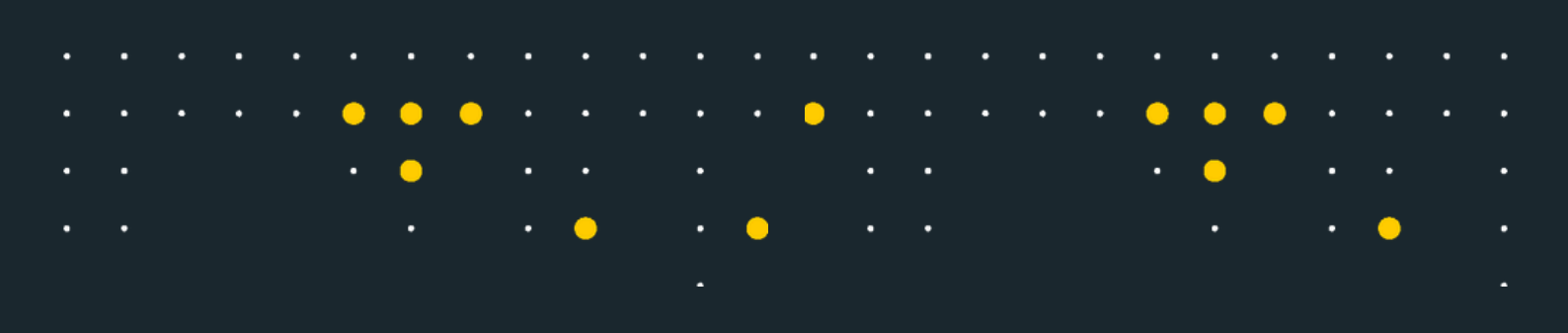




Back to School 2026

September 15–17
New York City



The gracious hospitality by QS
and expert curation of
sessions made this gathering
one of the most **meaningful
professional development
experiences** in my higher
education career.

Daniel Katz, Ph.D.

Director, Office of Global Initiatives/Office
of Diplomatic Engagement and Training
Borough of Manhattan Community College
(BMCC), City University of New York (CUNY)

Our Partners

We would like to thank all our partners for making the Summit exceptionally successful!

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If you would like to support any future edition of Back to School, or other QS Conferences, partner with us and grow your academic and professional network across the globe.

Book a consultation

Testimonials



This summit has really helped me to grasp the critical issues at play, to meet partners so these conversations can continue and to **bring back to my institution some new ideas**

Dr Jonathan Noble

Senior Assistant Provost for Internationalization;
Global Executive Director
University of Notre Dame

The thought leadership here has been excellent. I have made a lot of great connections. **I've learned a lot.** I had no idea some of these things were going on and it also presented a broad swathe across educational institutions, community colleges, four-year universities and business people like me so I thought that was a great continuum of information."

Susan Youngblood

Operating Advisor on AI and Workforce Strategy
Bessemer Venture Partners

It's always a conference for me where I'm **meeting people that I don't normally see** at other conferences, especially if you think about the bridge they're bringing between the K-12 space, higher ed and as a US based funder I am often times only limited to having domestic conversations and the added global component is so critical because these issues are not just specific to one context.

Joshua Elder

Senior Vice President and Head of Grantmaking
Siegel Family Endowment

Key highlights

Back to School 2026

Across QS's Back to School Summit, which brought together experts from education, capital markets, philanthropy and employers, a clear theme emerged: education and employment can no longer operate in separate lanes. Universities, in the US and beyond, are facing an existential crisis. Speakers called for stronger skills alignment, stackable credentials and pathways that give learners more than a transcript, while employers, community colleges and healthcare partners showed what collaboration can deliver.

AI dominated the discussion, but readiness and human skills mattered more than speed of adoption, and outcomes, from earnings to mobility, need to be measured more effectively. The investment picture is shifting too: despite a drop in private capital, M&A activity is growing, with funding increasingly flowing towards the systems that support workforce development. It is another sign that education, skills and economic growth are becoming harder to separate.

[**View Summit photos**](#)

**Closing the space
between skills
produced and skills
needed is central**

**Pathways are opening
up beyond the four-
year degree**

**AI readiness matters
more than speed of
adoption**

Key speakers

We would like to thank our esteemed speakers, including:



Prof Jun Liu
Rector
University of Macau



Ambassador Binaya Srikanta Pradhan
Consul General,
Consulate General of
India, New York



