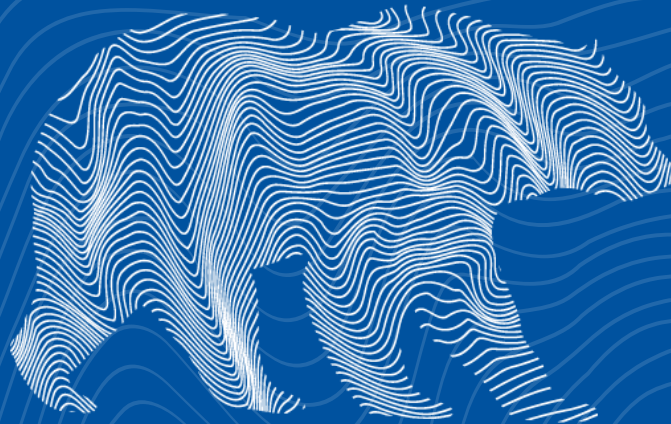


QUANTUM CALIFORNIA CONVENING

OCTOBER 22-23, 2026

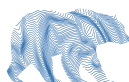


QUANTUM CALIF[✶]RNIA

Speaker Biographies

UCLA Covell Commons • Los Angeles, California

HOSTED BY



CALIFORNIA
BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

UCLA

Day 1: Thursday, October 22, 2026

Registration opens 8:00 AM · Program 9:00 AM · Reception 5:10 PM

SESSIONS AND SPEAKERS

8:00 AM	Registration and Networking
9:00 AM	Welcome Remarks Barak Bussel, Julio Frenk, Dee Dee Myers
9:15 AM	Keynote: The Momentum Behind Quantum California Assemblymember Buffy Wicks, Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel
9:35 AM	UCLA's Quantum Ecosystem and the UCLA Research Park Eric Hudson
10:00 AM	Fireside Chat with IBM and HRL: A New Chapter in California Jamie Garcia (moderator), Thaddeus Ladd, Matthew Borselli
10:25 AM	Networking Break
10:45 AM	Fireside Chat with Oratomic: From Breakthrough to Buildout Ray Jayawardhana (moderator), Dolev Bluvstein
11:20 AM	CIQC Renewed: Realizing the Quantum Ecosystem and Building Future Quantum Talent Miguel García-Garibay (introduction), Shimon Kolkowitz (moderator), Wes Campbell, Ania Bleszynski Jayich, John Preskill, Justin Perron
12:10 PM	Lunch
1:10 PM	Accelerating California's Quantum Workforce Kaina Pereira
1:20 PM	Google Quantum AI Sergio Boixo
1:40 PM	Panel: Quantum California, State Strategy and Investment in Motion Ah-Hyung "Alissa" Park (introduction), Nani Coloretti (moderator), Senator Tim Grayson, Dee Dee Myers, Theresa A. Maldonado
2:45 PM	Breakout 1A: Investment and Acceleration Barak Bussel (moderator), Alan Ho, Carmen Palacios-Berraquero, Tim Day, Dolev Bluvstein
2:45 PM	Breakout 1B: Testbeds and Proving Grounds Claire Cramer (moderator), Chris Spitzer, Gunther Haller, Jason Hyon, Ramesh Rao
2:45 PM	Breakout 1C: Local to Global Quantum Ecosystems, Crafting Regional Strategies and Partnerships David Steuerman (moderator), Tanya Bennett, Josh Boswell, Jermaine Hampton, Stefano Spagna
3:30 PM	Networking Break
3:40 PM	Breakout 2A: Quantum Industry, Applications and Algorithms Kristi Beck (moderator), Russell Stutz, Martin Roetteler, Khadijeh Sona Najafi, Elica Kyoseva
3:40 PM	Breakout 2B: Manufacturing and Production Chee Wei Wong (moderator), Lawrence Lee, Robert Larisch, Robert Visser, Saeed Seyed
3:40 PM	Breakout 2C: Connecting the Workforce and Talent Pipeline Richard Ross (moderator), Brian Monacelli, Ania Bleszynski Jayich, Javier Sanchez-Yamagishi
4:30 PM	Panel: Quantum Advantage Through Shared Opportunity Tricia Utterback (moderator), Paul Rennie OBE
5:05 PM	Closing Remarks and Preview of Day 2 Wrapping up the day and looking ahead to Day 2.
5:10 PM	Reception

Welcome Remarks

Speakers set the stage for the day ahead, share insights on California's leadership in the quantum sector following the launch of Quantum California the prior year, and discuss how this convening sets up participants for ongoing engagement and collaboration.

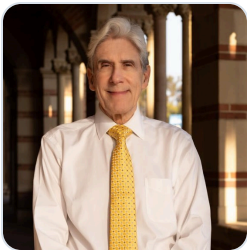


Barak Bussel

Managing Partner, 7i Capital; Chair, Center for Quantum Science and Engineering, UCLA

Barak Bussel is a serial entrepreneur, venture capitalist, and philanthropist focused on turning frontier science into companies with global impact. He is a founder and managing partner of deep tech venture firm 7i Capital and co-founder of Rowen Innovations, which develops photonic semiconductors for inference engines and energy applications. A physicist by training, Barak chairs UCLA's Center for Quantum Science & Engineering, dedicated to advancing quantum science and technology. Working across academia, industry, and government, he helps lead efforts to build and steward one of the world's most ambitious quantum ecosystems. Barak is also a managing partner at Third Wave Ventures, where he served as president of its quantum photonics portfolio company and sat on machine-vision pioneer Neven Vision's board until its acquisition by Google. He holds an MS in physics from UCLA, an MBA from UCLA Anderson, and a BS in physics from Harvey Mudd College.

Barak also emcees Day 1 and moderates Breakout 1A: Investment and Acceleration at 2:45 PM.



Julio Frenk

Chancellor, UCLA

Julio Frenk became the seventh chancellor of UCLA on January 1, 2025, and is a distinguished professor of health policy and management in the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health. He previously served as president of the University of Miami (2015–2024) and as dean of the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health (2009–2015), where he held the T & G Angelopoulos Professorship of Public Health and International Development. As Mexico's federal secretary of health (2000–2006), he launched Seguro Popular, a universal coverage program that extended care to more than 55 million previously uninsured people. He was founding director-general of Mexico's National Institute of Public Health and executive director for evidence and information for policy at the World Health Organization. He holds a medical degree from the National University of Mexico and a master of public health and a joint Ph.D. in medical care organization and sociology from the University of Michigan. He is a member of the U.S. National Academy of Medicine and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.



Dee Dee Myers

Senior Advisor to the Governor and Director, Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz)

Dee Dee Myers is Senior Advisor to Governor Gavin Newsom and Director of the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development. She brings more than three decades of experience in strategic communications, public affairs, corporate governance and social responsibility in both the public and private sectors. Most recently, she served as Executive Vice President, Worldwide Corporate Communications and Public Affairs for Warner Bros. She was a member of the company's executive committee and advised the CEO on a wide range of issues. Prior to joining Warner Bros., Ms. Myers served as Managing Director of the Glover Park Group. Ms. Myers served as White House Press Secretary during President Bill Clinton's first term and was the first woman to hold the position. After leaving the White House, she worked as a political analyst, commentator and writer as well as a contributing editor to Vanity Fair. She is the author of The New York Times best-selling book "Why Women Should Rule the World" and served as a consultant on the Emmy Award-winning drama series "The West Wing."

She joins the 1:45 PM panel, Quantum California: State Strategy and Investment in Motion.

Keynote: The Momentum Behind Quantum California

How the future of quantum is happening in California, and how the Golden State's research and academic institutions position it to lead for years to come.



Assemblymember Buffy Wicks

Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee, California State Assembly (14th District)

Assemblymember Buffy Wicks represents the East Bay in the California State Assembly, with a district spanning the communities of Oakland to Richmond, and includes the Cities of Berkeley, El Cerrito, and others. Assemblymember Wicks is Chair of the Appropriations Committee, after serving as Chair of the Assembly Housing Committee for two years prior. She has a track record of taking on the toughest fights to solve our state's housing crisis. In addition to this work, she focuses heavily on protecting our social safety net, keeping kids safe in the digital world, and championing the rights of women and working families. A lifelong organizer, Assemblymember Wicks previously served for President Barack Obama for six years.



Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel

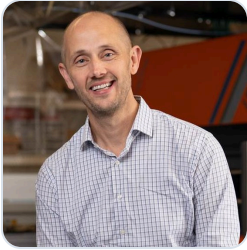
Chair, Assembly Budget Committee, California State Assembly (46th District)

Jesse Gabriel proudly represents the San Fernando Valley in the California State Legislature. As Chair of the Assembly Budget Committee, he works closely with legislative leadership and the Governor to craft California's state budget, advance key policy initiatives, and direct hundreds of billions of dollars in state spending. Recognized by The Sacramento Bee as a "California Influencer," Jesse has authored more than fifty new laws and established himself as a champion for children, working families, small businesses, reproductive freedom, gun safety, and the environment. Jesse also serves as Co-Chair of the California Legislative Jewish Caucus, where he has led statewide efforts to combat antisemitism, strengthen hate crimes laws, and unite diverse communities. Before entering public service, Jesse worked as a constitutional rights attorney, representing clients in state and federal courts, including the United States Supreme Court.

DAY 1 · 9:35 AM

UCLA's Quantum Ecosystem and the UCLA Research Park

A brief history of UCLA's work in quantum, the transformational UCLA Research Park now under construction with \$200M in state funding, and state investment through California Jobs First.



Eric Hudson

Davis Saxon Presidential Chair and Professor of Physics and Astronomy; Director, Center for Quantum Science and Engineering, UCLA

Eric Hudson is the Davis Saxon Presidential Chair and Professor of Physics and Astronomy at UCLA and Director of the UCLA Center for Quantum Science and Engineering. His research spans trapped-ion quantum computing, quantum sensing, and the development of a nuclear clock.

Fireside Chat with IBM and HRL: A New Chapter in California

Following IBM's acquisition of HRL Laboratories, leaders from both organizations discuss why the deal came together, how HRL's silicon qubit work fits IBM's roadmap, and what the combination means for California's quantum ecosystem and the road to fault-tolerant machines.



Jamie Garcia **MODERATOR**

Director, Strategic Growth and Quantum Partnerships; Senior Research Executive, IBM Research

Dr. Jeannette Garcia is the Director of Strategic Growth and Quantum Partnerships and Senior Research Executive at IBM Research – Silicon Valley. Dr. Garcia received her B.S. from Seattle University and her Ph.D. in Chemistry from Boston College. She joined IBM Research in 2012, initially working on advanced materials, before moving into quantum computing. She later became Global Lead for Quantum Applications in Quantum Chemistry and Science and subsequently Senior Research Manager for IBM's Quantum Applications and Software team. Her work has focused particularly on connecting quantum computing with chemistry, materials science, software, and industrial applications. Dr. Garcia is an IBM Master Inventor, has authored more than 40 scientific publications and holds more than 115 patents. She has also been recognized among MIT Technology Review's Innovators Under 35 and Foreign Policy's Top 100 Global Thinkers.



Thaddeus Ladd

Chief Scientist, Qubit Systems Laboratory, HRL Laboratories (an IBM company)

Thaddeus D. Ladd, Ph.D. is the Chief Scientist of the Qubit Systems Laboratory at HRL Laboratories in Malibu, California, where he now contributes to the research and development of silicon-spin-qubit-based fault-tolerant quantum computers. He earned his B.S. in Physics from Harvey Mudd College in 1998 before pursuing his graduate studies at Stanford University, where he obtained both an M.S. and a Ph.D. in Applied Physics in 2005. Prior to joining HRL Laboratories in late 2009, he performed project research at Stanford's Edward L. Ginzton Laboratory while holding appointments with the University of Tokyo and Japan's National Institute of Informatics. Thaddeus is a Fellow of the Fannie and John Hertz Foundation and a Fellow of the American Physical Society. His technical leadership and high-impact contributions at HRL have also been recognized with multiple HRL-internal honors, including HRL's prestigious Chairman's Award.



Matthew Borselli

Vice President, Qubit Systems Laboratory, HRL Laboratories (an IBM company)

Dr. Matthew Borselli is Vice President of the Qubit Systems Laboratory at HRL Laboratories, an IBM Company, where he leads development of fault-tolerant, large-scale quantum computers based on silicon spin qubits. In July 2026, his team published “A digitally controlled silicon quantum processing unit” in Nature, the first demonstration of quantum error correction executed entirely by a cryogenic CMOS controller. Previously, as Director of HRL’s Materials and Microsystems Laboratory, he co-led the company’s quantum technologies strategy, and as Department Manager of Device Technologies he oversaw research in quantum devices and other beyond-CMOS technologies. He has received HRL’s highest honor, the Chairman’s Award. He has co-authored more than 35 publications, including three in Nature, cited more than 5,000 times, and holds multiple U.S. patents. He received his M.S. and Ph.D. in Applied Physics from Caltech and his B.S. with honors in Physics and Mathematics from the University of Arizona.

Fireside Chat with Oratomic: From Breakthrough to Buildout

Oratomic's founders discuss the result that put a 10,000-qubit neutral-atom architecture on the map, the \$775M raise that followed, and what it takes to turn a breakthrough paper into a company building machines in California, from talent and facilities to the partners and customers it needs next.



Ray Jayawardhana **MODERATOR**

President, Caltech

Ray Jayawardhana is the 10th President of the California Institute of Technology and Professor of Astronomy. A renowned astrophysicist, Jayawardhana's research explores the origin and evolution of planetary systems and the formation of stars and brown dwarfs, with a view to investigating prospects for life in the universe. An award-winning writer, he has published four books and over 120 articles in prominent outlets. He is a recipient of the Guggenheim Fellowship, Radcliffe Fellowship, and Carl Sagan Medal. Prior to Caltech, he served as Provost of Johns Hopkins and as Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Cornell.



Dolev Bluvstein

Co-Founder and CEO, Oratomic; Visiting Associate Professor, Caltech

Dolev Bluvstein did a physics bachelors at UC Santa Barbara and a physics PhD at Harvard. During his PhD he and his colleagues developed an approach for quantum computing based on dynamically reconfiguring arrays of neutral atoms, and using this approach for realizing fault-tolerant quantum computation. He came to Caltech in 2025 to be a physics professor, and worked with other Caltech colleagues to accelerate research toward a fault-tolerant quantum computer. The early research success showed that utility-scale quantum computation may be possible sooner than expected, which led Dolev and his colleagues to start a company, Oratomic, where Dolev is now the CEO. Oratomic is on a mission to build a working fault-tolerant quantum computer.

Dolev also joins Breakout 1A: Investment and Acceleration at 2:45 PM.

CIQC Renewed: Realizing the Quantum Ecosystem and Building Future Quantum Talent

Academic and research partners behind the recently renewed \$37.5M NSF Quantum Leap Challenge Institute discuss how federal investment in California's quantum research apparatus continues to strengthen industry architectures, advance R&D, and cultivate future generations of workforce talent.



Miguel García-Garibay **INTRODUCTION**

Dean of Physical Sciences; Senior Dean of the College of Letters and Sciences, UCLA

Miguel A. García-Garibay is Senior Dean of the UCLA College and Dean of the Division of Physical Sciences, and a Distinguished Professor in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry. He joined UCLA in 1992 after earning a B.S. at the University of Michoacán in Mexico and a Ph.D. at the University of British Columbia and completing postdoctoral work at Columbia University. He served as vice chair and then chair of the chemistry and biochemistry department before his appointment as dean of physical sciences in 2016, and has been senior dean of the College since 2022. Under his leadership the division grew to six departments and eight institutes and centers, hired more than 80 faculty, and expanded its work in quantum information science, climate science and fusion. His research spans organic photochemistry, solid-state organic chemistry and crystalline molecular machines, with more than 230 publications. He is a member of the National Academy of Sciences and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and received the 2025 ACS James Flack Norris Award in Physical Organic Chemistry.



Shimon Kolkowitz **MODERATOR**

Roger Herst Chair Associate Professor of Physics, UC Berkeley; Director, NSF Challenge Institute for Quantum Computation (CIQC)

Shimon Kolkowitz is an experimental atomic physicist and quantum scientist, with his research focusing on precision measurement, quantum sensing, and metrology. He graduated with distinction from Stanford University in 2008 with a B.S. in Physics, and earned his PhD in experimental physics at Harvard University in 2015. He was subsequently a National Research Council (NRC) postdoctoral fellow at JILA/NIST/CU Boulder from 2015-2017. From 2018 to 2023 he held a faculty position in the Department of Physics at the University of Wisconsin - Madison, before joining the faculty at UC Berkeley in 2023, where he is currently an Associate Professor of Physics and holder of the Roger Herst endowed Chair. He was recently selected as a 2026 Heising-Simons Faculty Fellow and a 2026 Miller Research Professor, and in 2026 he became the Director of the NSF Challenge Institute for Quantum Computation.



