AI, Data & Digital Academy

AI Essentials for Boards

| 1 Day Board Development Programme |

Delivered by Niresh Rajah | Chief Data & AI Officer | Board Chair & NED | Associate Fellow & Innovation Expert –Oxford University | Fellow at Imperial College | Chair of UK AI – FS |

Overview

Boards are navigating a pivotal moment. AI is reshaping every industry in a major way. The critical question is no longer whether AI will affect your organisation, it's whether the board is equipped to manage and oversee it.

This programme gives Board Members, the knowledge, confidence, and practical tools; to ask the right questions, ensure opportunity is being identified, guide the organisation on the correct path, fulfil the governance responsibilities, identify and mitigate risk and regulatory aspects, and champion Responsible AI.

We build from first principles, no prior AI knowledge assumed to board-ready fluency, using real examples drawn from the financial services, public sector and professional services sectors.

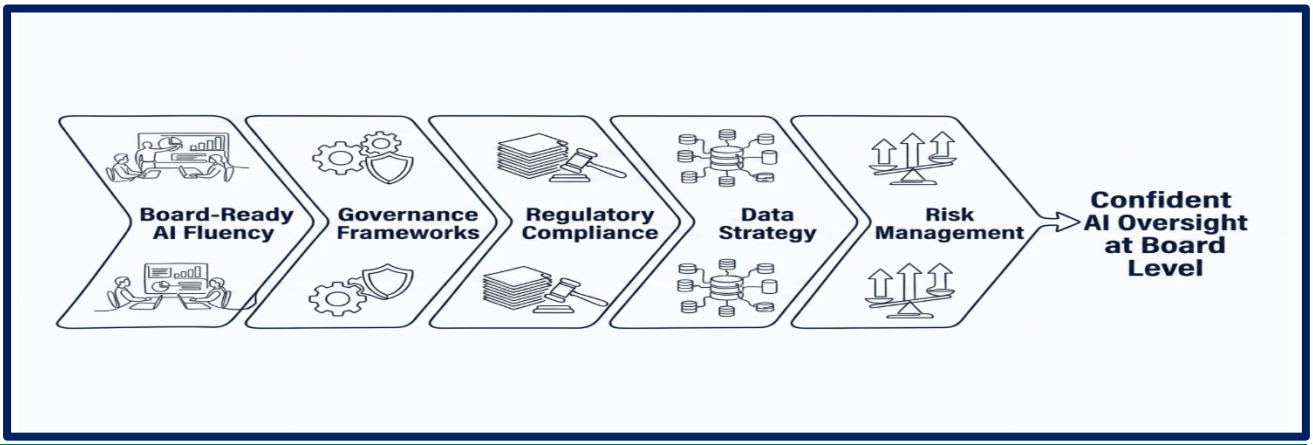
We cover AI essentials, value creation through AI, your regulatory obligations, and the risk frameworks that matter most. You will leave with a clear picture of the AI opportunity and risk landscape, the questions you should be asking in every board meeting, and a practical checklist you can use at your very next meeting.

Who Should Attend?

AI is now every board's business.

This session is designed for Board Members ; Executive Directors, Non-Executive Directors, Executive Leaders, Chairs, Deputy Chairs and those who need board and executive committee ready AI fluency in a time-efficient format. No prior AI knowledge is required or assumed.

Informed. Prepared. Accountable.



Session Structure

| 1 Day Board Development Programme |

1. *AI Essentials: What Every Board Member Needs to Know*

- A plain-English primer on AI: the essentials, no jargon and no assumptions
- Generative AI, machine learning, and automation — what each one means for boards in practice
- How AI is already operating in the relevant sectors right now
- Why this is the opportunity that boards cannot afford to miss
- What organisations in regulated sectors are doing

2. *Re- Imagining your organisation in the Age of AI – Workshop Based*

- Re-imagine your organisation through an AI Framework – Guided Session
- Where does AI creates genuine strategic value
- What is the impact of AI on the business model
- What are the new opportunities for leveraging AI
- What are the threats and risks from AI to your organization
- Practical next steps

