FRONTIER SUMMIT

INVITATION ONLY · ABU DHABI

EVENT AGENDA

AI | SPACE | ROBOTICS

19 & 20 October 2026
Four Seasons Abu Dhabi at Al Maryah Island

Goanna is pleased to coordinate an invitation only, two-day event bringing together the leading LPs, GPs, Government representatives, researchers and founders focused on AI, Space & Robotics.

DAY 1 19 OCTOBER 2026 BUILDING THE FUTURE

WHY WE'RE HERE

Setting the stage, the leaders, capital and conviction behind Abu Dhabi's frontier moment.

01 REGISTRATION, COFFEE & NETWORKING 8:30 – 9:30

02 OPENING REMARKS 9:30 – 9:40

Opening Remarks: Building National Advantage in Frontier Technology

How nations attract talent, capital and innovation to build lasting leadership in AI, robotics and space.

03 WELCOME REMARKS 9:45 – 9:55

Welcome Remarks: The Purpose of Frontier Summit

The technologies, companies and leaders shaping the next decade, and why Abu Dhabi is where they meet.

SPEAKER
Robert Hilmer
Founder, Goanna Capital

04 FIRESIDE CHAT 10:00 – 10:15

Powering the Frontier: The UAE's Energy & AI Infrastructure Strategy

How the UAE is turning energy leadership into AI infrastructure advantage, and why that makes it the place to build.

SPEAKER
H.E. Sharif Al-Olama
Undersecretary for Energy & Petroleum Affairs, Ministry of Energy & Infrastructure

HOST
Yousef Gamal El-Din
Frontier Summit MC

05 FIRESIDE CHAT 10:20 – 10:35

The Sovereign Advantage

What a fund like Mubadala can do that traditional venture cannot, and how it backs the technologies defining the next decade.

SPEAKER
Faris Sohail Al Mazrui
Head of Growth, Mubadala

HOST
Robert Hilmer
Founder, Goanna Capital

06 COMPANY SPOTLIGHT 10:40 – 10:55

Varda Space Industries

A live call-in company spotlight.

SPEAKER
Delian Asparouhov
President & Co-Founder, Varda Space Industries (Live call-in)

HOST
Owen Babington
Investor, Goanna Capital

07 KEYNOTE 11:00 – 11:10

Tokens per Watt: Building the New Architecture for Agentic AI

SPEAKER
Charles Chebli
Managing Director UAE & Head AI Cloud MEA, Qualcomm

08 PANEL 11:15 – 11:40

Panel 1: Betting on the Infrastructure Layer

Where does the real value accrue in the AI stack? Investors and founders debate whether long-term returns sit in models, tooling, or compute, and what the semiconductor arms race means for venture.

PANELIST
Simon King
Partner, Lakestar

PANELIST
Joydeep Bhattacharyya
General Partner, Canaan Partners

MODERATOR
Michael Brunner
Managing Director, Goanna Capital

09 COMPANY SPOTLIGHT 11:45 – 11:55

Nucleus Genomics

SPEAKER
Kian Sadeghi
Founder, Nucleus Genomics Inc

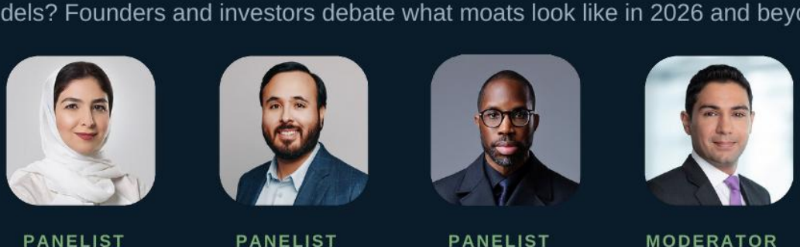
THE DURABLE MOAT

Data, silicon and the moats that actually hold.