Wes Campbell

Professor of Physics, UCLA

Wesley C. Campbell is a professor of physics and astronomy at UCLA, where he leads a research group that uses trapped atomic ions and ultracold molecules for quantum information science, including quantum computing, simulation and sensing. His group's recent work includes quantum error-correcting codes hosted within single atoms, isotopically tailored ion qubits, and designer molecules for quantum measurement. He earned a B.S. in physics from Trinity University in 2001 and a Ph.D. in physics from Harvard University in 2008, then was a postdoctoral researcher and assistant research scientist in Chris Monroe's trapped-ion group at the Joint Quantum Institute (University of Maryland/NIST). He joined the UCLA faculty in 2012 and became full professor in 2022. He is a Fellow of the American Physical Society, a Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation Experimental Physics Investigator and a 2023 Fulbright grantee, and currently chairs the APS Division of Atomic, Molecular and Optical Physics.



Ania Bleszynski Jayich

Professor of Physics; Co-Director, NSF Quantum Foundry, UC Santa Barbara

Ania Bleszynski Jayich is a Professor of Physics, the co-Director of the Quantum Foundry, and the co-Director of the Eddleman Center for Quantum Innovation at the University of California Santa Barbara, where she holds the Bruker Endowed Chair for Science and Engineering and the Virgil Elings Endowed Chair for Quantum Science. She received her PhD in physics from Harvard in 2006. Her research interests include quantum assisted sensing and imaging on the nanoscale using defects in diamond, quantum optomechanical systems, and the advanced synthesis of materials that enable scalable quantum technologies. She is the recipient of the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers, the Air Force Office of Scientific Research Young Investigator Award, an NSF Career award, and the Geoffrey Frew Fellowship.

She also joins Breakout 2C: Connecting the Workforce and Talent Pipeline at 3:40 PM.



John Preskill

Richard P. Feynman Professor of Theoretical Physics; Director, Institute for Quantum Information and Matter, Caltech

John Preskill is the Richard P. Feynman Professor of Theoretical Physics at Caltech and the Director of the Institute for Quantum Information and Matter, a National Science Foundation Physics Frontiers Center. Aside from his full-time Caltech role, Preskill is also a part-time employee of Oratomic, Inc., a company building fault-tolerant quantum computers. A member of the National Academy of Sciences, he received the 2024 John Stewart Bell Prize and the 2025 Academic Pioneer in Quantum Award. Preskill has mentored more than 140 Ph.D. students and postdoctoral scholars at Caltech, many of whom are now leading researchers at institutions and companies worldwide.



Justin Perron

Associate Professor, CSTEM Physics, CSU San Marcos

Justin Perron is an experimental physicist whose research focuses on silicon quantum electronics. He also leads multiple quantum education and workforce development projects with a focus on expanding access and lowering barriers at predominantly undergraduate institutions.

Accelerating California's Quantum Workforce

The California Workforce Development Board shares how the State is aligning its workforce and education systems with the needs of the quantum industry, and how employers, colleges, and training partners can plug in.



Kaina Pereira

Executive Director, California Workforce Development Board

Kaina Pereira was appointed Executive Director of the California Workforce Development Board (CWDB) by Governor Gavin Newsom in February 2024. The CWDB is the Governor's policy and advisory body on workforce development, responsible for aligning state workforce programs with the needs of employers and workers, and its Workforce Accelerator Fund is investing \$3 million in quantum and fusion career pathways. Before joining the Board he spent six years at the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz), serving as Senior Advisor for Business Development from 2020 to 2024 and, from 2018 to 2020, as Deputy Director and Assistant Deputy Director of Business Investment Services, where he worked on business attraction, expansion and retention. Prior to state service he worked in the private sector as a business and real estate consultant and as a financial strategist and e-commerce manager. He holds an MBA from the University of California, Davis, and a bachelor's degree in business administration from San Diego State University.

Google Quantum AI

Google Quantum AI shares the latest from its Santa Barbara lab, from the Willow processor and the Quantum Echoes verifiable-advantage result to the path toward a useful quantum computer.



Sergio Boixo

Director, Quantum Computing, Google Quantum AI

Sergio Boixo leads the Quantum Computer Science group at Google Quantum AI. The mission of Google Quantum AI is to build best-in-class quantum computing for otherwise impossible problems. The Quantum Computer Science group builds quantum and classical computer science and engineering to materialize useful quantum computing. Sergio has a doctorate in physics from UNM, was a research professor at USC, and a postdoc at Harvard and Caltech. Previously Sergio worked as a computer engineer.

Panel: Quantum California, State Strategy and Investment in Motion

Members of the Governor's Cabinet and legislative leaders share the State's investments, what they have learned, and what is on the horizon, including how programs such as Jobs First work in tandem with industry to encourage commercialization, workforce development, and the integration of quantum technology.

Dee Dee Myers also joins this panel. Her bio is with the 9:00 AM Welcome Remarks.



Ah-Hyung "Alissa" Park **INTRODUCTION**

Ronald and Valerie Sugar Dean; Professor, Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering, UCLA Samueli School of Engineering

Ah-Hyung "Alissa" Park is the Ronald and Valerie Sugar Dean of the UCLA Samueli School of Engineering and a professor of chemical and biomolecular engineering, and civil and environmental engineering. Before joining UCLA in 2023, Alissa was a faculty member at Columbia University for 16 years, where she served as the Lenfest Earth Institute Professor of Climate Change and Director of the Lenfest Center for Sustainable Energy. Her research focuses on sustainable energy and materials conversion pathways with an emphasis on integrated carbon capture, utilization and storage technologies. Dean Park recently received the 2026 Francis P. Garvan-John M. Olin Medal from the American Chemical Society for inspiring and mentoring the next generation of engineers to address the grand challenge of climate change through innovative chemistry.



Nani Coloretti **MODERATOR**

Cabinet Secretary, Office of Governor Gavin Newsom

Nani Coloretti has served as Cabinet Secretary in the Office of Governor Gavin Newsom since February 2025, after joining the office as Senior Counselor earlier that year. She previously served as Deputy Director of the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (2022–2025), Senior Vice President for Business and Financial Strategy at the Urban Institute (2017–2022), and Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (2014–2017). From 2009 to 2014 she held several roles at the U.S. Department of the Treasury, including Assistant Secretary for Management and Acting Chief Operating Officer of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, which she helped establish. Earlier, she was Budget Director and before that Policy Director in the Office of San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom. She holds a Master of Public Policy from the University of California, Berkeley, and a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and Communications from the University of Pennsylvania.



Senator Tim Grayson

Chair, Senate Banking and Financial Institutions Committee; Senate Majority Whip, California State Senate (9th District)

Tim Grayson was previously elected to serve in the California Assembly in November 2016 and to represent the 15th Assembly District, which encompassed portions of Contra Costa County. In 2010, Grayson was elected to serve on the Concord City Council, winning reelection in 2014 and serving on the Council until his election to the Assembly. He also served as Concord's Mayor from 2014-2015. Grayson co-founded the Contra Costa Family Justice Center and has long advocated for victims of domestic violence, human trafficking, and child and elder abuse. As an Assemblymember, Grayson authored laws prioritizing qualified California students in UC admissions (AB 1674) and increasing UC cost transparency (AB 1655), and introduced legislation for \$7 billion in higher education construction and repairs. Grayson also helped create the Budget Deficit Savings Account, with an initial \$1.75 billion deposit, to protect education and public services from future recessions. He now serves as the Chair of the Senate Banking & Financial Institutions Committee and as the Senate Majority Whip.



Theresa A. Maldonado

Vice President for Research and Innovation, University of California Office of the President (UCOP)

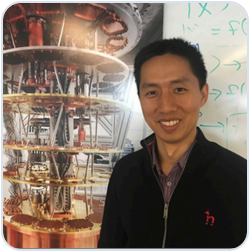
Theresa A. Maldonado is the systemwide Vice President for Research & Innovation (R&I) at the University of California Office of the President (UCOP). As the UC system chief research officer, she leads large-scale initiatives by harnessing the expertise and assets of the 10 UC campuses, three UC-managed DOE national labs, UC Agriculture & Natural Resources, and UC Health. VP Maldonado champions team science to produce transformative outcomes through research, research translation, innovation, and policy. In addition to her long academic background in Texas and California, Dr. Maldonado served two terms at the National Science Foundation, including as Division Director in the Engineering Directorate. At NSF she was engaged in advancing engineering research centers, education, and commercialization initiatives. Before entering academia, she was a member of technical staff at AT&T Bell Laboratories. Dr. Maldonado earned the BEE (Highest Honors), MSEE, and PhD degrees in Electrical Engineering from the Georgia Institute of Technology. Her research background is in nonlinear optical devices and materials, electromagnetics, and optical fiber technologies. She is a registered Professional Engineer in Texas and current President of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS).

