



IRM UK DATA GOVERNANCE, AI GOVERNANCE AND
MDM CONFERENCE 2026
MONDAY 23RD AND TUESDAY 24TH MARCH 2026
CONVENE 133 HOUNDSDITCH, LONDON

Introduction

Kate Jenkinson Conference Poet

You might ask why poetry?
Well poetry connects us,
it's like the data of our soul.
When we feel the words
our minds create,
poetry makes us whole.

Does this sound familiar?
If so, data is similar.

Over these two days
I've found that
when you feel the impact,
of data curated ethically,
holistically,
your work hums
with the harmony
that everyone hears.



NEXT STEP HR

Welcome Day 1 Monday 23rd March



Gerard Bartley Governance Practice Lead EMEA, Syniti
and
Sue Geuens Data Governance & MDM, Elsevier

Gerard set us off,
with his yellow paper,
introducing the shape of
our data, AI governance
and MDM conference.

Gerard said 'everyone here
does data day to day'
and Sue said 'nobody
planned their careers this way',
but IRM conferences
are a data hug.
Full of data networking
and geeky stuff.
I think I've caught the data bug!

Kate Jenkinson

As your conference poet,
I'm going to offer you a selection
of tasty takeaways
from across the two days.
And to prove there is poetry
in everything, the proof
is in the pudding.
So, feast your ears on these
selected sound bites
and delight in the remembering.

Blackmail, Inc – Inside a Global Data Extortion Operation
Geoff White, Author, Speaker, Investigative Journalist & Podcast Creator



Jeff White's keynote opener
came with a spoiler alert -
your data is as pointless as dirt!
If scrambled it is digital rubble,
and that's just the kind of trouble
the upside down of cyber crime
is obsessively masterminding.

Navigating AI's Inflection Point: Chart your Path to Success
Dora Boussias, Keynote Speaker & Executive Advisor, Data & AI Leadership

Dora said AI is the 'Buzz du Jour'
92% are accelerating investment,
whilst maturity is at 1%.
Going from experimentation
to organisation and integration.
How do we manage the value gap?
When both tech and exec are overstating
their competence - we are compensating,
realising this is our integrity.
As Spiderman's Uncle Ben said
'with great power
comes great responsibility'.

AI Governance Unlocked: How to Empower Innovation without Losing Control
Ciara McMorrow and Selenay Akalin, Sky

Sky's Ciara and Selenay
took the movies metaphor
to new heights.
The biggest risk with AI
is when there is no script,
no rehearsals or safety checks
and the box office flop,
is what you get.

Data Governance as a Business Enabler in HR: How HMRC have approached this

Ian Wallis and Godfrey Morgan, HMRC



From William the Conqueror we've collected as much tax as accurately as we can the HMRC's 65,000 FTE's make that happen – today.

But are they information literate? Ian and Godfrey shared the key in HR. It's the storytelling that's selling the benefits of quality, because getting the wrong answer faster isn't integrity.

Context Intelligence: Mastering the New Rules of Data for Agentic AI

Chris Fitzpatrick, Reltio

Chris from Reltio demonstrated the need for context and how agentic AI increases complexity like a rats nest.

Your next Workforce will be Human and Agent. Are you really ready?

Kendal Parmar, Founder Me&AI

But honestly none of us have this box ticked, as Kendal said we need to 'take the wall away'. This transformation is inside out. If we reduce the 20% time wasted in chasing, finding, reminding people, we can untrap the data - we can be the 'data liberators'!



Data Governance, FAST: Evolving Data Culture and Metadata Management

Shereen Zafar, Data Modeller, University of Leeds
and

Adam Milward, CEO, MetadataWorks



Shereen and Adam shone a light
on their data innovation journey
at Leeds University.

Don't assume knowledge
is in the leadership room,
go beyond the moment of truth
to amplify impact and advocacy.
An award-winning culture
of data fluency - awaits.

From Fragmentation to Foundation: Building Digital Continuity in Airbus Real Estate

JP Torres, Data Architect, Airbus

JP Torres went from a fragmented
database of real estate,
with missing assets
and footprint the size of Venice – twice!
(It was textbook complex!)
to spinning the flywheel.

When people, process and tools combine,
forging the golden records,
from use cases,
clustered from multiple sources -
it exposes opportunities
for greater efficiencies.
This is award winning digital continuity.

Cutting through the Hype: Practical Insights from a Real Data Transformation Journey

Rob Wilsher, Data Governance & Operations Lead, RWE Renewables



Rob's myth busting numbered 5.
Here is one to make you wise.

If you build it they will come,
but you can spend 7 figure sums,
and be twiddling your thumbs,
with empty stadiums.
Instead, put people first.
Design engagement in,
because making fans is more fun!