10 PANEL 12:00 – 12:25

Panel 2: Data as the Durable Moat

Proprietary datasets, synthetic data, and what actually wins. Is unique data still a defensible advantage in a world of foundation models? Founders and investors debate what moats look like in 2026 and beyond.



PANELIST
Elham AlQasim
Chief Data and AI Officer, Majid Al Futtaim

PANELIST
Alex Sharata
Partner, NEA

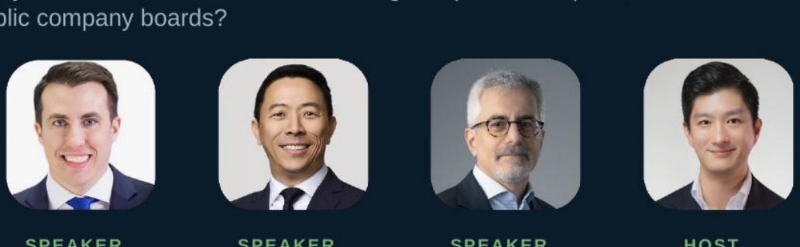
PANELIST
Michael Lints
Founding Partner MENA, Golden Gate Ventures

MODERATOR
Yousef Gamal El-Din
Frontier Summit MC

11 DISCUSSION 12:30 – 12:50

The Long Road to Liquidity: Private Capital, Space, and Sovereign AI

Private capital, patient exits and AI at national scale. With companies staying private for a decade or more, where does liquidity really come from, how should investors get exposure to space, and what wins over conservative buyers from sovereigns to public company boards?



SPEAKER
John Tuttle
Board Member, FutureCorp

SPEAKER
Thomas Pramotedham
Chief Executive Officer, Presight

SPEAKER
Karim Michel Sabbagh
Managing Director, Space42

HOST
Brian Lee
Global Head of Strategy, Goanna Capital

NETWORKING LUNCH 12:50 – 13:40

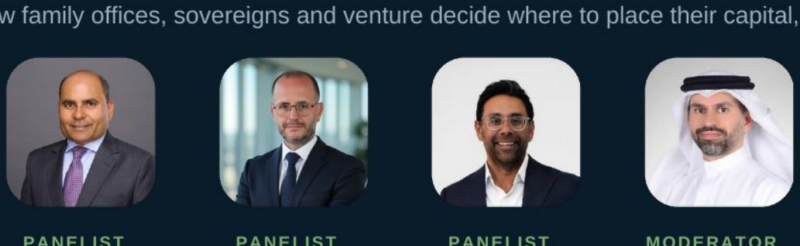
FOLLOW THE CAPITAL

Where money moves, how liquidity returns, and what capital really buys.

12 PANEL 13:45 – 14:10

Panel 3: Who Backs the Frontier

How family offices, sovereigns and venture decide where to place their capital, and what earns their conviction.



PANELIST
Rajesh Ranjan
Head of Investments, Ali & Sons

PANELIST
Volkan Şen
Head of Zain Ventures, Zain Group

PANELIST
Deepak Jayaraman
Managing Partner, Ibex

MODERATOR
Hussain Al Alawi
Managing Director, Goanna Capital

13 COMPANY SPOTLIGHT 14:15 – 14:25

Ulysses

Developing Low-Cost, High-Capability Maritime Systems for Persistent Situational Awareness

SPEAKER
Will O'Brien
Founder, Ulysses

14 PANEL 14:30 – 14:55

Panel 4: Liquidity in the Age of Mega-Rounds

Secondaries, IPO windows and the path to DPI. With late-stage valuations still elevated and public markets selective, how are founders and early investors thinking about exit timing and secondary market access? Covers liquidity from the investor perspective, including tenders and GP-led and LP-led activity.

PANELIST
Hani El Khoury
Partner, Coller EQT

PANELIST
Peji Kanani
Regional Lead Equity Management, Carta

MODERATOR
Robert Hilmer
Founder, Goanna Capital

15 COMPANY SPOTLIGHT 15:00 – 15:10

Seagliders: The Future of Maritime Mobility

The all-electric seaglider, a new class of high-speed coastal transport that floats, foils and flies.

