



56 Innovation Leaders to Follow in 2019

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Over the past decade of working in the world of collaborative innovation, I've had the great pleasure to meet, interview, and work with a fantastic group of innovation leaders helping companies build the tools, techniques, and talent required to compete in the changing world of technology and innovation.

Here are 56 innovation gurus, that you should know, making waves in 2019. The list includes those innovation leaders who are working in the trenches, as well as innovation leaders providing thought leadership to help us understand what's working and what's next in business innovation.

Innovation Leaders for 2019



[Eric Ries](#) wrote the 2011 bestseller “[The Lean Startup](#),” but maybe even more relevant in 2019 with his most recent follow-up “[The Startup Way: How Modern Companies Use Entrepreneurial Management to Transform Culture and Drive Long-Term Growth](#).” This book is quickly becoming this year’s go-to-book for people wrestling with corporate innovation. [@ericries](#)

[Michael Docherty](#) is leading the creation of a new corporate/startup co-innovation platform as part of Innovation Works. Also Managing Partner of NextBig, creating and commercializing new digital and IoT-enabled ventures in partnership with leading corporations. He wrote, “[Collective Disruption: How Corporations and Startups Can Co-create Transformative New Businesses](#).” [@medocherty](#)

[Andi Platenberg](#) is the founder of FutureTight where she works with teams to evolve their product design practices, reduce business risk, and make quick headway towards problem solution fit. [Inside Outside Innovation Summit 2018 \[VIDEO\]](#). [@andisf](#)

[Barry O'Reilly](#) has pioneered the intersection of business model innovation, product development, organizational design, and culture transformation. His latest book is "[Unlearn: Let Go of Past Success to Achieve Extraordinary Results](#)." He is also the co-author of "[Lean Enterprise: How High-Performance Organizations Innovate at Scale](#)."

[Sunayna Tuteja](#) is leading change and innovation at the nexus of social, mobile, digital and FinTech. She is TD Ameritrade's Lead on Digital Strategy, Experience & Innovation. [Inside Outside Innovation Summit 2018 \[VIDEO\]](#)

[Aaron Proietti](#)'s new book is "[Today's Innovator](#)," a coaching guide for anyone who innovates. He is the founder of Adaptivity Enterprises and previously with Transamerica's Innovation Lab. [@aproietti](#)

[Janice Fraser](#) founded LUXr, the first Lean Startup coaching firm for early-stage companies. She is currently the Senior Vice President at Bionic and has coached, taught, and worked with thousands of startup founders inside and outside corporations. [@clevergirl](#).

[Brant Cooper](#) co-wrote "[The Lean Entrepreneur: How Visionaries Create Products, Innovate With New Ventures, and Disrupt Markets](#)." His firm Moves The Needle helps organizations with lean innovation, helping them move from theory to practice. [@brantcooper](#)

[Megan Elliott](#) is a creative, visionary and agile leader in the digital, creative, emerging media, and education sectors. She is Founding Director of the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts. She also co-created X Media Lab. [Inside Outside Innovation Summit 2018 \[VIDEO\]](#)

[Peter Gardner](#) is founder of Startgrid, an SaaS platform used by enterprises to dramatically accelerate their discovery and delivery of external innovation. [Inside Outside Innovation Summit 2018 \[VIDEO\]](#)

[Diana Kander](#)'s latest book, "[The Curiosity Muscle](#)," is a novel tackling the rise and plateau of a gym franchise and why most companies reaching the peak of their potential lose their curiosity and crash into irrelevance. It's a great follow-up to her New

York Time's bestseller "[*All In Startup: Launching a New Idea When Everything Is On The Line.*](#)" [@dianakander](#)

[Alistair Croll](#) is one of the smartest guys we know and is an expert in data-driven business and entrepreneurship. He co-wrote "[*Lean Analytics: Use Data To Build A Better Startup Faster.*](#)" He also founded a number world-class events for innovators, including Fwd50, Canada's digital government conference, and the technology trend conference, Pandemonio. [@acroll](#)

[Amy Radin](#) is a recognized Fortune 100 Chief Marketing and Innovation Officer and thought leader on how to deliver innovation for sustainable, business-changing impact. She wrote "[*The Change Maker's Playbook: How to Seek, Seed and Scale Innovation In Any Company.*](#)" [@amyradin](#)

