249.2M revenue

Guides on

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

Past experience

NTT DATA Director of consulting (\$37B val.)

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Dan Mahoney

Ex-Senior Logistics Business Arch.
\$482B valuation

Guides on

- ✓ Optimizing supply chain value chains
- ✓ Architecting resilient logistics systems

Past experience

Life long career at Intel (482B val.)

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Grace Mittl

Co-founder and CEO

Guides on

- ✓ Turning an idea into a scalable product
- ✓ Building a brand with purpose

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Vittorio Viarengo

Ex-VP Cross-Cloud
\$61B valuation

Guides on

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

Past experience

ORACLE
VP of development (\$494B val.)

McAfee
CMO (\$14B val.)

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).

[MORE ↗](#)



COMPASS

Lycurgo Vidalakis

Tech lead
\$7B valuation

Guides on

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

Past experience

pininfarina Assistant Project Manager at Pininfarina (\$60M val.)

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Andres Blazquez

CEO at Genoa CFC

Guides on

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

Past experience

Fanatiz Board Member at Fanatiz

Sevilla FC Board Member at Sevilla FC

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Paolo Marengo

Founder

Guides on

- ✓ Managing engineering teams

Past experience

PONTECH Director

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Aaron Heth

Design Director, Co-Founder

Guides on

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

Past experience

zynga UX lead (\$12.7B val.)

[MORE ↗](#)



stripe

Flavia Oliveira

Technical Advisor to the CRO
\$159B valuation

Technical Advisor to the CRO 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 strategic growth across Stripe's highest-value client portfolio. She previously worked at Citibank (\$118.11B), where she was promoted three times in three years.

Guides on

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

Past experience

citi
Global account manager
(\$228B val.)

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Boris von Bieberstein

Head of Group Business
Development

Guides on

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

Past experience

cerlikon Senior VP, ME Business
(\$1.4B val.)

SIEMENS Head of Product - Gas
Turbines & Generators
(\$190B val.)

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اَوَفَعَار

Antonio Forenza

Founder and CEO
\$5M valuation

Guides on

- ✓ How to build hardware
- ✓ How to patent your technology

Past experience

Rakuten SVP and Head of R&D
(\$11.3B val.)

ARTEMIS Co-founder and CTO
(\$120M val.)

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JohnPaul Bennett

Director of Corporate Sales
\$5.2B valuation

Guides on

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

Past experience

PLEDGE IT Director of customer success
(\$9.6M val.)

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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 startups

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Massimo Andreasi Bassi

Co-Founder and CTO
\$1.5B valuation

Massimo Andreasi Bassi is a serial entrepreneur and Co-founder & CTO of Eight Sleep, leading technological innovation in consumer health tech. With a background spanning over two decades, he has successfully built and scaled multiple ventures, navigating the full lifecycle from early-stage development to acquisition.

Guides on

- ✔ Strategic technical decision making
- ✔ Technical co-founder dynamics
- ✔ Building hardware products

Past experience



Senior Software Engineer
(\$1.5B val.)

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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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ATLASSIAN

Carola Pescio Canale

AI Design Leadership
\$22.8B valuation

Guides on

- ✔ Building intuitive AI experiences
- ✔ User experience for complex products

Past experience



Senior Design Manager
(\$5.9B val.)

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NEXT⁴

Francesco Boano

Chief technology officer
\$50M valuation

Guides on

- ✔ Using Data for Product Development
- ✔ Technology Strategy

Past experience



Genoa - Co-founder



Research Scientist
(\$40.75B val.)

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Jacquelyn Heth

Co-Founder &
UX research consultant

Guides on

- ✔ Using data for product development
- ✔ Technology strategy

Past experience



UX Researcher (\$1.5T val.)



Senior UX Researcher
(\$4.1T val.)

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Stepful

Edoardo Serra

Co-founder and CTO at Stepful
\$476M valuation

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.

Guides on

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

Past experience

🍏 Software engineering (\$4.1T val.)

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Ilyas Frenkel

Founder

Guides on

- ✓ Identifying customer pain points
- ✓ Perfectly launching

Past experience

🍷 **Climatize** Fractional CMO (\$15M val.)