SPEAKER
Billy Thalheimer
Co-Founder & CEO, REGENT

INTO THE REAL WORLD

Regulation, security and the messy reality of deploying at scale.

16 DISCUSSION 15:15 – 15:30

From Pilot to Production: AI, Energy and the Capital Behind the Buildout

Where AI actually touches production, safety and cost. An operator and an investor on why most enterprise pilots stall, how build, buy or partner decisions get made, and why energy is now both the constraint and the opportunity behind the AI buildout.

SPEAKER
Nada Meqbali
Acting Senior Vice President, Technology Partnerships and Engagement, ADNOC Group

SPEAKER
Mark Machin
Co-Founder and Managing Partner, Intrepid Growth Partners

HOST
Hussain Al Alawi
Managing Director, Goanna Capital

17 COMPANY SPOTLIGHT 15:35 – 15:50

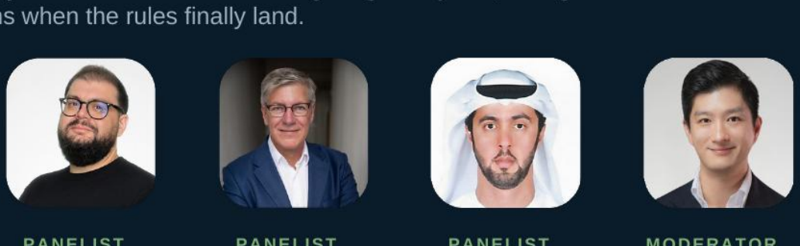
CesiumAstro

SPEAKER
Shey Sabripour
Founder & CEO, CesiumAstro

18 PANEL 15:55 – 16:20

Panel 5: Building in the Grey Zone: AI Regulation

Navigating AI regulation before the rules are written. Founders, incumbents and policymakers on operating where AI rules do not yet exist: how builders manage regulatory risk, how governments and standards bodies think about what is coming, and who wins when the rules finally land.



PANELIST
Noor Al-Nahhas
CEO, Nybl

PANELIST
Jan Ellsberger
Director-General, ETSI

PANELIST
H.E. Rashed Al Qubaisi
Executive Director, Abu Dhabi Dept. of Economic Development (ADDED)

MODERATOR
Brian Lee
Global Head of Strategy, Goanna Capital

19 COMPANY SPOTLIGHT 16:25 – 16:40

From AI Capability to AI Economics, Why the inference era is won on tokens, not chips

SPEAKER
Husni Khuffash
Managing Director, Positron

20 COMPANY SPOTLIGHT 16:45 – 17:00

The Promise of Fusion: Unlocking Global Potential with Abundant Energy

An overview of fusion, why it hasn't been done yet and what is changing now. Helion's approach, the path to commercialization on build cost, LCOE and timing, and a world imagined with abundant fusion energy.

SPEAKER
David Kirtley
Founder & CEO, Helion

21 ROUNDTABLE BREAKOUTS: GROUP 1 All Day

22 ROUNDTABLE BREAKOUTS: GROUP 2 All Day

PRIVATE DRINKS RECEPTION 17:00 – 18:00

DAY 2 20 OCTOBER 2026 DEPLOYING THE FUTURE

BEYOND EARTH

Space, defense and the institutions shaping the new frontier economy.

23 COFFEE & NETWORKING 8:30 – 9:30

24 OPENING REMARKS 9:30 – 9:40

Deploying National Advantage in Frontier Technology

How the UAE turns national strategy into real-world adoption, drawing the companies, capital and talent shaping AI, robotics and space.

SPEAKER
H.E. Masood Rahma Al Masaood
Treasurer, Abu Dhabi Chamber

25 WELCOME REMARKS 9:45 – 9:50

From Building to Deploying

Where day one leaves off and what today is really about: turning frontier technology into real-world impact.

