

Dan Dumbacher is a Professor of Engineering Practice at Purdue University, formerly the Chief Executive Officer of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA).

Dan has served in senior executive roles at NASA, including the Deputy Associate Administrator, Exploration Systems Development Division, Human Exploration and Operations Mission Directorate at NASA Headquarters. Dan's roles have included groundbreaking flight test of the initial vertical landing rocket, DC-X/XA, development of technologies to reduce the cost of access to space, NASA development of the X-37 flight vehicle prior to transition to the U.S. Air Force, and as Engineering Director at the NASA Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, AL.

During his career, he has received numerous awards and honors including the coveted Silver Snoopy Award and the NASA Distinguished Service Medal. In 2015, Purdue recognized him with the Gustafson Teaching Award. Dan has also been named as a 2025 Distinguished Engineering Alum by Purdue University.

Dumbacher earned his bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from Purdue University and a master's degree in business administration from the University of Alabama in Huntsville. He has also completed the Senior Managers in Government program at Harvard University.