DAY 1 · 2:45 PM

Breakout 1A: Investment and Acceleration

How venture and institutional capital are accelerating the growth of California's quantum companies. North Ridge Room.

Barak Bussel moderates and Dolev Bluvstein joins the panel. Their bios are with the 9:00 AM Welcome Remarks and the 10:45 AM Oratomic fireside chat.



Alan Ho

Co-Founder and CEO, Qolab

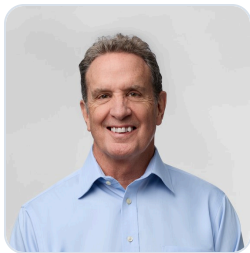
Alan Ho brings extensive experience from his role as the former Head of Product at Google Quantum AI. At Google, he led the business and product development efforts, contributing to significant advancements in the field of quantum computing. Alan played an integral role in the team that achieved the milestone of quantum supremacy, demonstrating a quantum computer's capability to outperform classical supercomputers in specific tasks. Before founding Qolab, Alan was a Director of Product at Apigee and held senior roles at other tech companies, enhancing his expertise in product management and development.



Carmen Palacios-Berraquero

Founder and CEO, Nu Quantum

Dr. Carmen Palacios-Berraquero is the Founder and CEO of Nu Quantum, the leading distributed quantum computing company, building the networking infrastructure to enable quantum computers to scale. Since launching in 2018, Nu Quantum has grown to over 70 highly skilled, interdisciplinary staff and expanded internationally with teams in Spain and the US. In December 2025, Nu Quantum also announced a record-breaking \$60 million Series A fundraise, the largest for a quantum networking company ever. An award-winning physicist and inventor, Carmen holds a PhD in physics from the University of Cambridge and an undergraduate degree from Imperial College London. She is also a Cofounder and Director of UKQuantum, the UK's quantum industry group, and has been the leader of several pro-equality and LGBTQIA+ visibility groups and initiatives in STEM.



Tim Day

Chairman and CEO, Monarch Quantum

Dr. Timothy Day has amassed over 35 years' experience as an executive in the photonics industry. Dr. Day currently serves as the Chairman & CEO for Monarch Quantum, a U.S. based quantum photonics company building integrated photonics systems – Quantum Light Engines™ – for the quantum ecosystem in computing, sensing and networking. Dr. Day earned his Ph.D. degree in Electrical Engineering from Stanford University; his thesis entitled, “Frequency Stabilized Solid State Lasers for Coherent Optical Communications” is still used as a foundational reference in today's atomic-molecular-optical (AMO) physics labs for many quantum applications. Dr. Day co-founded New Focus where he developed an extensive patent and product portfolio for markets such as telecommunications, atomic spectroscopy and laboratory research. As New Focus' Senior Vice President and Chief Technical Officer, Dr. Day helped transition the company through its Initial Public Offering (IPO) in May 2000, and contributed to raising over \$500M through private equity and two (2) public offerings. During his tenure, New Focus grew revenue to over \$40M/quarter, with over 2,000 employees across eight (8) sites worldwide. Dr. Day and his team completed two (2) acquisitions and realized over \$330M in total revenue, and ultimately oversaw the sale of the company to Bookham Technology PLC for \$338M in 2004. Subsequently, Dr. Day co-founded Daylight Solutions, an advanced manufacturer of photonics products for molecular detection, illumination and imaging. As Daylight's CEO and Board Chairman, he oversaw Daylight's growth to become the worldwide leader in Quantum Cascade Laser (QCL) based products in both defense and commercial markets. In June 2017, Dr. Day orchestrated the acquisition of Daylight by Leonardo DRS, and served as Senior Vice President and General Manager of the DRS Daylight Solutions business unit.

Breakout 1B: Testbeds and Proving Grounds

The latest on how California's national laboratory, university, and space-focused testbeds are expanding access to the facilities where quantum technology is developed and proven. West Coast Room.



Claire Cramer **MODERATOR**

Executive Director, Berkeley Quantum and the Challenge Institute of Quantum Computation (CIQC), UC Berkeley

Dr. Claire Cramer came to Berkeley in 2025 from the federal government, where she played a major part in shaping the U.S. Department of Energy's strategy for quantum information science, helping to develop DOE's QIS research portfolio and contributing to the evolution of the National Quantum Initiative through collaborations across federal science agencies. Her earlier service at the Office of Management and Budget, the National Science Foundation, and NIST gives her rare insight into how scientific priorities are set, how major research programs are funded, and how large multi-institutional collaborations succeed. Dr. Cramer holds a joint portfolio that spans both NSF CIQC — an NSF-funded, multi-university institute — and Berkeley's growing campus-wide quantum program. She coordinates research activities, guides strategic planning, strengthens educational programs in quantum information science, and builds partnerships across academia, industry, government, and national laboratories.



Chris Spitzer

Quantum Research Program Manager, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory

Chris Spitzer is the lead for the Quantum Information Science and Technology group at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, where he runs research programs on the development and operation of quantum computers. Previously he served as a program officer in UC Research Initiatives at the UC Office of the President, where he led grant-making programs covering physical sciences and engineering. Chris has held several policy-related positions, including an AIP Congressional Fellowship in the U.S. Senate and a AAAS S&T Policy Fellowship in the State Department. Outside of LBNL, he is a co-founder of the nonprofit Engineers and Scientists Acting Locally. He holds a Ph.D. in particle theory from the University of Washington and bachelor degrees in physics and electrical engineering / computer science from UC Berkeley.



Gunther Haller

Chief Technologist, Technology Innovation Directorate, SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory

Dr. Gunther Haller is Chief Technologist of the Technology Innovation Directorate at SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory, where he has led technical strategy and innovation since January 2022. Over a career at SLAC spanning several decades, he has held senior engineering leadership roles including Deputy Associate Laboratory Director and Director of the Advanced Instrumentation for Research Division, with expertise in accelerator physics, detector technology, and large-scale experimental design. His work has contributed to major scientific collaborations including the Large Area Telescope on the Fermi Gamma-ray Space Telescope, the CMB-S4 project, and serial femtosecond crystallography. He is currently managing the SLAC/Stanford University effort of the ANL/SLAC Department of Energy (DOE) Q-NEXT National Quantum Information Science Research Center. He holds a Ph.D. from Stanford University.



Jason Hyon

Director, Quantum Space Innovation Center (QSIC), NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory

Jason J. Hyon has served as Chief Technologist for the Earth Science and Technology Directorate (ESTD) since 2003 at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California, and currently also serves as Director of the Quantum Space Innovation Center. In these roles, he has led strategic technology planning, guided investment in emerging capabilities, and organized major NASA technical workshops, while advancing cutting-edge technologies for NASA Earth science missions. Previously, he managed the development of ground data systems for NASA Earth science missions. His technical interests include microwave remote sensing; lidar and quantum technologies; real-time systems; data systems and large-scale archival architectures; and AI/ML-based digital twins. He has authored numerous technical publications and is the recipient of the NASA Outstanding Leadership Medal, the NASA Exceptional Achievement Medal, and multiple JPL Magellan Awards.



Ramesh Rao

Director, Qualcomm Institute (Calit2); Distinguished Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering, UC San Diego

Ramesh Rao, PhD, is the Director of the Qualcomm Institute and Calit2 at UC San Diego and a Distinguished Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering in the Jacobs School of Engineering. A UCSD faculty member since 1984, he has built his career around interdisciplinary research, shared infrastructure, and partnerships that move emerging technologies from fundamental research toward real-world use. At the Qualcomm Institute, Dr. Rao helps steward advanced, professionally-supported facilities—including nanofabrication, photonics, sensing, visualization, and prototyping resources—designed to serve researchers across disciplines and, increasingly, external partners. He also leads and convenes collaborations spanning universities, industry, government, and national laboratories. In 2026, Calit2 hosted the Quantum San Diego Convening as part of California's statewide quantum initiative. Dr. Rao's perspective brings a university testbed and infrastructure lens to efforts connecting California's research facilities, talent, and partners to accelerate the development, validation, and translation of quantum technologies across the broader ecosystem.