SPEAKER
Robert Hilmer
Founder, Goanna Capital

26 COMPANY SPOTLIGHT 9:55 – 10:10

Starcloud

A live call-in company spotlight.

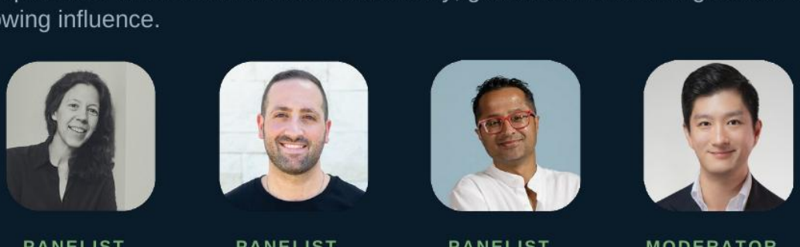
SPEAKER
Philip Johnston
Co-Founder & CEO, Starcloud (Live call-in)

HOST
Owen Babington
Investor, Goanna Capital

27 PANEL 10:15 – 10:40

Panel 6: The New Frontier Economy

Commercializing space, defense and the domains beyond. The frontier economy from the operator, investor and policy perspectives: where real revenue exists today, government's evolving role as customer and partner, and sovereign capital's growing influence.



PANELIST
Hélène Huby
CEO, The Exploration Company

PANELIST
Daniel Kleinmann
Co-founder and General Partner, Balerion Space Ventures

PANELIST
Bilal Zuberi
Founder & Managing Partner, Red Glass Ventures

MODERATOR
Brian Lee
Global Head of Strategy, Goanna Capital

28 FIRESIDE CHAT 10:45 – 11:00

Factory

Agentic software development, from research demo to production. What changed technically, where agents still fail, what an engineering team looks like when agents do real work, and what separates the coding agent companies that last.

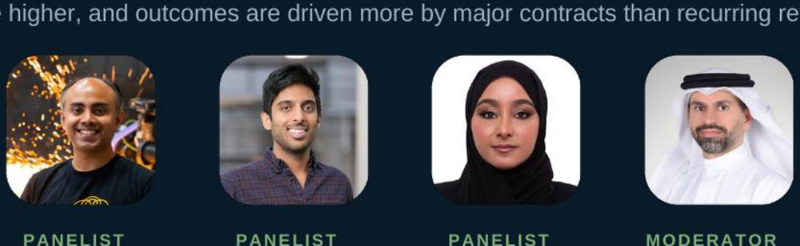
SPEAKER
Eno Reyes
CTO & Co-Founder, Factory

HOST
Owen Babington
Investor, Goanna Capital

29 PANEL 11:05 – 11:35

Panel 7: The Last Frontier for Venture, Deep Tech

As software returns plateau, venture is shifting toward capital-intensive sectors like space, robotics and advanced manufacturing. Founders and investors discuss how to fund, scale and evaluate businesses where timelines are longer, risks are higher, and outcomes are driven more by major contracts than recurring revenue.



PANELIST
Ariyan Kabir
Co-Founder & CEO, GrayMatter Robotics

PANELIST
Vin Sachidananda
Partner, Radical Ventures

PANELIST
Rawiya Ali Al Tamimi
Expert, Future Foresight, Tawazun Council for Defence Enablement

MODERATOR
Hussain Al Alawi
Managing Director, Goanna Capital

THE HARDEST PROBLEMS

Deep tech, robotics and the bets that take a decade to pay off.

30 COMPANY SPOTLIGHT 11:40 – 11:50

Mach Industries

A live call-in company spotlight.