[Ben Yoskovitz](#) is the other co-author of "[*Lean Analytics.*](#)" This Canadian angel investor also writes the [Instigator Blog](#) and is a founding partner of the corporate/startup new venture creator, Highline BETA with [Marcus Daniels](#). [@byosko](#)

[Simone Ahuja](#) is the founder of Blood Orange, an innovation and strategy consulting group with special expertise in innovation, jugaad (or frugal) innovation, emerging markets, and intrapreneurship. She is co-author of "[*Jugaad Innovation.*](#)" [@SimoneAhuja](#)

[Neil Soni](#) wrote "[*The Startup Gold Mine: How to Tap the Hidden Innovation Agendas of Large Companies to Fund and Grow Your Business*](#)" (Featuring Inside Outside Innovation). He's also founder of Unlimited Brewing Company and helped build and grow Estee Lauder's External Innovation capabilities. [@TheRealNeilS](#)

[Nicole Rufuku](#) is the co-founder of Bonsai Hiring where they are redesigning job interviews. She wrote "[*Hiring for the Innovation Economy: Three Steps to Improve Performance and Diversity.*](#)" [Inside Outside Innovation Summit 2018 Speaker \[VIDEO\]](#) [@nicolerufuku](#)

[Tristan Kromer](#) is a lean startup coach and founder of Kromatic who blogs at [GrasshopperHerder](#). He also volunteers with [Lean Startup Circle](#), a non-profit that develops innovation ecosystems through peer-to-peer sharing. [@TriKro](#)

[Chris Shipley](#) works in the technology industry as a journalist, analyst, event producer, and startup mentor. Today, Chris focuses her writing, speaking, photojournalism, and advocacy on the human and organizational challenges in the face of technology and economically-driven disruption. [Inside Outside Innovation Summit Speaker 2017](#)
[\[VIDEO\]](#) [@cshipley](#)

[Steve Glaveski](#) runs Collective Campus, an AFR Faster Starter and corporate innovation and startup accelerator based in Australia and Singapore. He wrote “[The Innovation Manager’s Handbook: Volume 2: Float like a corporate, sting like a startup](#)” and hosts the Future Squared podcast. [Inside Outside Innovation Summit Speaker 2018](#)
[\[VIDEO\]](#)[@SteveGlaveski](#)

[Natalie Fratto](#) is Vice President Early Stage Practice & Focused on Canadian Expansion of Silicon Valley Bank. She provides banking and financing support for the most promising early-stage startups and establishes strategic partnerships. [Inside Outside Innovation Summit 2018](#) [\[VIDEO\]](#)

[Andy Cars](#) is a serial entrepreneur with international experience. He founded Lean Ventures International AB, an innovation strategy consultancy based in Stockholm, Sweden to help large companies that want to get better at innovation. He’s also worked with over 200 startups to help them develop and bring their ideas to market. [@andy_cars](#)

[Laura Klein](#) is an engineer and UX designer who wrote “[UX For Lean Startups: Faster, Smarter, User Experience Research and Design](#).” She’s also a Principal at Users Know. [@lauraklein](#)

[David Bland](#) founded Precoil, an innovation consulting agency that advises global corporations and Silicon Valley startups on how to find product-market fit using lean startup, design thinking, and business model generation. [Inside Outside Innovation Summit 2018](#) [\[VIDEO\]](#) [@davidjbland](#)

[Teresa Torres](#) with Product Talk helps digital product teams adopt continuous product discovery practices including a regular cadence of customer interviews, rapid prototyping, and assumption testing. She emphasizes strong critical thinking practices

to ensure there is a strong connection between what the teams are learning in their research activities with the product decisions that they are making. [@ttorres](#)

[Jack Elkins](#) is Director of Innovation for the Orlando Magic and Founder of Persportives which builds creative leaders and fosters innovation in sports. [Inside Outside Innovation Summit 2018 \[VIDEO\]](#) [@persportives](#)

[Sangeeta Badal](#) is the Principal Scientist for Gallup's Builder initiative. She is co-author of "[Born to Build](#)." Dr. Badal is responsible for designing and implementing entrepreneurship programs that enable startup and small business growth. [@SangeetaBadal](#)

[Justin Wilcox](#) founded Customer Development Labs, which teaches startups and communities how to practice the principals of Lean Startup. The [blog](#) at Customer Development Labs also offers advice. [@Justin_Wilcox](#)

[Nirali Shah](#) is an innovation architect at Cisco HyperInnovation Living Labs (CHILL), a co-innovation catalyst for Cisco's \$12B Customer Experience business. They partner with large corporations to create an ecosystem approach to innovation.