🌀 Head of Growth Marketing (\$50M val.)

📦 **SQUARESPACE** Growth marketing manager (\$7.2B val.)

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turntable

Ian Tracey

CEO & Co-Founder
Undisclosed sale
(Backed by Github Founder)

Guides on

- ✓ Product testing
- ✓ Finding your early users

Past experience

stripe Tech lead (\$159B val.)

📌 **Pinterest** Software eng. (\$11.6B val.)

▲ **ATLASSIAN** Software eng. (\$22.8B val.)

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ATLASSIAN

Paolo Ertreo

Senior Design Manager
\$22.8B valuation

Guides on

- ✓ Growth product design
- ✓ Acquisition, activation & retention

Past experience

🌐 **LinkedIn** Senior Design Manager (\$26.2B val.)

📁 **Dropbox** Senior Design Manager (\$5.9B val.)

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underwrite^{me}

David Rivier

Chief Product Officer
\$39M valuation

Guides on

- ✓ Product led growth
- ✓ Retention strategy and techniques

Past experience

✈️ **Skyscanner** Product manager (\$1.75B val.)

BARCLAYS Senior manager global Innovation (\$81B val.)

☎️ **skype** Business & product manager (\$8.5B val.)

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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
(\$1B AUM)

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
\$10B valuation

Guides on

- ✓ Product execution secrets
- ✓ User centric testing

Past experience

Former founder

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Sahil Sinha

Founder
\$15M valuation

Guides on

- ✓ Growing B2B products
- ✓ SaaS growth mechanisms

Past experience

INTUIT Product Manager
(\$110B val.)

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Source

Dax van Poortvliet

Head of revenue
\$115M valuation

Guides on

- ✓ Choosing the right market
- ✓ Market entry strategies

Past experience

seenons Head of Int. Ops & Expans.
(50M val.)

VAN POORTVLIET Strategy & innovation lead

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Glint Solar

Sigrun Nilsen Rodrigues

VP of Marketing
\$20M valuation

Guides on

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

Past experience

Davidhorn CMO (\$2.75B)

Microsoft CMO @ Microsoft Norway
(\$3T val.)

Ardoq VP of Marketing (\$700M val.)

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Thaddeus Anim-Somuah
Global Se. Ma. Sustainability
\$19B valuation

Guides on

- ✓ Managing complex projects
- ✓ Prioritization techniques

Past experience

 Engineering Manager Projects (\$165B 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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





Guido Torrini
CFO and COO at DDN
\$5B valuation

Guides on

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

Past experience

 CFO (\$5B)
 CFO (\$13B)
 General Man. (\$600B)
 Finance Dir. (\$50B)

Torrini is the CFO and COO at DDN and brings over 20 years of experience building finance teams for large technology companies such as OneTrust, 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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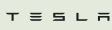



Andrea Esposito
Hand Development Lead
\$3B valuation

Guides on

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

Past experience

 Program Manager (\$738B)
 Sr. market strategist and Sr. audit associate (\$302B)

Andrea is currently the Lead Mechanical Engineer for Hand Development at Foundation. Prior to his current role, he served as a Technical Program Manager at Tesla, where he led the supply chain and mechanical design development for next-generation charging platforms. He holds an MS in Supply Chain Management from MIT. In his previous work experience, Andrea covered a variety of roles in the manufacturing operations of the Italian branch of GE Aerospace.

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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

[MORE](#) ↗

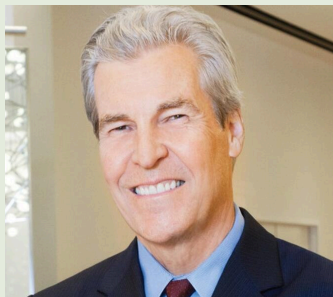


Jesse Greene

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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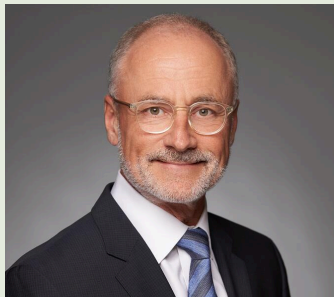


