

# MIT Industrial Liaison Program Faculty Knowledgebase Report

---

2018 MIT Startup Workshop - AgTech

---

---

September 26, 2018 8:30 am - 12:45  
pm

---

8:30am Coffee and Registration

8:55am Welcome  
James Gado

Senior Director, Corporate Relations



James Gado

Senior Director, Corporate Relations

James E. Gado manages relations with US, European, and Middle Eastern companies with a focus on developing a broader MIT presence in the MENA region. Gado has oversight responsibility for the MIT Startup Exchange program and managers.

Gado comes to MIT after more than 25 years in the specialty materials and chemical industry. His experience spans the sectors of construction, microelectronics, automotive, and food/beverage packaging all on a global basis. The majority of his career was spent at W.R. Grace & Co., with positions also at American Cyanamid Company and Teradyne, Inc.

Gado has held leadership positions at the director level for mergers and acquisitions, strategic planning, marketing, and research and development management. He has developed new business, both organically and via acquisition, across the globe including the emerging markets of China and India. His domestic investment experience includes collaboration with Grace/Horn Venture Partners.

9:00am

Introductory Remarks  
Marcus Dahllöf  
Program Director, [MIT Startup Exchange](#)



Marcus Dahllöf  
Program Director  
[MIT Startup Exchange](#)

Marcus Dahllöf leads MIT Startup Exchange, which facilitates connections between MIT-connected startups and corporate members of the MIT Industrial Liaison Program (ILP). Dahllöf manages networking events, workshops, the STEX25 accelerator, opportunity postings, and helps define the strategic direction of MIT Startup Exchange. He is a two-time tech entrepreneur (one exit in cybersecurity), and has previously held roles in finance, software engineering, corporate strategy, and business development at emerging tech companies and Fortune 100 corporations in the U.S., Latin America, and Europe. Marcus was a member of the Swedish national rowing team and he is a mentor at the MIT Venture Mentoring Service.

9:05am

Corporate Investor Keynote  
Alan Kriz  
Strategic Alliance Manager, Crop Science, [Bayer](#)



Alan Kriz  
Strategic Alliance Manager, Crop Science  
[Bayer](#)

Alan Kriz is Global Strategic Alliance Manager and Crop Science Lead at Bayer LifeHub Boston. He has 30 years of experience in the agbiotech sector with Bayer, Monsanto (including DeKalb Genetics and Renessen LLC), BASF Plant Science, and as a faculty member at the University of Illinois. Kriz's entire career has focused on the delivery of innovative solutions to agriculture. He holds a BA in biology from Hiram College and a PhD in genetics from Indiana University.

9:25am

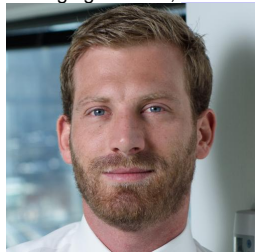
Startup Lightning Talks

Andrey Zarur

Cofounder & CEO, [GreenLight Biosciences](#)

Philip Wender

Managing Director, [Advanced Potash Technologies](#)



Philip Wender

Managing Director

[Advanced Potash Technologies](#)

Philip Wender is a managing director at Advanced Potash Technologies and joined the company about three years ago. He helps to oversee the technical development of the company, as well as connecting this side of APT with current commercial efforts. Wender is a mechanical engineer by training and graduated from Imperial College in London. After graduating, Wender spent three years at Goldman Sachs in London, working with M&A. After GS and prior to joining APT, he spent two years at The Carlyle Group's Special Situations Group.

Merry Smith

Senior Scientist, [C2Sense](#)



Merry Smith

Senior Scientist

[C2Sense](#)

Merry Smith is a Senior Scientist at C2Sense. In her research career, Smith has published 12 peer-reviewed papers focused on the study of carbon-rich framework-based nanomaterials from experimental and theoretical perspectives and the practical application of these and related nanomaterials as chemical sensors. She received her doctorate in chemistry from Wesleyan University, where she worked in Professor Northrop's laboratory. Smith also served as a postdoctoral scholar at Dartmouth College under the supervision of Professor Mirica.

Sorin Grama

Cofounder, [Transaera](#)



Sorin Grama

Cofounder

[Transaera](#)

Sorin Grama is the CEO of Transaera, which develops energy-efficient climate systems for indoor farms using a novel desiccant material. Previously, Grama cofounded and served as CEO and CTO of Promethean Power Systems, a manufacturer of thermal energy storage systems for refrigeration and cold-storage applications. He was the principal inventor of Promethean's thermal battery. Grama is also one of the founders of Greentown Labs, a grassroots effort which has grown to become the nation's largest cleantech incubator. He is trained as an electrical engineer, holds an MS in engineering and management from MIT, and currently teaches an undergraduate product design course at MIT.

Michael Miille

CEO, [Joyn Bio](#)



Startup Lightning Talks (continued)

Adam Behrens  
CEO, [Cambridge Crops](#)



Adam Behrens  
CEO  
[Cambridge Crops](#)

Adam Behrens is CEO of Cambridge Crops and has spent his career developing and translating polymer-related technologies in the areas of agriculture, healthcare, and nutrition. Most recently, he was a postdoctoral associate in the Langer Lab at MIT, where he still retains affiliate status. Behrens managed several projects, including the scale-up and clinical trial design/implementation of a nutrient stabilizing fortification technology. He was named to the Forbes 30 under 30 list in 2017. Behrens holds a BS in chemical engineering and a PhD in bioengineering from the University of Maryland.