Breakout 1C: Local to Global Quantum Ecosystems, Crafting Regional Strategies and Partnerships

How international and regional partnerships and investments are turning California's regions into industry clusters for manufacturing, supply chain, testing, and more. South Bay Room.



David Steuerman **MODERATOR**

Executive Director, Center for Quantum Science and Engineering (CQSE), UCLA

David Steuerman, Ph.D., is the Executive Director of the Center for Quantum Science and Engineering at UCLA, where he helps lead initiatives connecting frontier research, industry, and government to advance quantum science and technology. His career spans pioneering research in molecular electronics and spintronics, academic leadership as a professor, and senior roles at IonQ and the Kavli Foundation, where he helped advance scientific research, strategic partnerships, and emerging technologies. At UCLA, he has played a leading role in establishing the SoCal Quantum Alliance, bringing together universities, national laboratories, industry, and regional partners to accelerate quantum innovation. His work also spans national quantum initiatives, including the NSF Challenge Institute for Quantum Computation, and efforts to connect and strengthen regional quantum ecosystems across the United States. Having experienced transformative discoveries firsthand, he is passionate about building the partnerships, infrastructure, and opportunities that enable exceptional scientists and engineers to do their most impactful work.



Tanya Bennett

Australian Consul-General, Los Angeles, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Ms. Bennett was appointed Australian Consul-General Los Angeles in December 2023. She is a senior career officer with Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and was most recently Assistant Secretary, First Nations Taskforce. Bennett has previously served overseas in Japan and at Australia's Permanent Mission to the United Nations in Geneva. In Canberra, Ms Bennett has served as Assistant Secretary, Communications Branch and as a lead negotiator on the Free Trade Agreement with the European Union. Ms. Bennett holds a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) from Queensland University and a Master of Foreign Affairs and Trade degree from Monash University. She is married with two children.



Josh Boswell

Vice President of Strategy and Policy, REACH Central Coast

Josh leads REACH's strategy and policy efforts, advancing initiatives on the Central Coast of California that strengthen regional competitiveness and drive industry growth, workforce alignment, and investment. He works with business and government leaders to align policy, partnerships, and market opportunities. Josh brings experience advising global companies on investment and policy strategy at the intersection of business and government, having spent over a decade in Washington, DC at Crowell & Moring International.



Jermaine Hampton

Vice President, Workforce Development and Strategic Initiatives, Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC)

Jermaine Hampton is a mission-driven economic development and workforce leader with 16 years of experience across the nonprofit, public, and private sectors. As Vice President of Workforce Development and Strategic Initiatives at the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation, he leads regional strategies that align industry, education, workforce, government, and community partners to strengthen priority sectors, expand quality jobs, and advance inclusive economic mobility. In 2025, Hampton was appointed to the Los Angeles County Workforce Development Board, deepening his work to align policy, investment, and systems across the region. Previously, he held leadership roles in Washington, D.C., including with the Department of Employment Services under the Bowser administration, and directed federally funded WIOA programs in DeKalb County, Georgia. A nationally recognized leader and 2015 NAWDP Leadership Award recipient, Hampton champions data-informed public-private partnerships that support business growth, strengthen talent pipelines, and create equitable economic opportunity throughout Los Angeles County and beyond.



Stefano Spagna

Senior Vice President of Strategic Initiatives, Quantum Design

Stefano Spagna earned his Ph.D. in Materials Science from the University of California, San Diego, in 1995 before joining Quantum Design as a Research Physicist. He was appointed Chief Technical Officer in 2008 and has since played a pivotal role in advancing the company's scientific and technological leadership. In 2015, he spearheaded Quantum Design's undergraduate physics laboratory initiative, expanding access to hands-on scientific education. An accomplished researcher and published author, he joined the editorial board of the American Physical Society's Physical Review Applied in 2019. He also helped establish July 10 as "Helium Conservation Day," promoting global awareness of helium preservation. In recent years, Stefano has led strategic initiatives across Quantum Design's global operations. In 2025, he was appointed Senior Vice President of Strategy and Innovation at Quantum Design International.

Breakout 2A: Quantum Industry, Applications and Algorithms

Where quantum applications are headed and which use cases are closest to delivering commercial value. North Ridge Room.



Kristi Beck **MODERATOR**

Director, Livermore Center for Quantum Science, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory

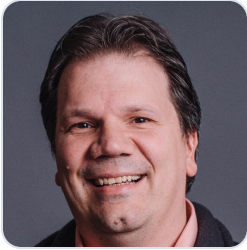
Dr. Kristin (Kristi) Beck is a staff scientist working with the LLNL Quantum Coherent Device Physics Group and the director of the Livermore Center for Quantum Science. Her research interests span the quantum computing stack, from device hardware and gate design to testbed architecture. Kristi joined LLNL in 2020. Prior to LLNL, Kristi was a senior physicist at the startup quantum computing company IonQ. She completed a postdoctoral fellowship in the Joint Quantum Institute at the University of Maryland in 2018. She received her Ph.D. from MIT in 2016, her M.Phil. from the University of Cambridge in 2010 and her B.S. in Physics and B.A. in Mathematics from the University of Rochester in 2009. Her scholarship has been recognized through several fellowships including an NSF Graduate Research Fellowship and a Winston Churchill Scholarship.



Russell Stutz

Senior Director, Product Technologies, Quantinuum

Dr. Russell Stutz is currently leading the Product Technologies group of Quantinuum, where he is responsible for the long-range technical roadmap for quantum computing hardware. His team works on technology advancements in areas including quantum operations, microfabrication, photonics, and electronics. He received his PhD from the University of Colorado-Boulder in atomic, molecular, and optical physics studying the electron electric dipole moment in trapped molecular ions. After receiving his PhD, Dr. Stutz worked in industrial research and development at AOSense developing quantum sensors, as well as at Lockheed Martin. He started at Honeywell Quantum Solutions, a precursor of Quantinuum, in 2016, holding several roles including leading the design, build, and test of the company's commercial quantum computers before taking his current position.



Martin Roetteler

Vice President, Quantum Applications R&D, IonQ

Dr. Martin Roetteler is the head of IonQ's Quantum Applications R&D team and works closely with customers to prove out the value of IonQ's technology. In 2001, he received his PhD in computer science from the University of Karlsruhe in Germany. Throughout Martin's career, he has been a world-leader in quantum algorithms and applications. Martin has over 30 years of experience in quantum computing, 21 years of experience working in the industry, and 18 years of management experience. From 2007-2013, he led the quantum computing team at NEC Laboratories America. During that time, he developed tools for scalable quantum resource estimation as the main PI of a team in the Quantum Computer Science program funded by the Intelligence Advanced Research Projects Activity (IARPA). From 2013-2024, Martin was with Microsoft, where he was a founding member of the Azure Quantum and Azure Quantum Elements teams that focused on building applications for quantum computing, HPC, and AI. During his tenure at Microsoft, he led multiple research and engineering teams, including the Q# Libraries team. Martin joined IonQ in 2024. Martin is an inventor of over 110 patents world-wide and co-author of more than 140 highly cited academic publications, including pioneering work on benchmarking quantum applications and on resource optimized implementations of Shor's algorithm.



Khadijeh Sona Najafi

Quantum Solution Manager, IQM Quantum Computers

Khadijeh Sona Najafi is a quantum supercomputing scientist working at the convergence of quantum computing, AI, and high-performance computing. As Quantum Solution Manager at IQM Quantum Computers, she leads algorithm development for integrating quantum processors into HPC environments and national laboratory ecosystems, translating hardware capability into real workloads across materials science, chemistry, optimization, and machine learning. She previously spent four years as a research scientist at IBM Quantum, where she led cross-disciplinary teams of physicists, AI researchers, and engineers, ran large-scale simulation experiments, and built end-to-end software connecting quantum circuits to tensor-network methods across QPUs, CPUs, and GPUs. Before IBM, she held postdoctoral appointments at Caltech and Harvard University, leading research in quantum machine learning and quantum neuromorphic computing. She received a Google Quantum AI award in 2019.



