

The Center for Advancing Innovation (CAI) Welcomes New Board Members — Guided by IBM Legend Nick Donofrio as Chair



Bethesda, Maryland Oct 29, 2025 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - The Center for Advancing Innovation (CAI), the world's first Tournament-Challenge-Accelerator transforming publicly funded discoveries into world-changing startups, proudly announces the addition of three distinguished new Board Members — Steven M. Ferguson, Sourav Sinha, and Vijay Lakshman — under the continued leadership of Chair

Nick Donofrio.

Together, these visionary leaders strengthen CAI's mission to turn discovery into destiny, bridging the worlds of science, technology, capital, and creativity to advance humanity.

Innovation | Acceleration | Transformation

Founded in 2012 by Rosemarie Truman, CAI is igniting a new era of entrepreneurship — where brilliant ideas meet bold execution and diverse dreamers become industry shapers. To orchestrate its twelve completed challenges, CAI received funding from the U.S. EDA's Build to Scale Program, Walton Family Foundation, Silicon Valley Community Foundation, Resonance Philanthropies, The Brain Tumour Charity, Arnold Ventures, AstraZeneca, Heritage Provider Network, and Avon Foundation.

Impact to date:

- 🔗 460+ CAI Startups launched
- 🔗 \$2.8 billion+ in capital raised by CAI Startups
- 🔗 4,000+ jobs created by CAI Startups
- 🔗 700+ CAI Advocates (startup mentors, advisors, and judges)
- 🔗 150+ global research partners

From NIH to NASA and Silicon Valley to the nation's heartland, CAI has become the engine behind innovation with purpose.

Our Model — Revolutionary

While others incubate, we ignite. We've built the world's first Tournament-Challenge-Accelerator, a high-velocity framework that compresses years of innovation into months of mastery.

We:

- 🔗 Tap into 170,000+ breakthrough inventions
- 🔗 Build elite startup teams across the globe
- 🔗 Train them in the business of science
- 🔗 Accelerate their path to market with precision, passion, and purpose
- 🔗 Capitalize!

Our formula doesn't just launch startups; it launches legacies.

The Next Frontier

Building on its "Empire of Impact" (Sheri Sobrato) and leveraging the vision and expertise of its newly expanded Board of Directors, CAI is orchestrating the Future of Health Innovation Tournament Challenge (FHITC), a unified global initiative designed to ignite breakthrough startups at the intersection of biotechnology and frontier computation.

Guided by CAI's new leadership, FHITC will accelerate solutions that heal, connect, and uplift humanity while expanding CAI's award-winning challenge-based accelerator model into new domains, including:

- 🔗🔗 *Cell & Gene Therapy*
- 🔗🔗 *Super-Computing with AI, Quantum, Machine Learning, etc.*
- 🔗🔗 *Therapeutics, Devices, Diagnostics, Digital Health, Sustainability & More*

We're calling on:

- 🔗 *Inventors* ready to bring breakthroughs to market
- 🔗 *Entrepreneurs* eager to build world-changing ventures
- 🔗 *Investors & mentors* who fuel the next great leap
- 🔗 *Communities* ready to unlock jobs, talent, and growth

Express interest or learn more at <https://bit.ly/fhitc>

CAI Board of Directors

Nick Donofrio — Chair of the Board & Pillar of Innovation

A visionary engineer and global technology leader, Nick Donofrio spent more than four decades at IBM, where he rose to Executive Vice President of Innovation and Technology and led the team that built the first computer chip.

A member of the U.S. National Academy of Engineering and a driving force behind the National Semiconductor Technology Center (NSTC) under the CHIPS and Science Act, Donofrio continues to guide CAI as its Chair and foundational pillar — a champion for diversity, integrity, and innovation with purpose.

CAI New Board Members

Steven M. Ferguson — Biomedical Innovation Leader, NIH

Steve Ferguson, Special Advisor to the NIH Director, brings over 30 years of leadership in biomedical innovation and technology transfer. His efforts have translated NIH discoveries into life-saving therapies and FDA-approved products generating billions in commercial value. A mentor and educator, he chairs the Technology Transfer Department at FAES Graduate School, guiding the next generation of bio-entrepreneurs.

Sourav Sinha — Longevity Visionary and Biotech Strategist

As General Partner and Head of Strategy at the Longevity Vision Fund, Sourav Sinha invests in companies extending healthy human lifespan. A *Forbes* 30 Under 30 honoree and World Economic Forum Global Shaper, he co-founded Oncolinx, a winning team in CAI's Breast Cancer Startup Challenge, and continues to redefine innovation at the intersection of aging, healthcare, and impact capital.

Vijay Lakshman — Gaming Pioneer and Serial Innovator

A creative visionary and Harvard Business School alum, Vijay Lakshman helped shape the iconic *Elder Scrolls* franchise at Bethesda Softworks, setting the standard for immersive digital storytelling. As Managing Director of Mindgrub Ventures, he has helped founders raise over \$50 million and is now spearheading initiatives uniting technology, education, and human potential.

CAI Leadership Team

Rosemarie Truman, Founder & CEO, launched CAI after leading global innovation strategy for 50 of the Fortune 100, driving \$384 billion in revenue growth and \$64 billion for IBM. She holds 11 trade secrets in due diligence and co-founded Ignite Social Impact, a funding platform democratizing investment in social innovation. Her ethos: *Always Be Giving. Always Be Kind.*

Dr. Cody J. Locke, Chief Innovation Officer, earned his PhD in Neuroscience from the University of

California, San Francisco, where he was a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellow. His research on the genetics of epilepsy established a new model for understanding brain function and disease. At CAI, he leads scientific and commercialization strategy, bridging deep science and entrepreneurship to transform research into real-world impact.

Join the Movement

CAI continues to scale its impact, transforming invention into impact, passion into progress, and potential into power.

Visit <https://centerforadvancinginnovation.com/about-us> to learn how CAI is building the future of innovation.

Because the future doesn't just happen; we build it together.

ABOUT CAI

The Center for Advancing Innovation (CAI) is a global public-private partnership and nonprofit dedicated to accelerating technology commercialization to ignite entrepreneurship, strengthen the economy, and maximize the potential of promising inventions. CAI's award-winning challenge-based accelerator, rigorous evidence-based due diligence, and capital-efficient, lean management models serve to hyper-accelerate high-performing startups and deliver outsized investor returns. Learn more at <https://www.centerforadvancinginnovation.com>.

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