3. *AI Regulation, Responsible AI and AI Governance*

- EU AI Act: the key distinctions and cross-border implications
- UK AI Action Plan and UK AI Act : the key areas of focus
- ICO and UK GDPR: automated decision-making, member data rights, and your obligations
- Your fiduciary duties in the age of AI: what you are now accountable for
- AI governance frameworks: what boards need to have in place and how to assess current maturity
- Responsible AI: the principles every board should require its executives to embed
- Responsible AI in practice: what good governance looks like in leading organisations
- Real-world AI & Data failures: the lessons boards failed to learn and what they tell us

4. *AI Ready Data - The critical asset to protect*

- Data Strategy: Create value from your data assets and insights for customers, employees
- Data ethics: fairness, bias, discrimination, and accountability in data-driven decision-making
- Data management governance: board-level discussion on the data foundation required for AI ready data
- Data security: AI-specific cyber risks, and what to ask your CISO/CIO
- Data protection: UK GDPR, automated decision-making, and your board's obligations
- Where is your organisation on Data Foundations and AI Ready Data?

5. *Opportunity, Risk & The Board AI Checklist*

- Where does AI creates genuine strategic value for your organisation
- Key AI risks facing boards: model risk, third-party exposure, algorithmic bias
- Reputational, regulatory, operational, and strategic risk — Understanding the full picture
- Board AI checklist
- Key questions Board members need to ask regarding AI at board meetings
- Where is your board now?

6. *Wrap-Up, Q&A & Next Steps*

- Agreeing next steps: Governance frameworks, reporting lines, and the board's oversight role
- The questions you will ask at your very next board meeting
- Open Q&A and personal action commitments

About your Board Facilitator – Niresh Rajah



Niresh Rajah

Chief Data & AI Officer,
Board Chair – Microbit Foundation, NED, Board Advisor
Chair – UK AI for Financial Services,
Fellow at Imperial College,
Associate Fellow & Innovation Expert at Oxford University

Niresh Rajah is a globally recognised executive leader in Financial Services and Professional Services with over 20+ years of experience at the forefront of Data & Analytics, Artificial Intelligence, Regulation, Automation, Innovation and Digital Transformation. With a distinguished track record, he has held senior leadership roles at Barclays, Lloyds Banking Group, Danske Bank, DLA Piper, and Grant Thornton, often reporting directly to Group CEO or Group COO.

As a seasoned Group Chief Data & AI Officer, Niresh has led complex and high-impact AI and data transformations, balancing innovation with regulatory rigor. He has led complex regulatory, AI and Data transformations at Board level including Brexit changes and GDPR working with regulators across Europe.

He also holds a variety of Non-Executive Director and Board Advisory roles. He is an Associate Fellow and Innovation Expert at Oxford University, and an Honorary Practice Fellow for AI, Data & Digital at Imperial College.

Recognised in the Global CDO 100 for three consecutive years (2023-2025), AI Executive to Watch (2025), and Data Management Professional (2023). Niresh has been appointed as Chair of the UK AI Financial Services Working Group, where he champions the balance between innovation and practical, pragmatic regulations for consumer protection.

He serves as co-chair of the UK Chief Data & Analytics Officer governing body for Gartner C-Suite communities and holds advisory board positions at A-Team Group (for both Data and Reg-Tech), Hot Topics and CDO Magazine. He also judges at a number of prestigious awards, including the National AI Awards, British Data Awards, AI Industry Women in Governance Risk & Compliance, and the A-Team Data Management and RegTech Awards.
Niresh is an accomplished speaker and regularly speaks at the FT, Economist and Gartner conferences

Marc Berryman, Chief Operating Officer, Gulf International Bank (UK) Limited

"Niresh delivered an engaging and highly informative session for our Board that helped demystify AI and bring the discussion onto practical business ground. He combines an exceptionally strong grasp of the technology with the ability to explain it in clear, accessible terms, helping our senior leaders focus on the opportunities, risks, and strategic implications most relevant to our organization."

For more information : Please contact Niresh Rajah
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