[Ash Maurya](#) wrote the books "[Running Lean: Iterate from Plan A To A Plan That Works](#)" and "[Scaling Lean: Mastering the Key Metrics for Startup Growth](#)." He also founded LeanStack and Lean Canvas, an adaptation of Osterwalder's Business Model Canvas. [@ashmaurya](#)

[Jason Calacanis](#) is the outspoken angel investor and founder of the [LAUNCH Conference](#) which brings out over 10,000 startup founders, investors, and innovators annually. He also has a great book on Angel investing, appropriately titled "[Angel: How to Invest in Technology Startups—Timeless Advice from an Angel Investor Who Turned \\$100,000 into \\$100,000,000](#)." [@jason](#)

[Amy Jo Kim](#) helps entrepreneurs & innovators 10X their product/market fit with Game Thinking. She pioneered the idea of applying game design to digital services, and is well known for her books "[Community Building on the Web](#)" and "[Game Thinking](#)."

[Bernard Moon](#) is co-founder of SparkLabs Group, which is made up of SparkLabs

Accelerator, SparkLabs Global Ventures, SparkLabs Capital, and SparkLabs Ventures. Bernard was previously co-founder of Vidquik and GoingOn Networks and a director at IRG and HeyAnita Korea. [*Inside Outside Innovation Summit 2018 \[VIDEO\]*](#) [*@Bernardmoon*](#)

[*Francesca Gino*](#) is an experienced Harvard Business School Professor and a community and social services professional skilled in nonprofit organizations, analytical skills, coaching, and research design. She wrote “[*Rebel Talent: Why It Pays to Break the Rules at Work and in Life*](#)” and “[*Sidetracked: Why Our Decisions Get Derailed, and How We Can Stick to the Plan.*](#)” [*@francescagino*](#)

[*Sean Ammirati*](#) is a partner at Birchmere Ventures focused on both SaaS and Consumer Internet investments as well as their Birchmere Labs initiative and an Adjunct Professor of Entrepreneurship at Carnegie Mellon University’s Tepper School. Most Recently Sean was COO of ReadWriteWeb and co-founder of mSpoke. [*Inside Outside Innovation Summit 2018 Speaker \[VIDEO\]*](#) [*@SeanAmmirati*](#)

[*Lindsay Angelo*](#) partners with brands of all sizes to explore and validate ideas and create strategies to bring those ideas to life. She has held positions at lululemon and BC Hydro.

[*Jeremy Lockhorn*](#) uses new and emerging technologies to solve difficult marketing, customer experience and business challenges for brands. Previously, VP Experience Strategy / Mobile + Emerging Technology at SapientRazorfish. [*Inside Outside Innovation Summit 2018 \[VIDEO\]*](#) [*@newmediageek*](#)

[*Lorrie Vogel*](#) is the CEO/Founder ImagineNOW, a consultancy that accelerates innovation by using the power of design thinking, leveraging innovation, design and sustainability expertise. Lorrie was also at Nike for two decades, bringing changes to all facets of Nike’s products as well as shaping the future of the apparel and footwear industry as the VP of Nike’s Material Science and Innovation.

[*Paul Singh*](#) is a “Lean VC” formally with 500 Startups and Disruption Corporation. He runs a weekly newsletter at Results Junkies. [*@paulsingh*](#)

[Andy Shannon](#) lives in London and heads up global operations at Startupbootcamp, a large European startup accelerator. [@atshannon1](#)

[Robert Wolcott](#) is a professor of innovation at Kellogg School of Management. He provides foresight, growth and innovation strategy & management advice for global corporations, and entrepreneurs. He's also an active angel investor in partnership with corporations and entrepreneurs. [@RobertcWolcott](#)

[Ari Popper](#) is the Founder and CEO of SciFutures, an award-winning innovation house that uses science fiction prototyping to create preferred futures for Fortune 500 companies. [@aripopper](#)

[Jonathan Bertfield](#) is a Partner at Spinnaker Co. He's worked with global corporations, early-stage startups, large government agencies and non-profits as a consultant, coach, trainer and workshop facilitator.

