

# MIT Industrial Liaison Program Faculty Knowledgebase Report

---

## 2026 MIT AI Conference

---

April 14, 2026 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

---

8:00 AM Registration with Light Breakfast

9:00 AM Opening Remarks  
Gayathri Srinivasan  
Executive Director, [MIT Corporate Relations](#)



Gayathri Srinivasan  
Executive Director  
[MIT Corporate Relations](#)

Dr. Srinivasan is a distinguished scientist who received her PhD in Microbiology from The Ohio State University in 2004, where she contributed to the discovery of the 22nd amino acid, Pyrrolysine (2002). She first came to MIT as an NIH Postdoctoral Fellow in Prof. Tom Rajbhandary's lab, where her research focused on understanding protein synthesis mechanisms in Archaea.

Dr. Srinivasan subsequently moved into the business development and technology licensing space, serving in MIT's Technology Licensing Office, where she helped commercialize technologies in medical devices and alternative energies. She then moved to UMass Medical School's Office of Technology Management in 2009 and to Emory University in Atlanta in 2014 as the Director of Public and Private Partnerships for the Woodruff Health Sciences Center. In 2019, Dr. Srinivasan joined Emory's Office of Corporate Relations as Executive Director, and in 2021, she led the Office of Corporate and Foundation Relations.

9:15 AM Identifying High-Impact Use Cases for Generative AI

Bruce Lawler

Generative AI is delivering real, measurable value in industry—but only for organizations that focus on the right use cases and execution patterns. This talk draws on a large-scale study of AI adoption across manufacturing and operations to highlight where Generative AI is creating the greatest impact today, from maintenance and quality to knowledge capture and decision support.

Beyond showcasing proven use cases, the presentation introduces a practical framework for identifying and prioritizing high-impact GenAI opportunities based on business value, data readiness, and time-to-value. Attendees will gain insight into how leading organizations move from experimentation to production, and how others can apply these lessons to accelerate their own GenAI initiatives.

9:45 AM

## AI and the Future of Negotiation

Jared Curhan

Negotiation is a daily practice in business—with clients and partners, vendors and suppliers, supervisors and colleagues, employees and recruits. In today's complex and interconnected world, the art of negotiation has never been more crucial. Successful negotiation requires self-awareness, preparation, and practice. However, it's challenging to find partners with whom you can do the latter.

What if AI could help?

Join MIT Sloan Professor Jared Curhan as he delves into best practices and groundbreaking research surrounding AI as a tool to hone your negotiation skills in a variety of situations.

10:15 AM

## The Great Acceleration: How AI is Transforming Innovation

George Franco

Innovation has been constrained by a fundamental bottleneck: the limits of what a domain expert can synthesize, explore, and act on within the bounds of human capacity. This talk examines the hypothesis that AI, positioned as a thinking partner and research accelerator rather than an automation engine, may represent the most significant expansion of that capacity in a generation. Drawing on active experimentation in enterprise AI deployment, this session presents an evolving practitioner's framework for AI-driven innovation: where amplification of human expertise creates genuine leverage, where the model breaks down, and what organizational conditions determine the difference. This is an honest account of an idea that is being implemented in a complex, asset-heavy, and operationally demanding industry. It is intended for leaders who are navigating the gap between AI's promise and its demonstrated payoff.

10:45 AM

## Networking Break

11:10 AM

## MIT Sloan Action Learning

Lisa Barone  
Senior Associate Director  
[MIT Sloan Action Learning Office](#)

MIT Sloan Action Learning is a teaching method where students take what they learn in the classroom and apply it to a real business challenge. Our labs vary widely in topics, industries, and regions with host organizations that range from local non-profits to multinational companies. Students gain real-world experiences while hosts gain sophisticated insights, custom-tailored to their unique business challenges.

11:15 AM

## The Human Frontier of AI: Balancing Risk, Reward, and Real-World Value

Bryan Reimer  
Research Scientist  
[MIT AgeLab](#)

Artificial intelligence is advancing quickly, but its greatest challenges are no longer only technical. As generative AI expands what machines can do, it also raises harder questions about trust, governance, responsibility, and human value. Researchers, developers, policymakers, investors, and consumers each define success differently, yet AI succeeds only when those perspectives are aligned around real-world usefulness. Drawing on insights from *How to Make AI Useful*, co-authored with Magnus Lindkvist, this talk argues that AI creates the most value when it works in partnership with people rather than attempting to replace them. It explores how people perceive, trust, and adapt to AI systems, and why human behavior often matters as much as technical capability in determining whether these technologies help or harm us. The real frontier of AI is not only what the technology can do, but how wisely society chooses to use it.