Elica Kyoseva

Director, Quantum Applications, NVIDIA

Dr. Elica Kyoseva is Director of Quantum Applications at NVIDIA, where her focus is pushing the boundaries of quantum-classical computing. Her work centers on designing and advancing quantum algorithms that unlock capabilities beyond the reach of classical computation alone — built to run on and scale with NVIDIA's supercomputing architectures. She partners closely with leading organizations across the quantum industry — from hardware providers to enterprise end users — co-developing algorithms tailored to real-world constraints of today's and tomorrow's quantum devices. A particular focus is quantum algorithms for health and life sciences, where her team is driving breakthroughs with the potential to transform drug discovery, genomics, and other critical challenges.

Breakout 2B: Manufacturing and Production

What it takes to move quantum hardware from lab-built prototypes to commercial-scale manufacturing, and how to clear the bottlenecks in enabling technologies. West Coast Room.



Chee Wei Wong **MODERATOR**

Tannas Professor of Engineering, Electrical and Computer Engineering, UCLA

Prof. Wong examines precision, qubit and ultrafast measurements in mesoscopic devices and systems. He serves as the Tannas Professor of Engineering at UCLA and, prior a tenured faculty member at Columbia University. He is elected a member of the National Academy of Inventors, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and a Fellow of APS, IEEE, OSA, ASME and SPIE. He is awarded the DARPA Young Faculty Award, the NSF CAREER Award, the NIH Early Scientist Trailblazer Award, and the 3M Faculty Award among others. He completed his Doctorate of Science and Master of Science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and his dual degree, B.Sc. and B.A. with highest distinction, from the University of California at Berkeley. His work has appeared in more than 180 journals and 340 conference papers, including Nature, Science, and Phys. Rev. series. He has delivered 140 plenary and invited talks in industry, universities and national laboratories, and awarded 40 patents and provisional patents. He serves on the Advisory Boards of nation-wide foundations. He has supervised and trained 73 PhD students and research scientists, about a third are now in their own professorships including full professors, and guided 112 PhD thesis committees.



Lawrence Lee

Senior Director, Commercialization Group; Program Director, NIST Quantum Manufacturing Engineering Center, SRI International

Lawrence leads the Strategic Development team in SRI's Commercialization Group that transitions technologies from research to the market through industry partnerships, licensing, and spinouts. His team also delivers commercialization services for U.S. Federal R&D programs including the NIST Quantum Manufacturing Engineering Center and DARPA Commercial Accelerator. Lawrence joined SRI in 2023 from Xerox following the merger of Xerox's Palo Alto Research Center (PARC) and SRI. Lawrence was VP of Strategy & Planning at Xerox where he led global R&D strategy and drove the creation of a corporate venture studio at PARC. Earlier in his career Lawrence was an entrepreneur at two startups; he co-founded Zoundry and was VP of Business Development at Mirror Worlds Technologies. Lawrence holds an MBA from the Yale School of Management and bachelor's degrees from the Management & Technology program at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School and School of Engineering.



Robert Larisch

Senior Vice President, Global Supply Chain, PsiQuantum

Robert (Rob) Larisch holds a Bachelor's degree in Physics and Astrophysics from the University of California, Berkeley. He began his career as a Nuclear Submarine Officer, serving five years before moving to Silicon Valley's semiconductor capital equipment industry, where he spent eight years at KLA and seven at Applied Materials. He then led the global supply chain for Silicon Graphics, before returning to Applied Materials for another decade. Drawing on more than two decades building supply chains for the world's most advanced technologies, Rob now leads the global supply chain at PsiQuantum, where his team sustains R&D and engineering excellence while scaling and maturing the supply chain and associated business processes to deliver the world's first useful, fault-tolerant quantum computer.



Robert Visser

Vice President, Engineering Technology, Office of the CTO, Applied Materials

Robert J. Visser, VP of Engineering Technology in the CTO office at Applied Materials, Inc., spearheads business and engineering ventures in emerging markets such as advanced displays, packaging technology, and photonic components for augmented reality, flat optics, and quantum computing. With four decades of expertise, he has revolutionized flat panel display manufacturing and made significant breakthroughs in photolithography, plasma physics, and organic electronics. He currently leads the Quantum Technology activities at Applied Materials, leveraging the most advanced semiconductor technology to improve customers' device quality for both quantum computing, sensing, and communications. In 2020, Dr. Visser was recognized by the Society for Information Display with the Fellows Award for his pioneering work in thin film encapsulation of organic light-emitting diode and flexible displays. His leadership extends to an advisory role in the field of chemistry at Applied Materials' Center of Excellence at the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay. He holds master's and PhD degrees in theoretical and physical organic chemistry from Leiden University, The Netherlands. His impactful career encompasses 128 granted patents across multiple disciplines and 78 journal and conference publications.



Saeed Seyed

Senior Vice President, System Hardware Engineering, Rigetti

Saeed Seyed is Senior Vice President of System Hardware Engineering at Rigetti Computing, where he leads multidisciplinary teams developing and integrating superconducting quantum computing systems. His responsibilities span hardware architecture, cryogenics, control systems, engineering validation, and the processes required to transition advanced technology from research prototypes to repeatable, deployable systems. He works closely with quantum scientists, fabrication engineers, manufacturing partners, and suppliers to advance system performance, reliability, and scalability. Saeed brings more than 30 years of engineering and technology leadership across quantum computing, enterprise networking, and hyperscale infrastructure. Before joining Rigetti, he held senior engineering leadership roles at Cisco Systems and Celestica. At Cisco, he led large global engineering organizations and contributed to the development and commercialization of more than 100 hardware products. His experience includes design for manufacturability, global manufacturing partnerships, product development, thermal engineering, and scaling complex hardware platforms. An inventor with 21 U.S. patents, Saeed holds a Master of Science in Mechanical Engineering from Santa Clara University. He brings a practical perspective on the engineering, supply chain, and manufacturing capabilities needed to scale quantum hardware commercially.

Breakout 2C: Connecting the Workforce and Talent Pipeline

How California's education and workforce systems are preparing the talent pipeline for careers in quantum. South Bay Room.

Ania Bleszynski Jayich also joins this panel. Her bio is with the 11:20 AM CIQC panel.



Richard Ross **MODERATOR**

Program Director, Master of Quantum Science and Technology (MQST), Department of Physics and Astronomy, UCLA

Dr. Richard Ross directs the UCLA Master of Quantum Science and Technology (MQST) degree program and serves as the Education Director of the NSF Challenge Institute for Quantum Computing (CIQC). Prior to joining UCLA in the fall of 2021, he was a Principal Scientist and Manager at HRL Laboratories, where his research focused on the development of semiconductor heterostructure materials and devices for advanced electronics applications including electron spin-based qubits for quantum information science applications.



Brian Monacelli

Professor and Director of Laser Technology, Pasadena City College

Brian Monacelli teaches hands-on laboratory skills via the Pasadena City College Laser Technology program. He works as a principal optical engineer and technical group supervisor of the Optical Implementation group at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory. He led the optical assembly and alignment of the Coronagraph Instrument for the Roman Space Telescope and the SHERLOC Instrument of the Mars2020 Perseverance Rover, among other optical instruments. He also serves on the Optics and Electro-Optics Standards Council where he supports the development of optics standards and chairs their education and outreach committee. He holds a BS in optical engineering from Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, an MS in optics from the University of Rochester, and a PhD in optics from the University of Central Florida/CREOL.



Javier Sanchez-Yamagishi

Associate Professor of Physics and Astronomy; Assistant Director, Eddleman Quantum Institute, UC Irvine

Javier Sanchez-Yamagishi is an associate professor in UC Irvine's Department of Physics & Astronomy. His lab explores the physics of two-dimensional quantum materials and their applications in quantum sensing. He earned his PhD in physics at MIT and was a postdoctoral fellow at the Harvard Quantum Optics Center. He is an NSF CAREER Award recipient, a UCI Hellman Fellow, a Research Corporation for Science Advancement Scialog Fellow, and a National Academy of Sciences Kavli Frontiers of Science Fellow. At UCI, he teaches an interdisciplinary undergraduate seminar on quantum science research. He also serves as the assistant director of the UCI Eddleman Quantum Institute, which supports research and education in the Quantum Sciences.

Panel: Quantum Advantage Through Shared Opportunity

International partnerships shaping California's quantum future, with a focus on the growing collaboration between California and the United Kingdom.



Tricia Utterback **MODERATOR**

International Trade and Investment Representative, Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz)

Patricia (Tricia) Utterback serves as the International Trade and Investment Representative for Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and India at the California Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz). She advances California's global economic ties by supporting export opportunities for California companies and attracting foreign direct investment to the state. Tricia brings nearly a decade of international trade and government experience, including roles in global market entry consulting and state-level economic and emergency coordination. She holds a B.A. from the University of California, San Diego, and an M.Sc. in Diplomacy, Business, and Trade, with distinction, from Loughborough University London.



