



Melica Moshiri

ENTREPRENEUR/FOUNDER

Early-stage AI companies are hiring against a market that did not exist three years ago. The roles they need are senior, the candidate pool is shallow, and the cost of a wrong executive hire shows up in the first investor update. Founders are trying to scale commercial and technical leadership while still building the product.

Melica Moshiri is the founder of SkillTorch, a boutique search firm hiring senior commercial and technical leaders into venture-backed AI companies across the US and Europe.

Melica Moshiri's 2026 Biography

Why organisations work with Melica Moshiri

- Operating knowledge of the AI scale-up hiring market. SkillTorch places go-to-market, C-suite and technical leaders into companies across automation, robotics, semiconductors and enterprise AI.
- A founder's view of what it takes to start and run a specialist business from cold, not a consultant's view of someone else's growth.
- A public platform built through BBC's The Apprentice (2025) and a TEDxWorthing talk, giving her access to audiences beyond a typical recruitment specialist.
- A working perspective on how AI is changing recruiting itself, drawn from running an AI-focused search firm and hosting the SkillTorch Disrupt podcast with founders and operators in the field.

Biography highlights

- Founder, SkillTorch, retained and embedded search for venture-backed AI companies across North America and Europe
- Host, SkillTorch Disrupt podcast on hiring, leadership and applied AI
- TEDxWorthing speaker, October 2025: "How to reconnect in a robotic world"
- BBC The Apprentice 2025 contestant, reached Week 8, won five tasks including Project Manager
- Speaking platforms include NBCUniversal, Spotify and the University of Brighton
- BA (Hons) Law with Business, University of Brighton

Biography

AI companies in their first scaling phase usually have two problems at once. The product is moving faster than the leadership team can hire for, and the executive roles they need most are the ones the founders have

AVAILABLE FOR

- Speaking

MELICA'S SPEAKING THEMES

- Artificial Intelligence & Generative AI
- Business Strategy & Growth
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- Entrepreneurship
- Future of Work
- Resilience & Stress Management

LANGUAGES: English

never personally done. SkillTorch was built to sit inside that gap.

Melica Moshiri founded SkillTorch in 2022 after a decade in recruitment that took her from Pareto Law in the UK through executive search in advertising technology to Los Angeles and Orange County, where she opened a US office for a UK firm before launching her own. The firm runs retained and embedded search for venture-backed AI companies across the US and Europe, placing senior commercial, technical and operational leaders into businesses in automation, robotics, semiconductors and enterprise AI.

In 2025 she became a contestant on BBC's The Apprentice, reaching Week 8 and winning five tasks, including one as Project Manager. The platform extended her public reach across BBC News, BBC Radio 5 Live, the Daily Mail, The Mirror and Persian broadcaster Manoto TV, and led to a TEDxWorthing talk later that year on how technology is reshaping the way people connect at work.

She also hosts SkillTorch Disrupt, a podcast with founders and operators building applied AI in real-world settings. The recurring theme across her client work, her broadcasting and her speaking is the same: how small, recently funded companies design leadership teams that can hold up when growth gets ahead of the org chart.

Key speaking topics

- Building and scaling a specialist business in the AI sector
- Executive hiring for venture-backed technology companies
- AI's effect on recruiting and talent strategy
- Resilience and reinvention as a first-time founder
- Women founding and leading in technology
- Personal brand and visibility for entrepreneurs

Ideal for

- Founders and CEOs of early-stage and Series A to C technology companies
- Heads of Talent and CHROs scaling teams inside AI-native businesses
- Entrepreneurship programmes, accelerators and university enterprise audiences
- Conferences on women in technology, leadership and founding

Audience outcomes

- A working picture of how senior hiring inside AI scale-ups actually runs, from brief to closed offer
- Specific examples of what goes wrong when founders hire too late or too senior, and how to read the signals earlier
- A candid account of the public, financial and personal exposure that comes with founding a business and a media profile at the same time
- Practical positioning for women entering or founding in technology, drawn from her own market

Melica Moshiri's 2026 talks & topics

How to reconnect in a robotic world

A TEDxWorthing talk on how always-on technology and screen-mediated work have left people more connected and less in contact, and what it takes to rebuild presence at work and at home.