[Jay Acunzo](#) has worked at Google, HubSpot, and at the VC firm NextView. On the side, Jay created the podcast Unthinkable, and co-founded Boston Content. Jay also founded Unthinkable Media, which works with fast-growing startups and challenger brands to create entertaining B2B podcasts. He recently wrote "[Break the Wheel: Question Best Practices, Hone Your Intuition, and Do Your Best Work](#)" [@jayacunzo](#)

[Ryan Jacoby](#) is the founder of MACHINE, a strategy and innovation company that helps its clients Think Big and Act Small. He wrote "[Making Progress: The 7 responsibilities of innovation leadership](#)." Ryan has been a Venture Partner at the Collaborative Fund and led teams at the design and innovation firm IDEO. [Inside Outside Innovation Summit 2018 \[Video\]](#) [@jacobyryan](#)

[Dan Toma](#) is an innovation thought leader and the author of "[The Corporate Startup](#)." He's involved with technology startups across the world, in addition to focusing on enterprise innovation strategy. A big advocate of the ecosystem approach to innovation, he's also worked with various government bodies and universities. [@Danto_ma](#)

[Dan Olsen](#) helps companies build and optimize their products and product teams, often as interim VP of Product. He wrote "[The Lean Product Playbook](#)." [@danolsen](#)

[Sean Johnson](#) helps companies figure out what to build, how to build it and how to get people to care. He is a partner at Digital Intent and at Founder Equity, a Chicago-based venture fund. He also teaches in the innovation and entrepreneurship group at Northwestern's Kellogg School of Management. [@intentionally](#)

[Dave Knox](#) is an innovator that bridges the worlds between brand marketing, digital, and entrepreneurship. As CMO of Rockfish, Dave helped the company become one of the fastest growing agencies in the country. Dave also co-founded The Brandery and wrote "[Predicting The Turn: The High Stakes Game of Business Between Startups and Blue Chips](#)." [@daveknox](#)

[Douglas Ferguson](#) is an entrepreneur and human-centered technologist. He is president of Voltage Control, an Austin-based workshop agency that specializes in Design Sprints and innovation workshops.

[Bart Foster](#) is the founder of Sanitas Ventures, Ltd. a venture capital firm focused on early-stage companies in the eye care industry. He works to bridge the gap between large multinational companies and early-stage ventures that need resources, capital, and expertise. He's worked at both Novartis, in a business venture which became SoloHealth, and at Peachtree Network. [Inside Outside Innovation Summit 2018 \[Video\]](#) [@bart_foster](#)

[Greg Larkin](#) is founder of Bowery 315 where he is a builder of products and instigator of cultural transformation in huge companies. He wrote "[This Might Get Me Fired: A Manual for Thriving in the Corporate Entrepreneurial Underground](#)." [@gregory_larkin](#)

[Brad Feld](#) has been an early stage investor and entrepreneur since 1987. Before co-founding Foundry Group, he co-founded Mobius Venture Capital and, before that, founded Intensity Ventures. Brad is also a co-founder of Techstars. He's written many books as part of the "[Startup Revolution](#)" series and writes the blogs Feld Thoughts and Venture Deals. [@bfeld](#)

[Azeem Azhar](#) writes the [Exponential View](#) newsletter on technology, business, and society. Startup after management, founder, and adviser. Investor with several exits. Advisor at Accenture and the World Economic Forum. VC at Kindred Capital. [@azeem](#)

[Josh Seiden](#) helps clients launch new products and services, and helps them create more agile, entrepreneurial organizations. He is co-author of “[Sense & Respond: How Successful Organizations Listen to Customers and Create New Products Continuously](#)” and “[Lean UX: Designing Great Products with Agile Teams](#).” He is co-founder of Neo and IxDA, and currently the co-founder of Sense & Respond Press, a publishing startup that publishes short, practical books on innovation, digital transformation, and product management. [@jseiden](#)

[Doug Hall](#) founded Eureka! Ranch in 1986 with the mission to help companies find, filter, and fast-track big ideas. He’s the author of several best-selling books, including his latest release “[Driving Eureka: Problem-Solving with Data-Driven Methods & the Innovation Engineering System](#).”

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Who did I miss? Email me! [Brian Ardinger](#)

[Brian Ardinger](#) is Director of Innovation at Nelnet and the founder of [Inside Outside](#), makers of the weekly [Inside Outside Innovation podcast](#), events, and an innovation leaders community. For over 25 years, Brian has been helping entrepreneurs and enterprises navigate and compete in a world of change and disruption. He was the founder of NMotion (a seed-stage startup accelerator), CMO at Nanonation, head of research at Ion Global (a Hong Kong-headquartered technology firm), and senior consultant for Gartner in Asia. [@ardinger](#)



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