Paul Rennie OBE

British Consul General in Los Angeles

Paul Rennie OBE is His Majesty's Consul General in Los Angeles, leading the UK Government's representation across Southern California, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, Hawaii, and three U.S. territories. His remit covers trade and investment, science and technology, climate, creative industries, and education, and he oversees consular services for roughly 600,000 British residents in the region. He previously led the Trade and Global Issues Group at the British Embassy in Washington, D.C. (2020–2024), and has served as Deputy High Commissioner in Malaysia, Head of the Political Department at the British High Commission in India, Head of the G8/G20 Team in the Cabinet Office, Private Secretary to the Cabinet Secretary, and Head of the Economic Department at the British Embassy in Brazil. A professional economist, he was the first Diplomatic Service Economist recruited by the Foreign Office in 2001. He was appointed OBE for services to UK–India relations and holds an honorary doctorate from Heriot-Watt University.

Day 2: Friday, October 23, 2026

Breakfast 8:00 AM · Program 9:00 AM · Optional lab tours 1:35 PM

SESSIONS AND SPEAKERS

8:00 AM	Breakfast and Networking
9:00 AM	Welcoming Remarks Shouleh Nikzad, Lark Park
9:25 AM	Expanding in the Golden State Kelly LoBianco (introduction), Alex Shih, Jay Guilmart, Reza Nejabati, Stefanie Tardo, Keith Wright
10:30 AM	Building the California Ecosystem Rosa Di Felice, Hiroshi Ooguri, Michael Sailor, Nathaniel Gabor
11:25 AM	Networking and Coffee
11:45 AM	Panel: Opportunities in Aerospace, Maritime, and Defense Karl Jacob (moderator), Jay Lowell, Andrew Mollner, Joanna Ptasinski
12:40 PM	Lunch and Presentation: Quantum California, Strategy and What's Next Trelynd Bradley
1:30 PM	Closing Remarks Closing reflections on the two days and the commitments carried forward, from GO-Biz and UCLA.
1:35 PM	Site Tours and Visits (Optional) Guided tours of UCLA quantum research labs, including trapped-ion quantum computing, quantum optics, and superconducting qubit facilities.

Welcoming Remarks

Speakers set the stage for the day ahead and share how California's research institutions and public partners are carrying Quantum California forward.



Shouleh Nikzad

Chief Technologist, NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory

Shouleh Nikzad is the Chief Technology Officer at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), Caltech. Prior to this role Nikzad led the NASA-JPL's Science Division where astrophysics, planetary science, and Earth science research were conducted. Additionally, Nikzad is a JPL Fellow, Senior Research Scientist, Principal Engineer and holds the highest level of visiting faculty appointment at Caltech's Physics Math, and Astronomy Division. She is an elected member of the National Academy of Engineering (2026), Caltech Distinguished Alumni Award 2026, Fellow of the National Academy of Inventors, APS, IEEE, SPIE, and Optica. Her recognitions also include American Astronomical Society's 2023 Weber Award, IEEE Photonics Aron Kressel Award, Asteroid Nikzad-540413, SPIE's Meinel Technology Achievement Award, NASA Outstanding Leadership Medal (2020). She holds over 20 US patents and has over 200 publications. Nikzad earned a PhD in Applied Physics and an MSEE—both from Caltech, and a BSEE from USC.



Lark Park

Executive Director, California Education Learning Lab; Regent, University of California

Lark Park has been the Executive Director of the California Education Learning Lab, a state-funded program in the Governor's administration, since its launch in 2018. Under her leadership, Learning Lab has committed more than \$55 million to 120+ projects across 114 higher education institutions to promote innovation and collaboration in student success and learning. The program has reached thousands of faculty across the UCs, CSUs, and California community colleges and positively impacted learning for hundreds of thousands of students through its funded projects. Prior to launching Learning Lab, Ms. Park previously served as Governor Jerry Brown's senior advisor on higher education and deputy legislative affairs secretary on health and human services issues, shepherding key policy changes such as the implementation of the Affordable Care Act and making recommendations on several hundred bills over an eight-year period. Prior to that, she worked on policy issues for both the California State Senate and Assembly, writing and negotiating changes to law in health, human services, childcare, and business professions; she reported on technology startups and venture capital as a business/technology journalist; and also served as a writer in the Clinton White House. Ms. Park has a humanities background, with both a Bachelors and Master's in English. She is an alumna of UC Berkeley and Georgetown University, and has served as a Regent of the University of California since June 2017, championing innovation, technology transfer, and entrepreneurship across broad fields, as well as increasing access to healthcare in underserved areas, and adopting innovations in teaching and learning. Ms. Park was appointed by Governor Brown to a term expiring in 2029.

Expanding in the Golden State

Leaders of quantum companies that have chosen to locate and expand in California and the Los Angeles area discuss what drew them to the state, from proximity to research institutions, talent, and testbeds to capital, and what will keep them growing.



Kelly LoBianco **INTRODUCTION**

Director, Los Angeles County Department of Economic Opportunity

Kelly LoBianco is the first Director of the Los Angeles County Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), the County's central economic and workforce development agency. She joined the County in 2021 as Executive Director of Economic and Workforce Development, helped establish DEO, and was appointed Director by the Board of Supervisors in July 2022. Under her leadership DEO pursues a regional strategy and community-centered programs to support local workers and small businesses, attract investment that creates quality jobs and career pathways, and promote economic security and mobility. She has more than 15 years of public-sector experience at the federal, state, and local levels, including as Chief Program Officer for The HOPE Program and Sustainable South Bronx in New York City, as Assistant Commissioner at the New York City Department of Small Business Services, and earlier on the staff of U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell. She holds a Master of Public Administration from Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs and a B.A. from Northwestern University.



Alex Shih

Vice President of Product, Q-CTRL

Alex Shih is the VP of Product at Q-CTRL (q-ctrl.com), a quantum infrastructure software company building AI-powered, performance maximizing software products for quantum hardware (quantum computers and quantum sensors). He has previously held product leadership roles at various technology companies, such as Slack, Airbnb, Planet Labs, and Google, and founded a couple startups (some of which have exited). He earned dual master's in engineering systems design and management from MIT and a B.S. in mechanical engineering from Cornell University.



Jay Guilmart

Lead Product Manager, Q-CTRL

Jay Guilmart is the Lead Product Manager for Quantum Computing at Q-CTRL, where he transforms quantum control innovations into scalable, commercial products. With over a decade of experience at Intel, NI (National Instruments), and Eaton, Jay brings the commercial rigor of the semiconductor and electronics industries to the quantum sector. He specializes in applying mature product lifecycles and market dynamics to accelerate the industry's transition from R&D to quantum advantage. Jay holds an engineering degree from Purdue University, plus an MBA and MS in Business Analytics from Arizona State University.



Reza Nejabati

Head of Quantum Research and Labs, Cisco

Reza Nejabati is a Distinguished Engineer and Head of Quantum Research and Quantum Labs at Cisco, where he leads the research and development of the technologies needed to make scalable quantum networking and distributed quantum computing a reality. He leads a multidisciplinary team of experimental and theoretical scientists building Cisco's full-stack quantum networking architecture, spanning entanglement distribution, quantum networking software and compilers, and Universal Quantum Switch. Prior to joining Cisco, Reza was Chair Professor of Networks and Head of the High-Performance Network Group at the University of Bristol. A longtime researcher in quantum, optical and programmable networking, he is a recipient of the IEEE Communications Society's Charles Kao Award and co-founder of Zeetta Networks.



Stefanie Tardo

Chief Operating Officer, Diraq

Stefanie Tardo is Chief Operating Officer at Diraq, a company building utility-scale quantum computers using silicon. Since joining in the company's early days, Stef has been instrumental in shaping Diraq's strategic direction, and building the operational foundations needed to translate world-leading deep-tech research into commercial outcomes. Stef brings a strong background in private equity, deals, and consulting, with extensive experience guiding high-growth companies through fundraising, strategic planning, and operational transformation. At Diraq, Stef is focused on scaling the organisation globally and advancing quantum computing as a transformative technology for industry and society.



