

SPEAKERS

Fact sheet

Kam Ghaffarian

Executive Chairman and Co-Founder, X-energy

Laureate of the 2026 State Award of the Republic of Armenia for Global Contribution to High Technologies

Dr. Kam Ghaffarian is a technology entrepreneur and engineer with more than 35 years of experience in the space, energy and advanced technology sectors. Born in Iran, he moved to the United States at the age of 18. He is the Co-Founder of X-energy, which develops advanced nuclear energy technologies, and also co-founded Axiom Space and Intuitive Machines. He founded Stinger Ghaffarian Technologies, a technology and engineering services company that became one of NASA's largest contractors and was acquired by KBR in 2018. His work is focused on new technologies, applied engineering and turning ambitious ideas into scalable businesses.

Vahe Andonians

Founder and CEO, Cognaize

Vahe Andonians is the Founder and CEO of Cognaize, a pioneer of hybrid intelligence for financial services. He founded Cognaize to realise his vision of a world where financial decisions are based on all data, both structured and unstructured. Today, Cognaize's AI powers document and data workflows for some of the world's largest banks, rating agencies and insurers. Its model compression technology, context-understanding models and well-designed human-AI interaction let financial institutions automate complex document workflows with greater accuracy and at a fraction of the usual cost.

A serial entrepreneur, Andonians has founded several AI-based fintech firms and led them to successful exits. Before Cognaize, he led SCDM, a data-driven fixed income analytics firm founded in 2003, to its acquisition by Deloitte in 2017. He is a senior lecturer at the Frankfurt School of Finance & Management, a member of the Forbes Technology Council and a partner at Traidum, where he works with Moody's Analytics on a blockchain-based negotiation platform for structured credit products.



He studied Information Technology and High-Frequency Technology at the Federal Higher Technical Institute for Education and Experimentation in Mödling, Austria, and holds an MBA from the University of Liverpool, England.

Garik Israelian

Co-founder and Creative Director, STARMUS

Garik Israelian is an Armenian-Spanish astrophysicist, born in Yerevan, and co-founder of the STARMUS festival of science, art and music. He graduated from Yerevan State University and has worked at the Instituto de Astrofísica de Canarias in Tenerife since 1997. His research covers extrasolar planets and their host stars, massive stars, metal-poor stars and black-hole binaries. He has published around 500 articles with more than 10,000 citations.

In 1999, an international team led by Israelian, using data from the 10-metre Keck telescope in Hawaii, provided the first observational evidence that supernova explosions form stellar-mass black holes. In 2005 he compiled a library of the acoustic waves inside stars, the Starsounds project, which led to STARMUS, the festival he co-founded with Brian May, astrophysicist and guitarist of Queen.

In 2010 Israelian shared the Viktor Ambartsumian International Prize with Michel Mayor and Nuno Santos. He received the Canary Islands Gold Medal in 2014, and in 2016 asteroid 21057 was named in his honour.

Hassan Mansour

Chief Executive Officer, Monty Mobile

Hassan Mansour is CEO of Monty Mobile, a company whose growth he has helped shape for more than two decades. He began his career there in 2006 as an engineering graduate and rose through a series of roles to become General Manager and, in 2022, CEO. That journey, from the engineering floor to the executive suite, gives him rare operational insight into the business he leads.

Mansour leads global teams across Monty Mobile's international offices, and the company serves thousands of mobile operator and enterprise partners in more than 200 countries and regions. His approach to international markets is built on close, long-term relationships. Under his leadership, Monty Mobile continues to expand its reach in telecom, technology and fintech, focused on practical, scalable solutions for a global customer base.



Filippos Kyprianou

Director, Plug and Play

Filippos Kyprianou is Director of Plug and Play, leading the Silicon Valley innovation platform's work across Cyprus and Greece. He began his career as a consultant at Deloitte in the UK, advising enterprise clients on transformation, risk and delivery. He then moved into corporate innovation at Lloyd's Register, where he first worked with Plug and Play on the Safety Accelerator. He went on to build and grow Vonage's startup programme to 450 startups and worked at an MIT spinout before coming full circle to Plug and Play.

He holds an MBA from ESCP Business School and a BSc in Economics from the University of Nottingham.

Sona Grigoryan

Director, Plug and Play Armenia

Sona Grigoryan is Director of Plug and Play Armenia, where she leads initiatives supporting startups, innovation and international partnerships. She brings 20 years of experience in consulting, investment and programme leadership across Armenia and the wider region. Before joining Plug and Play, she served as CEO of CIVITTA Armenia and led projects in Armenia, Georgia, Uzbekistan and the UAE. She has also provided transaction support for numerous private equity and venture capital investments.

Sona is an ACCA affiliate, holds a master's degree from the Yerevan State Institute of Economics and has completed technology training at Stanford.

Laith Altimime

SEMI Europe, President

Laith Altimime is President of SEMI Europe, leading SEMI's activities in Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA). He has P&L responsibility and ownership of all programmes and events in the region, including SEMICON Europa, as well as industry standards, advocacy, community development and expositions. He builds and nurtures relationships with SEMI members worldwide, and with local associations and representatives of industry, government and academia.



Altimime has more than 30 years of international experience in the semiconductor industry. Before joining SEMI in 2015, he held senior leadership positions at NEC, KLA-Tencor, Infineon, Qimonda and imec. He holds an MSc from Heriot-Watt University, Scotland.

Ricardo Pinto

Europe Network Infrastructure CTO, Nokia

Ricardo Pinto is Europe Network Infrastructure CTO at Nokia, helping service providers, enterprises and cloud organisations build the connectivity foundations for the AI era. His focus spans IP, optical, cloud and data centre networking, enabling high-performance, secure and scalable infrastructures that can support AI workloads, distributed computing and next-generation digital services.

Pinto has more than 25 years of experience in telecommunications, with technical, commercial and leadership roles at Alcatel, Alcatel-Lucent and Nokia in technical support, new product introduction, bid management, business development and technical sales. Today he advises customers and industry stakeholders on the evolution of AI-era networks, focusing on automation, data centre networking and next-generation connectivity. He holds a degree in Information Systems and Computer Engineering from Instituto Superior Técnico, Portugal.