11:45 AM

Startup Lightning Talks  
Irina Gaziyeva  
Program Coordinator, [MIT Startup Exchange](#)



Irina Gaziyeva  
Program Coordinator  
[MIT Startup Exchange](#)

Irina Gaziyeva comes to Corporate Relations from the Mechanical Engineering Department at MIT where she worked 10 years as Administrative Assistant where she has supported four senior faculty members and their research groups (20-25 graduate students). Since 2018, Irina has acted as program coordinator, teaming-up with the program manager and program faculty lead for the MechE Alliance program. She has facilitated 45+ virtual seminars, workshops, and mentoring events in this informal role. Irina has also actively connected members of the MechE community to support student career development, mentorship, and networking opportunities with MIT alumni and industry. Before MIT, Irina held positions as Administrative Assistant and Member Representative at Brookline Dental and Tufts Health plan, respectively. Irina has also been a Community Organizer in Worcester, MA.

Irina earned her B.A., Management (with Innovation & Entrepreneurship track) at Clark University in Worcester, and her M.S., Program and Project Management from Brandeis University in Waltham. She has received many awards at MIT for outstanding service, and she has extensive community volunteer work to her credit.

Surya Swamy

Javier Segovia

Forest Flager

Arnulf Hagen

Sebastien Mannai

Andrew Surwilo

Valentin Heun

Nikita Lazarev

Abhi Yadav

Shai Schubert

12:45 PM

Lunch with Startups and MIT Partners Exhibit

2:00 PM

### Governing Open-Weight Generative Models

Ashia Wilson

The rapid diffusion of open-weight generative models has transformed creative practice but has also introduced new security risks, including large-scale misuse and the proliferation of illegal content such as non-consensual intimate imagery (NCII) and child sexual abuse material (CSAM). As generative systems become increasingly modular and decentralized, harmful capabilities often arise not from base models themselves but from lightweight fine-tuning and recombination strategies that are easy to distribute, difficult to trace, and hard to audit. This creates a fundamental challenge for trustworthy AI: platforms and regulators are expected to detect and mitigate high-risk models, yet legal, ethical, and adversarial constraints make direct content generation or inspection infeasible.

In this talk, I argue that securing open-weight generative ecosystems requires a shift from downstream content moderation to upstream, generation-free risk assessment at the level of model parameters. I highlight recent work showing that malicious or abusive fine-tuning objectives leave detectable signatures in weight space, enabling scalable screening and monitoring without prompting models, generating outputs, or accessing training data. More broadly, I outline a research agenda for weight-space accountability as a security primitive for open generative AI, with implications for platform governance, regulatory compliance, and the design of preventive safeguards as AI development continues to decentralize.

2:30 PM

### AI that Shares our Values

Caspar Hare

We want agential AI to reflect our values, pursue our goals, and act in our interests, but what exactly are these values, goals, and interests? In this talk, Caspar will explore this foundational question, offering a framework for thinking about human objectives in the context of AI alignment.

3:00 PM

### AI and The Next Industrial Revolution

David Mindell

Based on the ideas in his recent book *The New Lunar Society: An Enlightenment Guide to the Next Industrial Revolution*, in this talk, Mindell lays out some principles for envisioning the future of industry within a world of Artificial Intelligence. Marry product innovation to process innovation. Think in systems. Emphasize adoption. Design for resilience and flexibility. Get excited about maintenance and repair. Value knowledge at every level of work. See the human intelligence embodied in every product or system. Each is supported by examples from the original Industrial Revolution with relevance for the next one.

3:30 PM

### Networking Break

4:00 PM

### AI-Enabled Biological Discovery From Millions of Microbial Genomes

Yunha Hwang

Microbial genomes encode the largest molecular, biochemical and functional diversity on Earth, however, much of this diversity remains uncharacterized. Dr. Hwang's talk will focus on machine learning models and experimental approaches to discover and design novel microbial functions. These approaches enable more systematic identification of microbial capabilities and have applications in biomanufacturing, natural product discovery, and microbial technologies.

4:30 PM

Multimodal Biodiversity Monitoring

Sara Beery

Multimodal biodiversity monitoring integrates data from diverse sources, such as remote sensing, bioacoustic recordings, camera traps, citizen science, and scientific literature, to provide a more comprehensive and timely understanding of ecosystems. These modalities are complementary but heterogeneous, and traditional multimodal AI assumptions about co-registration, prevalence, and shared information content across modalities don't always hold. This talk will explore the principles, opportunities, and challenges of multimodal biodiversity monitoring, highlighting real-world applications and future directions for research.

5:00 PM

Networking Reception