Key takeaways:

- A read on the gap between connection and contact in remote and hybrid teams
 - What leaders and founders can do practically to restore presence inside their own organisations
 - Why the next phase of technology adoption is a human design problem, not a tooling one
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Building a business from scratch

A founder's account of starting SkillTorch from cold and scaling it into the AI sector, covering the early commercial decisions, the cost of getting hiring wrong, and what an embedded search model actually looks like in practice.

Key takeaways:

- How to recognise the point at which a founder must stop selling and start hiring sellers
 - The senior roles that early-stage AI companies systematically under-hire for
 - How to design a small specialist firm to compete with established search brands
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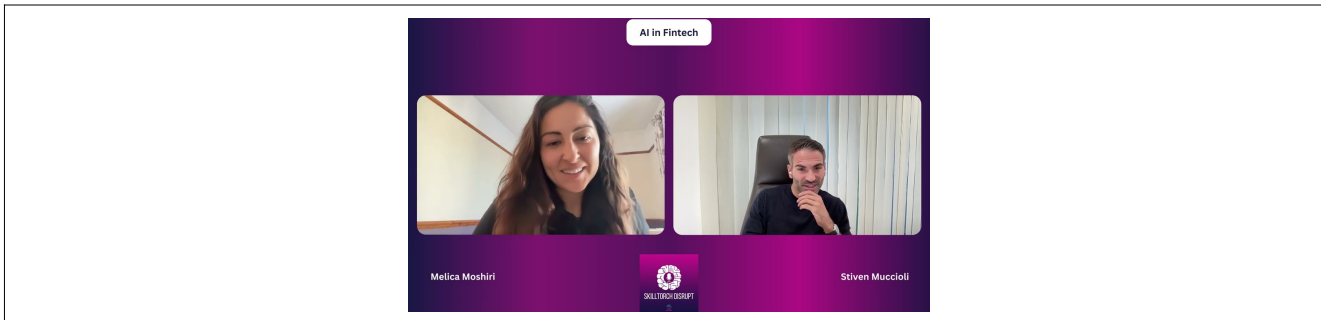
Resilience and reinvention

A talk drawing on the experience of running a business while filming The Apprentice in public, covering composure under pressure, recovery from visible setbacks, and the difference between performing and leading.

Key takeaways:

- Working tools for composure when a setback is happening in front of an audience
- The difference between reputation management and actual recovery
- Why visibility on its own does not build a business, and what does

Melica Moshiri's Videos



What Melica Moshiri's clients say

If you are seeking a lively and engaging guest speaker, look no further than Melica! I had the pleasure of hosting her in a 'fireside chat' at the School of Business & Law's Entrepreneurship Forum, where she spoke very well about her university experience, her time on the BBC's The Apprentice and starting her own business. She was engaging, warm and able to inspire her audience. A lively and authentic speaker, Melica shares valuable insights from her university journey and the real-world challenges and triumphs of launching her own recruitment company. Her talks are both relatable and motivating—ideal for anyone interested in entrepreneurship, career development, or the student experience. Highly recommended for guest speaking opportunities!

Dr. Clare Forder

Senior Lecturer, University of Brighton

Melica is an inspiring, eloquent, and passionate speaker. During our Women's Empowerment discussion at Spotify, Melica held the room while sharing her career experiences and time on The Apprentice.

She is adept at speaking about nuanced topics such as gender equality while always infusing her wit and personality. Speaking with Melica infuses light into your day, and anyone would benefit from engaging with her.

Dianna Colasurdo

UK Government Lead, Spotify

I had seen Melica on TV, but that's a different experience from seeing someone speak live at an event. Since then, I have seen Melica speak at several events. She shares such a fascinating story about her career and the decisions she made along the way. One of those was a big decision to go on The Apprentice. She talks about the experience and what she learnt from it. Melica brings her own business insights about the highs and lows of being a business founder. Her most compelling stories are about her family and her perspectives on life, which help her shape how she runs her business. If you want a great storyteller for your event, Melica will deliver on that for your audience.

Mo Kanjilal

Founder & Director, Edge Of Difference

Melica's talk was powerful, vulnerable, and energising. Our students left feeling genuinely inspired and more confident in carving their own paths.

University of Brighton

Honest, engaging, and full of value - Melica had the audience hooked from the first story. She speaks from experience, not theory, and that's what makes her so relatable.

Worthing & Adur Chamber of Commerce

She's got this unique ability to speak about serious topics - like ambition, rejection, and resilience - with so much warmth and humour. The room was buzzing afterwards.

The Big Fat Greek Club