Keith Wright

Head of US Business Development, Quantum Machines

Keith Wright is Head of U.S. Business Development at Quantum Machines, a leading provider of quantum control solutions used by researchers, startups, national laboratories, and quantum computing companies worldwide. He leads U.S. ecosystem development and strategic partnerships across industry, academia, government, and the investment community, helping accelerate the commercialization and adoption of quantum technologies. Keith works closely with organizations developing quantum computing infrastructure, workforce programs, open-access testbeds, and regional innovation initiatives. His focus is building the partnerships, resources, and ecosystems needed to translate quantum research into economic and technological impact.

Building the California Ecosystem

Research and education institutions across the state, from Pasadena to Riverside to San Diego, discuss how a connected regional ecosystem strengthens California as a whole.



Rosa Di Felice

Professor of Physics and Astronomy and Quantitative and Computational Biology, USC

Rosa Di Felice is a Professor of Physics and Astronomy and Quantitative and Computational Biology at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, USA. She also holds a part-time appointment as a Research Director in the Italian National Research Council at the Institute of Nanoscience in Modena. She got her BS+MS (1992) and PhD (1996) in Physics at the University of Rome “Tor Vergata”, working on ab initio molecular dynamics simulations of solid surfaces and interfaces. After postdoctoral work on similar topics, her attention moved in the early 2000s towards the electronic structure of biological molecules in the context of nanotechnologies. She uses computational methods that solve the many-body Schrödinger’s equation to describe the electronic properties of molecules and molecular complexes, while accounting for conformational fluctuations that are inherent in flexible systems. She is currently using quantum computers to explore applications in the health sciences and materials sciences.



Hirosi Ooguri

Fred Kavli Professor of Theoretical Physics and Mathematics; Kent and Joyce Kresa Leadership Chair, Division of Physics, Mathematics and Astronomy, Caltech

Hirosi Ooguri is the Fred Kavli Professor of Theoretical Physics and Mathematics and the Kent and Joyce Kresa Leadership Chair of the Division of Physics, Mathematics, and Astronomy at Caltech. He served as founding director of Caltech’s Walter Burke Institute for Theoretical Physics and director of the University of Tokyo’s Kavli Institute for the Physics and Mathematics of the Universe. He was also president and board chair of the Aspen Center for Physics. His honors include a Medal of Honor with Purple Ribbon from the Japanese Emperor, the Eisenbud Prize for Mathematics and Physics, a Simons Investigator Award, and a Guggenheim Fellowship. He is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Mathematical Society. His popular science books, one of which won the Kodansha Prize for Science Books, have sold over 400,000 copies in Japan, China, and Korea. His award-winning science movie has been translated into six languages.



Michael Sailor

Distinguished Professor of Chemistry; Director, NSF Materials Research Science and Engineering Center; Co-Director, Institute for Materials Discovery and Design, UC San Diego

Prof. Michael Sailor is Distinguished Professor of Chemistry at UC San Diego, Director of the NSF-funded UC San Diego Materials Research Science and Engineering Center (MRSEC), and co-Director of the UC San Diego Institute for Materials Discovery and Design (IMDD). He holds Affiliate Appointments in Bioengineering, Nanoengineering, and the Materials Science and Engineering program. Trained as a chemist, Sailor received a BS degree from Harvey Mudd College and a PhD degree from Northwestern University. His research focuses on silicon-based nanomaterials, metamaterials, biomaterials, and quantum dots. He is an elected Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the Royal Society of Chemistry, and the National Academy of Inventors.



Nathaniel Gabor

Professor of Physics and Astronomy; Principal Investigator, Center for Quantum Vibronics in Energy and Time (QuVET), UC Riverside; Technical Lead, Quantum Sciences, Apsidal

Dr. Nathaniel M. Gabor is an experimental physicist, professor in the Department of Physics and Astronomy at the University of California, Riverside (UCR), and technical lead in space-based quantum sciences at Apsidal, LLC. His research sits at the intersection of quantum physics, engineering, microgravity materials science, and biology, with a particular focus on quantum optoelectronics and the basic operating principles of natural light harvesting. He currently serves as the founding director of the Center for Quantum Vibronics in Energy and Time (QuVET), a fundamental research center that has catalyzed the emerging field of quantum vibronics.

Panel: Opportunities in Aerospace, Maritime, and Defense

How quantum materials, sensing, timing, and communications technologies are opening new opportunities in aerospace, defense, and maritime applications, and how California's defense economy strengths position the state to lead.



Karl Jacob **MODERATOR**

Commercial Strategy Office, DARPA; Strategic Advisor, USC Information Sciences Institute

Karl Jacob currently serves as a Strategic Advisor to USC's Information Sciences Institute (ISI), contributing to groundbreaking research and technology commercialization, with a particular focus on Quantum and AI technologies. He works closely with ISI's leadership and researchers to translate world-class science into real-world impact. He was Facebook's first advisor, working with the founding team during its formative years and contributing strategic guidance as the company grew from a startup into a global platform. He is a serial entrepreneur with a proven track record of founding and scaling companies through to successful exits. Companies he has founded or led include: LoanSnap (CEO & Co-founder), Hangtime (CEO & Founder), Coveroo (CEO & Founder, sold to Zazzle), Wallop (CEO & Founder), Cloudmark (CEO, sold to Proofpoint), Keen / Ingenio (CEO, sold to AT&T), and Dimension X (CEO & Founder, sold to Microsoft). He also held leadership roles at Microsoft (General Manager) and was an Entrepreneur in Residence at Benchmark Capital, with earlier roles at Sun Microsystems and Apple.



Jay Lowell

Principal Senior Technical Fellow and Quantum Technology Leader, Boeing Quantum Systems

Jay Lowell is a Principal Senior Technical Fellow and Quantum Technology Leader for Boeing Quantum Systems. Part of Engineering and Technology Innovation, Quantum Systems is developing the quantum communications, computing and sensing technical capabilities for Boeing products and services. After joining the company in 2012, Lowell worked in Boeing Research & Technology, where he initiated research strategies for modeling, characterizing and testing aircraft electromagnetic effects, and supported efforts to model and analyze automated production systems for commercial airplane programs. Prior to joining Boeing, Lowell was a program manager in the Defense Sciences Office of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), served on U.S. Air Force scientific advisory board studies, and was an assistant professor of physics at the U.S. Air Force Academy.



Andrew Mollner

Principal Director, Electronics and Photonics Laboratory, The Aerospace Corporation

Dr. Andrew Mollner is Principal Director of the Electronics and Photonics Laboratories of The Aerospace Corporation. Dr. Mollner earned his B.A.S in Music and Chemistry from the University of California, Davis in 2001 and his Ph.D. in Physical Chemistry from the California Institute of Technology in 2007. After a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Southern California, he joined The Aerospace Corporation's Photonics Technology Department in 2010.



Joanna Ptasinski

Branch Head, Cryogenic Electronics and Quantum Research, Naval Information Warfare Center (NIWC) Pacific

Dr. Joanna Ptasinski serves as Branch Head of Cryogenic Electronics and Quantum Research at NIWC Pacific and leader of the Center's Quantum Information Technology Community of Interest. With 24 years of naval R&D experience, Dr. Ptasinski drives military initiatives in quantum sensing, quantum optics, quantum-enhanced optimization, and secure communications architectures. She serves as NIWC Pacific's liaison to IARPA, holds 31 U.S. patents, has authored over 25 technical papers and book chapters, and is an elected Senior Member of the National Academy of Inventors. She holds a Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering (Photonics) from UC San Diego and an M.S. and B.S. from San Diego State University.

Lunch and Presentation: Quantum California, Strategy and What's Next

Lunch is served while GO-Biz presents the next phase of Quantum California: the priorities ahead, upcoming investments, and how participants can stay engaged in the year to come.



Trelynd Bradley

Deputy Director, Innovation and Emerging Technologies, Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz)

Trelynd (Tre) Bradley is Deputy Director for Innovation and Emerging Technologies at the California Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz), where he leads Quantum California and the State's efforts to keep California a global leader in sectors including artificial intelligence, quantum computing, fusion, space, robotics, and semiconductors. He advises state leaders on technology trends with a focus on commercialization, technology transfer, and talent pipeline development, and works with corporate executives, industry associations, and entrepreneurs on incentive navigation, site selection, and infrastructure planning. Previously, in GO-Biz's business development unit, his work supported some of the largest capital expenditure and job creation projects in California across aerospace and defense, clean energy, critical minerals, biotechnology, agriculture, and manufacturing. He holds a bachelor's degree in business economics and political science from UC Riverside, a graduate certificate in applied policy and government from California State University, Sacramento, and an MBA from the UCLA Anderson School of Management.

Tre also emcees Day 2.