Dr Karim Seghir
Chancellor
Ajman University



Jason Schupbach
President
Fashion Institute of
Technology



Dr. Tonya Smith-Jackson
Chancellor
Rutgers University--
Newark



Philip Moyer
President and CEO
McGraw Hill



Jeff Selingo
Author;
Special Advisor
Arizona State
University



Amit Patel
Co-Founder and
Managing Partner
Owl Ventures



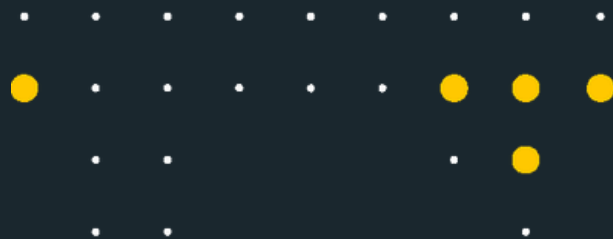
Chike Aguh
Head of Innovation and
Strategy, Gap Closing
Startups
Kapor Center



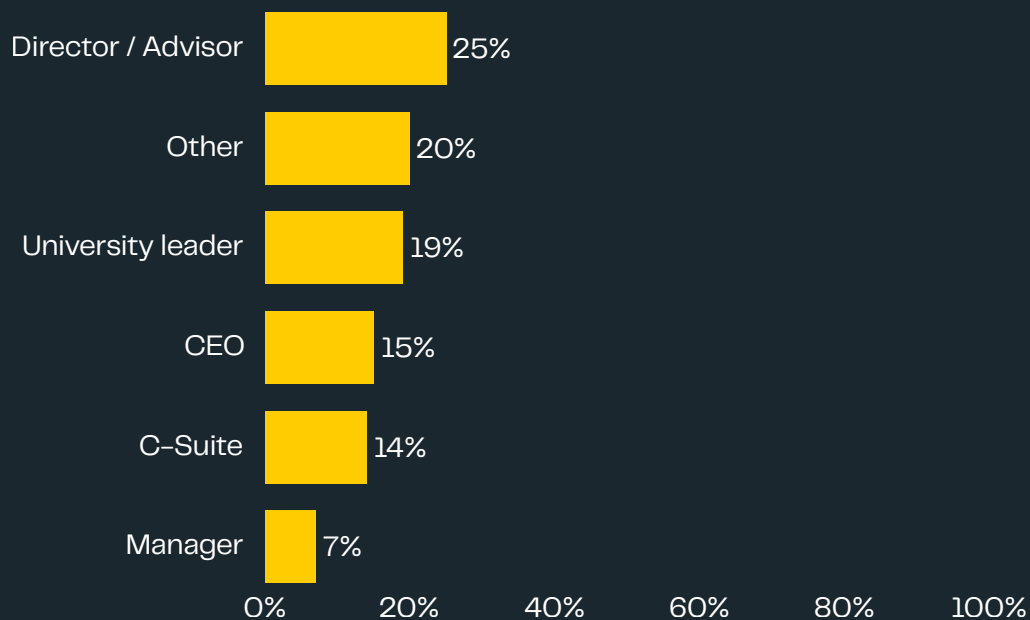
Lydia Logan
Vice President for
Global Education and
Workforce
Development
IBM