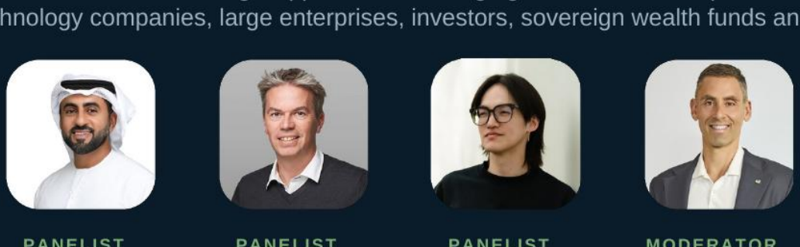
SPEAKER
Ethan Thornton
Founder & CEO, Mach Industries (Live call-in)

HOST
Brian Lee
Global Head of Strategy, Goanna Capital

31 PANEL 11:55 – 12:25

Panel 8: Deep Tech and the AI Buildout

Where are the next strategic opportunities emerging? A founder and operator discussion bringing together senior leaders from technology companies, large enterprises, investors, sovereign wealth funds and government institutions.



PANELIST
Faris Sohail Al Mazrui
Head of Growth, Mubadala

PANELIST
Anders Ranum
Partner, Sapphire Ventures

PANELIST
Alex Chee
Co-founding Partner, Tribe Capital

MODERATOR
Robert Hilmer
Founder, Goanna Capital

32 PRODUCT KEYNOTE 12:30 – 12:45

AI as Workflow, from SMB to enterprise, how Canva is supporting design in the AI era

SPEAKER
Ahmad Iqbal
GM, Canva MENAP

NETWORKING LUNCH 12:50 – 13:50

33 DISCUSSION 13:55 – 14:10

Sovereign Science: From Lab to Launch

How small, open nations turn deep science into deployable frontier capability. The UAE and Switzerland on sovereign AI, research institutions, and what it takes to move from the lab to real-world impact and shared prosperity.

SPEAKER
Dr. Saeed Al Jaberi
Director, AI Workflows, Tactica AI

SPEAKER
Markus Reubi
Deputy Head of Division Prosperity/Sustainability, Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs

HOST
Michael Brunner
Managing Director, Goanna Capital

WHAT COMES NEXT

The buildout ahead, from deep tech and enterprise adoption to the future of mobility.

34 COMPANY KEYNOTE 14:15 – 14:25

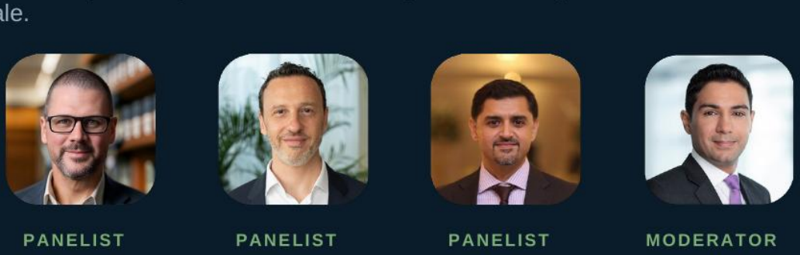
Discovery to Booking, at Scale

SPEAKER
Mario El Feghali
Head of Business Partnerships for Travel, Tourism & Food Services | Global Business Solutions, MENA, TikTok

35 PANEL 14:30 – 14:55

Panel 9: Enterprise Panel

Enterprise AI adoption and deployment, from experimentation to operational reality. Every large enterprise has run an AI pilot; far fewer have moved AI into core operations where it touches revenue, safety and millions of customers. Leaders deploying AI inside heavy industry, aviation and the region's AI champions on what it takes to get from proof of concept to production at scale.



PANELIST
Daragh McGrath
CEO, Xanadu (Canva enterprise partner)

PANELIST
Hady El Khoury
Head of Global Markets Commercial Excellence & Transformation, GE HealthCare