Josh Sapan

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

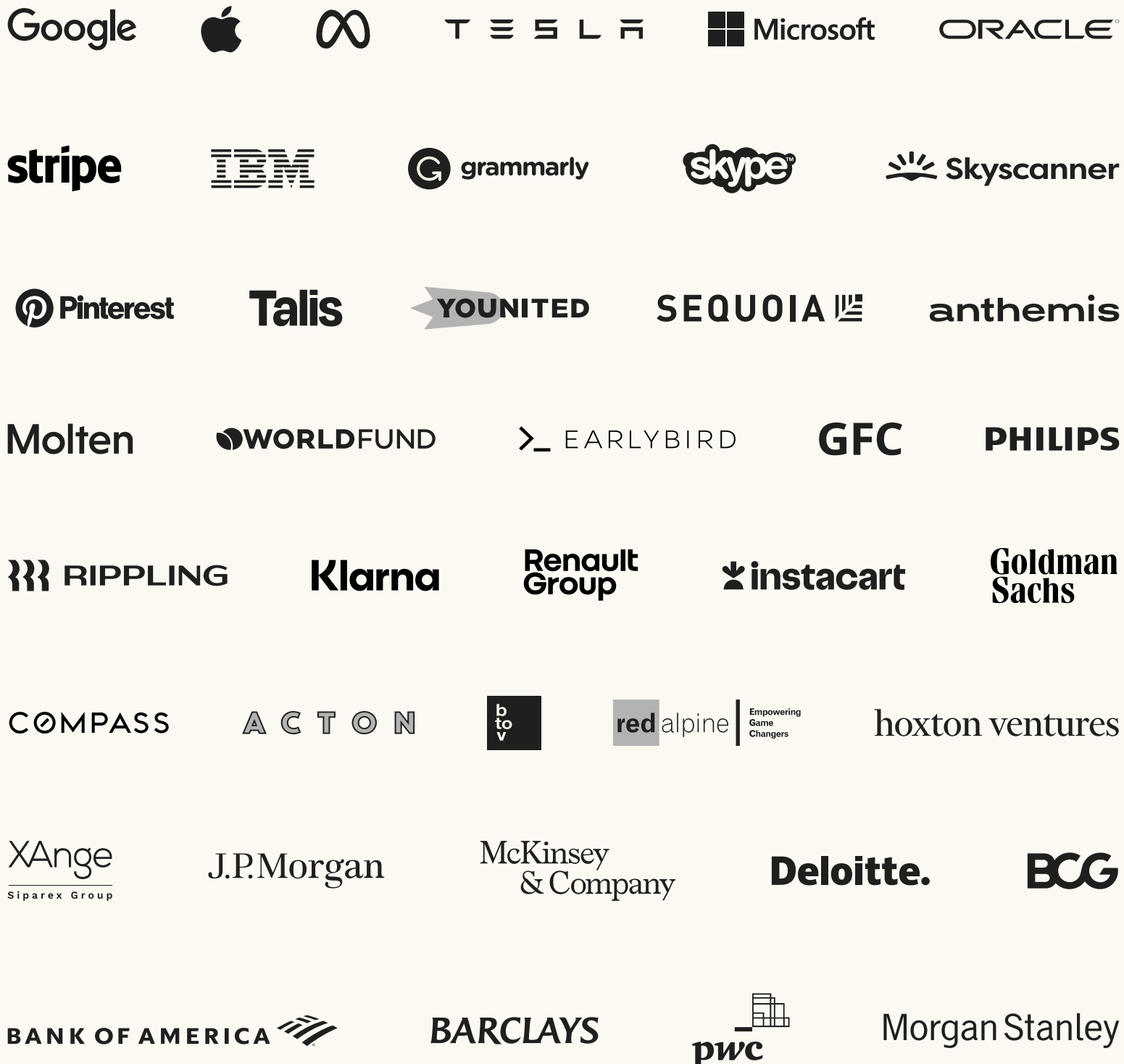
Expertise:

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:



GENOA



FOUNDER SCHOOL