Fabricio Pezente  
Cofounder & CEO, [Traive Finance](#)



Fabricio Pezente  
Cofounder & CEO  
[Traive Finance](#)

Fabricio Pezente is cofounder and CEO of Traive, an agri-fintech startup which aims at unlocking credit to farmers by connecting them to lenders and by providing ML-based credit risk assessment. Pezente is an executive with thirteen years of experience in banking, mostly in derivatives and credit. At MIT, he focused on technologies that impact the financial industry, participating in projects using smart contracts and AI algorithms for risk patterns recognition. Traive has been accepted into MassChallenge and Techstars, which are helping to develop its pilot.

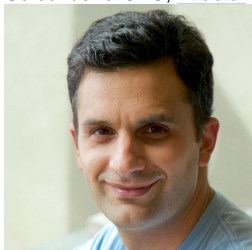
Rei Goffer  
Cofounder & Chief Strategy Officer, [ClimaCell](#)



Rei Goffer  
Cofounder & Chief Strategy Officer  
[ClimaCell](#)

Rei Goffer is the cofounder and chief strategy officer of ClimaCell. He served for ten years in the Israeli Air-Force as an F-16 Navigator and held managerial positions in the joint-operations unit and R&D department. Goffer holds a BA in economics from Ben Gurion University, an MBA from MIT Sloan, and an MPA from Harvard Kennedy School.

Bakur Kvezereli  
Cofounder & CEO, [Ztractor](#)



10:00am Networking Break

10:30am MIT Academic Innovator  
Caleb Harper

Principal Investigator and Director, OpenAg, MIT Media Lab

Caleb Harper

Principal Investigator and Director, OpenAg, MIT Media Lab

Caleb Harper is the principal investigator and director of the Open Agriculture Initiative (OpenAg) at the MIT Media Lab, where he leads a group of engineers, architects, urban planners, economists, and plant scientists in the exploration and development of high performance urban agricultural systems. Under his guidance, this diverse group (which he calls an “anti-disciplinary group”) is developing an open-source agricultural hardware, software, and data common aiming to create a more agile, transparent, and collaborative food system.

[View full bio](#)

10:55am Corporate Keynote  
Dilip Sundaram  
President, Corporate, [Mahindra Group - Americas](#)



Dilip Sundaram  
President, Corporate  
[Mahindra Group - Americas](#)

Dilip Sundaram is the President of Corporate Affairs at Mahindra Group Americas. Preceding this role, he was President of Mahindra Korea. Sundaram joined Mahindra Group as Senior VP and CFO of SsangYong Motors, one of Mahindra Group’s largest subsidiaries. Previously, Sundaram served in various senior management positions in finance and operations for blue chip companies, such as United Technologies, ArvinMeritor, and PWC. His career spans eight countries across four continents. Sundaram is an economics honors graduate from Calcutta University, received his MBA from the University of Rochester, and is a certified Chartered Accountant.

11:20am

Panel Discussion  
Marcus Dahllöf  
Program Director, [MIT Startup Exchange](#)



Marcus Dahllöf  
Program Director  
[MIT Startup Exchange](#)

Marcus Dahllöf leads MIT Startup Exchange, which facilitates connections between MIT-connected startups and corporate members of the MIT Industrial Liaison Program (ILP). Dahllöf manages networking events, workshops, the STEX25 accelerator, opportunity postings, and helps define the strategic direction of MIT Startup Exchange. He is a two-time tech entrepreneur (one exit in cybersecurity), and has previously held roles in finance, software engineering, corporate strategy, and business development at emerging tech companies and Fortune 100 corporations in the U.S., Latin America, and Europe. Marcus was a member of the Swedish national rowing team and he is a mentor at the MIT Venture Mentoring Service.

Caleb Harper

Principal Investigator and Director, OpenAg, MIT Media Lab

Caleb Harper

Principal Investigator and Director, OpenAg, MIT Media Lab

Caleb Harper is the principal investigator and director of the Open Agriculture Initiative (OpenAg) at the MIT Media Lab, where he leads a group of engineers, architects, urban planners, economists, and plant scientists in the exploration and development of high performance urban agricultural systems. Under his guidance, this diverse group (which he calls an “anti-disciplinary group”) is developing an open-source agricultural hardware, software, and data common aiming to create a more agile, transparent, and collaborative food system.

[View full bio](#)

Dilip Sundaram  
President, Corporate, [Mahindra Group - Americas](#)



Dilip Sundaram  
President, Corporate  
[Mahindra Group - Americas](#)

Dilip Sundaram is the President of Corporate Affairs at Mahindra Group Americas. Preceding this role, he was President of Mahindra Korea. Sundaram joined Mahindra Group as Senior VP and CFO of SsangYong Motors, one of Mahindra Group’s largest subsidiaries. Previously, Sundaram served in various senior management positions in finance and operations for blue chip companies, such as United Technologies, ArvinMeritor, and PWC. His career spans eight countries across four continents. Sundaram is an economics honors graduate from Calcutta University, received his MBA from the University of Rochester, and is a certified Chartered Accountant.

Jan Schnorr  
CEO, [C2Sense](#)



Jan Schnorr

Noon

Networking

12:45pm

Adjournment