PANELIST
Fahim Ghaffar
Vice President, EMEA Solutions Architecture, ClickHouse

MODERATOR
Yousef Gamal El-Din
Frontier Summit MC

36 COMPANY SPOTLIGHT 15:00 – 15:10

The Agentic Enterprise: How Snowflake Is Making AI Real for Business

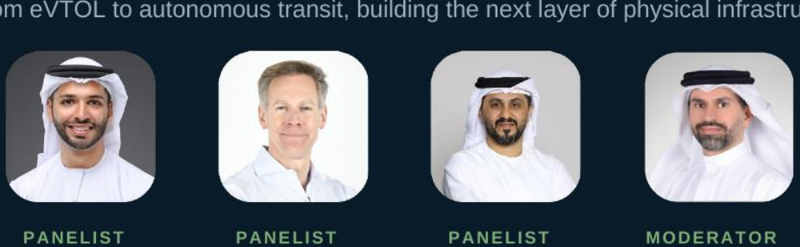
The competitive advantage in AI isn't the model, it's the governed data and business context behind it. Without that foundation, even the most capable agents deliver unreliable results and stall in production. Most enterprise AI never makes it past the pilot. Snowflake is here to end that.

SPEAKER
Ahmed Hafez
Director of Solution Engineering, Middle East, Turkey & Africa, Snowflake

37 PANEL 15:15 – 15:40

Panel 10: The Future of Mobility

From eVTOL to autonomous transit, building the next layer of physical infrastructure.



PANELIST
Dr. Talib Alhinai
General Manager, Archer UAE & Board Director at UAE GCAA

PANELIST
Mark Seeger
Founder, Co-CEO & Executive Board Member, Glydways

PANELIST
Hasan Al Hosani
Chief Executive Officer, Smart Solutions, Space42

MODERATOR
Hussain Al Alawi
Managing Director, Goanna Capital

38 COMPANY SPOTLIGHT 15:45 – 15:55

Beyond Automation: Humanoid as a Business Transformation Partner

What happens when robots move beyond automating individual tasks and shape how businesses operate and grow? This session explores how humanoid robots can become part of a broader business transformation strategy, helping companies and whole industries rethink productivity and the future of work.

SPEAKER
Jochen Rudat
Chief Growth & Revenue Officer, Humanoid

39 PANEL 16:00 – 16:25

Panel 11: Securing the Stack

Resilience, supply and sovereignty in critical technology infrastructure.

PANELIST
Janne Känkänen
CEO, National Emergency Supply Agency (Finland)

PANELIST
Marc Zakher
Vice President & General Manager, Middle East, Turkey and Africa, Cerebras Systems

PANELIST
Yuval Dvir
Commercial Officer, SandboxAQ

MODERATOR
Michael Brunner
Managing Director, Goanna Capital

40 COMPANY SPOTLIGHT 16:30 – 16:40

Foundry Robotics

SPEAKER
Varsha Rao
VP, Business, Foundry Robotics

41 CLOSING 16:45 – 16:55

Closing Remarks

SPEAKER
Robert Hilmer
Founder, Goanna Capital

ATTENDEES AND PARTNERS

OpenAI	Canva	MUBADALA	VARDA SPACE INDUSTRIES	Stripe	BlackRock
citi	VISTA	Google	UBS	AIRBUS	snowflake
Canaan PARTNERS	MGX	ADIC ABU DHABI INVESTMENT COUNCIL	hp	Roche	BostonDynamics
ماجد الفطيم MAJID AL FUTTAIM	Morgan Stanley	جهاز الاستثمار العُماني Oman Investment Authority	T.RowePrice	J.P.Morgan	Coller Capital
CANTOR	ALKEON CAPITAL MANAGEMENT	Hamilton Lane	KIC Korea Investment Corporation	presight A G42 company	zain
أدنوك ADNOC	TikTok	ULYSSES Maritime Technologies	137 VENTURES	BARCLAYS	NVIDIA
غرفة أبوظبي ABU DHABI CHAMBER	SAPPHIRE VENTURES	NEA	STEPSTONE	CAMBRIDGE ASSOCIATES	core42
CESIUMASTRO	marlan SPACE	Blackstone	TII Technology Innovation Institute	Mumtalakat	GRAY MATTER ROBOTICS

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Draft agenda. Times, session order and speaker assignments are provisional; entries marked "TBC" are still being finalized.