Event stats



Audience profile



What our attendees say

6/6

Overall experience
at the Summit

6/6

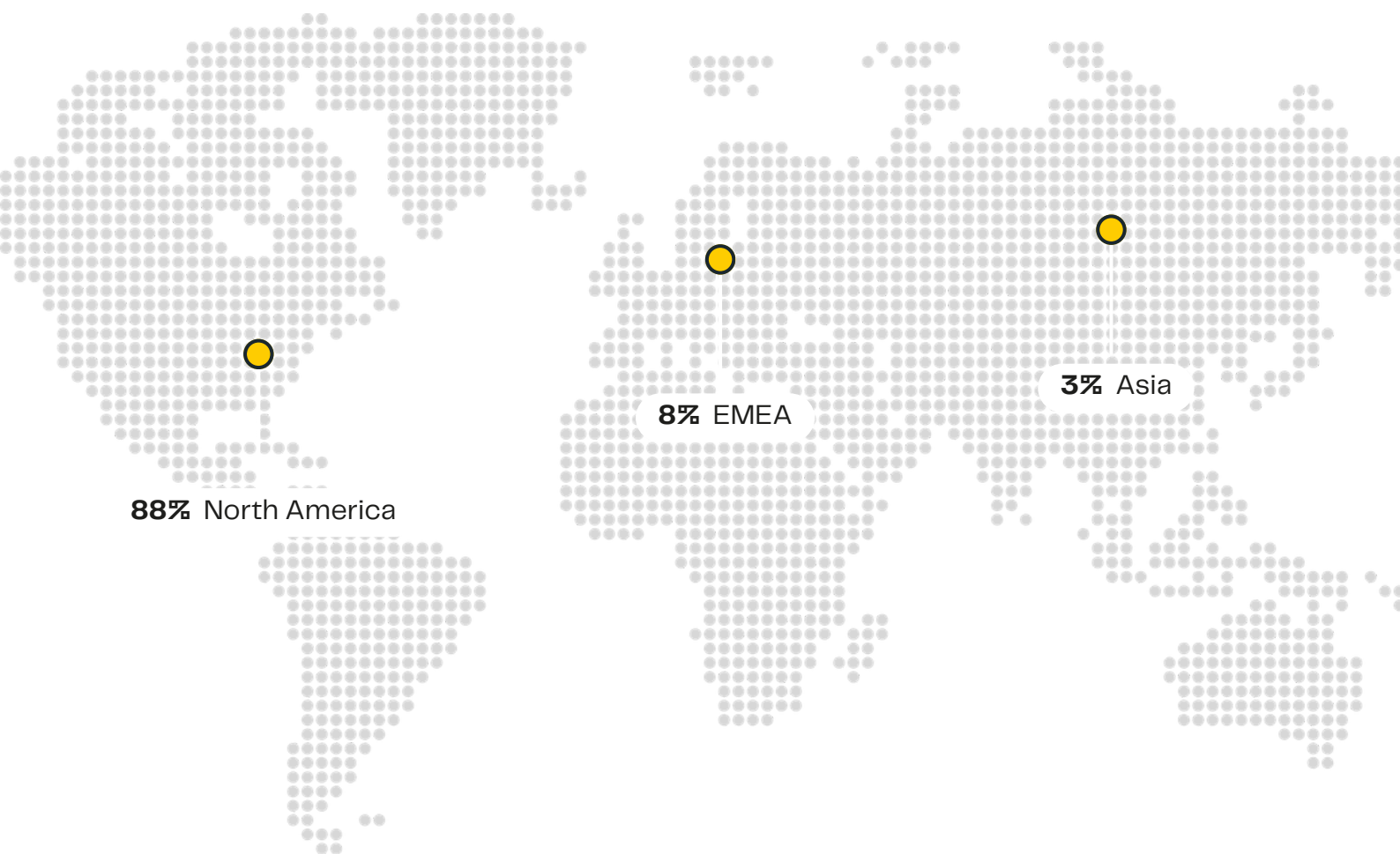
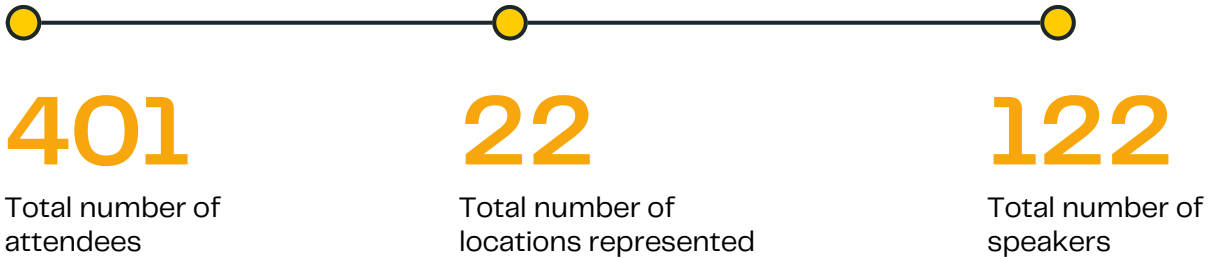
Experience using
the event app

5.5/6

Content of the
Summit

Event stats

Key Statistics



Summit gallery



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QS Conferences 2027

Dates and locations of conferences are subject to change, please check our website for any updates.



QS India Summit
8–10 Feb | Goa, India
Co-Host: SRM Institute of Science & Tech



QS Global Skills Week
23–25 Mar |
Washington D.C., USA



QS China Summit
31 Mar–1 Apr |
Shanghai, China



**QS Higher Ed Summit:
Middle East**
13–15 Apr | Sharjah, UAE
Co-Host: American University
of Sharjah



QS Africa Forum
May (TBC) |
Mauritius
Co-Host: Abu Dhabi
University



**QS World EduData
Summit**
8–10 Jun | Singapore



**QS Higher Ed Summit:
Europe & QS MoveON
Conference**
22–23 & 23–24 Jun |
Brussels, Belgium



**QS Back to School
Summit**
14–16 Sep |
New York, USA



**QS Higher Ed Summit:
Americas**
26–28 Sep |
Toronto, Canada



QS Arab Forum
13–14 Oct | Dubai, UAE
Co-Host: University of Dubai



**QS Higher Ed Summit:
Asia Pacific**
2–4 Nov |
Bangkok, Thailand
Co-Host: UNPAD + EdUHK



QS Eurasia Forum
25 Nov | Baku,
Azerbaijan
Co-Host: State Agency for
Science & HE



**QS Reimagine Education
Conference & Awards**
8–9 Dec | London, UK



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