

Suncoast Q & R Council

Panelist Biographies



Jeff Kondel

CEO, Roots Education Co.

Jeff Kondel is CEO of Roots Education Co., leading industry-driven technical education for students, schools, and manufacturers preparing for the future of work. Over 20 years, he has supported hundreds of manufacturers across multiple countries on projects ranging from \$10 million to \$50 million, applying robotic, automation, and manufacturing best practices to solve real workforce problems.



Keely DeGroot

Director of NeoCity, Plug and Play Tech Center

Keely DeGroot is the Director of NeoCity at Plug and Play Tech Center, leading strategy across semiconductors, deep tech, aerospace and defense, and medical innovation. With a background spanning healthcare innovation, product development, and human-centered design, she works with startups, corporations, and government partners to accelerate emerging technologies from concept to commercialization.



Matthew Walsh

Advanced Packaging Chief Engineer, Florida Semiconductor Engine

Matthew Walsh is the Advanced Packaging Chief Engineer for the Florida Semiconductor Engine, a subject matter expert in advanced 3-D heterogeneous microelectronics packaging. Since 1988, he has developed IC packaging, radar, and harsh-environment electronics technologies, including 15 years with the Department of Defense Navy, and holds 13 published papers, 8 patents, and 4 defensive publications.



Rob Harris

Executive Director, Sarasota/Manatee Area Manufacturers Association (SAMA)

Rob Harris is the Executive Director of the Sarasota/Manatee Area Manufacturers Association (SAMA). He has been engaged in the manufacturing industry since the start of his career, gaining early experience across all aspects of manufacturing operations through small businesses. He became full-time Executive Director of SAMA in 2021, previously also leading the Southwest Regional Manufacturers Association (SRMA).