Dr. James ("Jim") C. Spohrer

Director of IBM University Programs (IBM UP) since 2009, Jim works to align IBM and university ecosystems globally in five key areas: research (from nanotechnology to smarter planet), readiness (core STEM and emerging skills needs), recruiting (interns and full-time hiring), revenue (public-private partnerships), and responsibility (volunteerism and citizenship). His current priorities include applying service science, cloud computing, and analytics to create smarter buildings, campuses, universities, and cities.

Jim was one of the first to highlight for global audiences that universities are increasingly one of the largest employers of knowledge workers in cities, and play a vital role in urban sustainability and service innovation. Cities and universities are tightly-coupled holistic service systems, or integrated system of systems, and must constantly find ways to renew transportation, water, food, energy, communications, building, retail, finance, health, education, and governance systems at multiple scales to remain viable in an increasingly dynamic and interconnected world.

Jim helped establish and was founding Director of IBM's first Service Research group in 2003 at the Almaden Research Center with a focus on STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Math) for service sector innovations. He led this group to attain ten times return on investment with four IBM outstanding and eleven accomplishment awards over seven years. Projects included SSME (Service Science Management and Engineering), Component Business Model (CBM), Solution Design Manager (SDM)/Financial Solutions Manager (FSM), Intelligent Document Gateway (IDG), BIW (Business Insight Workbench), COBRA (Corporate Brand Analytics), SIMPLE (Intellectual Property Analytics), Impact of Future Technologies (IoFT), Web Fountain, Call Center Management Dashboard and Analytics, and New Service Design Rehearsal Studio. Working with service research and innovation pioneers from many academic disciplines, industries, and governments, Jim advocates for Service Science, Management, Engineering, and Design (SSMED) as an integrative extended-STEM framework for global competency development, economic growth, and advancement of science.

Jim helped establish and was founding CTO of IBM’s first Venture Capital Relations group in 2000 in Silicon Valley.

Jim lead Apple Computer’s Learning Technologies group in the mid 1990’s, where he was awarded DEST (Distinguished Engineer Scientist and Technologist).

Jim received a Ph.D. in Computer Science/Artificial Intelligence from Yale University and a B.S. in Physics from MIT.
Jim grew up in the great State of Maine, where his family’s love of the outdoors helped propel him to become an Eagle Scout, Jr. Assistant Scout Master, and Summer Camp Counselor. He now lives in Silicon Valley California with his wife and two sons.

Dr. Spohrer has over eighty publications, advancing our understanding of the application of information technology and related innovations to both improve human capabilities and transform human-made systems, including:


