

MIT Industrial Liaison Program Faculty Knowledgebase Report

2026 MIT NYC Symposium

June 10, 2026 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

8:50 AM

Welcome & Framing
Jim Flynn
Program Director, [MIT Industrial Liaison Program](#)



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Before MIT, Jim was the assistant dean of research business development at the UMass Amherst College of Information and Computer Sciences. Jim founded, built, and sold multiple technology companies in fintech and online media. He has bootstrapped startups and closed venture capital, angel, and private equity funding rounds. Jim also served as the Chief Operating Officer of a public company and a subsidiary of Pitney Bowes. He began his career at AT&T as a software developer, hardware engineer, and national account manager. Jim has authored patents and wrote one of the first books on Java programming. Out of all the roles he's held, Jim's favorite job title by far is dedicated dad of four. He earned a BS from Manhattan College and an MBA with concentrations in finance and international business from New York University.

Part 1: Money & Markets

9:00 AM

Digital Money and the Architecture of Next-Generation Payments

Neha Narula

Digital currencies and programmable financial systems are rapidly reshaping the foundations of global payments. In this talk, Neha Narula examines how innovations such as stablecoins, central bank digital currencies (CBDCs), and programmable money are redefining how value moves across borders and platforms. Drawing on research from MIT's Digital Currency Initiative, she explores the emerging architecture of next-generation payment systems and the strategic choices facing governments, financial institutions, and technology providers.

9:30 AM

Innovation and Competition in Financial Market Infrastructure

Haoxiang Zhu

Financial markets are undergoing a structural shift as advances in payment systems, digital currencies, and trading technology reshape how financial transactions are executed and settled. Drawing on his academic research on market design and experience at the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), where he worked on the transition to T+1 settlement and Treasury clearing, Professor Zhu discusses the key innovations in today's financial market infrastructure and their impact. He explores how digital currencies could enable faster settlement cycles, around-the-clock trading, and new forms of competition with incumbent banks and exchanges, while also raising important questions about the evolving structure of financial markets and new challenges to financial regulation.

Part 2: The Impact of AI

10:00 AM AI Reliance, Our Thinking, and Financial Decision-Making

Eric So

Drawing on emerging research and insights from his forthcoming book, Professor Eric So explores how reliance on AI tools is changing what experts learn, remember, and trust, and what this means for investors, analysts, and financial leaders navigating an AI-mediated world.

10:30 AM Networking Break

10:45 AM AI: Seeking Alpha

Gary Gensler

Artificial intelligence, the most transformative technology of our time, is changing the world of finance, money, and risk. In this talk, Professor Gary Gensler will explore the intersection of AI and finance, with a particular focus on investing and asset management. As using AI for automation and feature extraction becomes table stakes, how might investors generate alpha? How should investors develop AI-related investment theses – for the economy, markets, sectors, and individual companies? What lessons are there from past general-purpose technology financial booms? Might this be a boom or a bubble?

Part 3: Making it Real

11:15 AM MIT Startup Lightning Talks

Adam Swartzbaugh

Stuart Jones, Jr.

Karan Bharadwaj

Allison Riley Borison

MIT's motto, *mens et manus* (mind and hand), reflects the Institute's commitment not only to advancing knowledge, but to applying it in the real world. Nowhere is this more evident than in the startup ecosystem surrounding MIT, where research in digital money, market design, and artificial intelligence is translated into production systems.

In this session, three MIT startups will each present a brief lightning talk, showcasing how the ideas explored throughout the morning are already being deployed in practice. Together, they illustrate the emerging architecture of modern financial systems, from next-generation payment infrastructure and AI-driven risk and compliance to autonomous decision-making platforms and the economic layer for AI-driven systems.

11:45 AM

Closing Synthesis: What Financial Leaders Should Do Next

Jim Flynn

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12:00 PM

Adjourn & Lunch