Keynote: Fireside Chat with Nicola Askham

Nicola Askham, The Data Governance Coach

and

Shaymoly Mukherjee, Data Delivery Manager, The Guardian

And finally on day one,
our fireside chat with Nicola Askham.

She went from the Wild West
to finding her passion.
She makes it real so they feel it.
If no one owns it,
'I can delete it'.
Notice how quickly they get animated!
No need to get Federated.
Keep it uncomplicated.
See how keen they are to get on board.



Tuesday 24th March

Kate Jenkinson

and phew! we are on to day two!



Connect with DAMA UK – Supporting your Professional Development
Mary Drabble, Head of Data Governance, Royal London

Mary introduced DAMA UK
of DAMA International.
Nurturing this community
of data professionals.
The benefits of membership
are multiple!
Connect with peers.
Share your ideas,
and sign up online, anytime!

Welcome Day 2

Ben Clinch, Partner, Ortech

and

Mary Drabble, Head of Data Governance, Royal London

It's day two with the welcome
from Mary and Ben,
who reminded us again.
Being data driven, it's a given
our feedback is important
for curating future, relevant
conference content.



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Building Trust in the Era of Agentic AI
Cal AI-Dhubaib, Head of AI & Data Science, Further



Cal's keynote was inspired
AI's rise creates a higher
surface area to risk.
It's easier to build things
- you shouldn't.
We trust ourselves
but don't trust our colleagues.

There are only 2 problems.
Algorithms and humans.

Algorithms are the jagged frontier of AI-
where a muffin is a chihuahua,
chainsaws are piggy banks and
garbage out is now served with glitter.

And humans? We don't know what we want,
we share too much,
hack relentlessly
and culturally we don't agree.

So we need to acknowledge
this dual fallibility,
and fail with a playbook.
Ask 'is anything uncool happening here?'
Traffic light your trust governance,
keep humans in the loop
and like a can of soup,
communicate how trust is preserved -
in AI nutrition system cards.

Trust engineering is an enablement system.
Your IP is how you do it
it's the heartbeat
in your organisation.

And whoever said
a heartbeat was boring.

Keynote Panel: Demystifying Data Products - A Panel Discussion

Moderator: Malcolm Hawker, Chief Data Officer, Profisee - Ben Clinch, Partner, Ortecha, Yasemin Kural, Master and Reference Data Lead, SMBC EMEA, Rebecca O'Kill, Chief Data and Analytics Officer, Axis Capital and Samir Sharma, CEO, Datazoom



Our panel of data experts agree on one thing - data products it's about business need.

And there is a spectrum, on the left is scalability and agents on the right - humans and business consequence.

Map products to strategic objectives or the risks protected.
Create ownership around it and AI is the carrot.
Remember ruthless questions maximise the value equation.

The Behaviour Problem in Data Governance

Andrew Bradley, Head of Strategy and Adoption, Telefonica Tech

Andy Bradley reminded us business success is one that positions data as part of the process. And data governance is at the point of decision, if not it's just guidance.

Like the zebra crossing you choose to ignore, if governance isn't changing behaviour, it isn't governance.



Building a Value-Driven Enterprise: Using Business Capabilities for Data Governance and AI Excellence, E.ON Energy Networks and IRM Sweden

Cecilia Nordén, Senior Business Architect Consultant/Teacher, IRM



It's a mess out there -
information everywhere.
We need to create a coherent view
and the Milky Way model
is Cecilia's way
of overcoming inertia
in EON's organisation structure.

The Missing Link: How Leaders Are Transforming AI Hype Into Real Value

Annette Andresen, CEO, Marlowe Consulting Limited and
Jonathan Evans, Head of Operating Framework: Global Deployment, AstraZeneca

Axial, as the largest SAP upgrade.
They found many blockers on the way.
Where entrepreneurialism as a value,
means standardisation is countercultural,
leadership needs to role model
vulnerability - so that people will follow.

Keynote: Story-Driven Governance: Rewiring the Human Operating System for an AI-First Future

Ajay Mathur, Enterprise Data Governance Leader

And finally Jay closed the day
Introducing, with a poll,
the 53 synonyms at the heart
of our challenges - it's people.

An 80% failure rate
comes from frameworks
built on logic yet humans
are emotional

The sloth, parrot, elephant and lion
each need a strategy,
except the wolf.



The wolf will share the story,
take it on a journey,
move beliefs sideways.

Story as a service
overcomes resistance.
It's around the campfire
that we rewire acceptance.

CLOSE

Kate Jenkinson

And so to the end of our Spoken Word Finale
where poetry is the shortest short story.
But, be honest, before today did you see
the poetry in business metrics
or did you believe it didn't exist?

Poetry is truth -
when you seek the one truth,
the beauty of the perfect ratio,
the joy of the win win scenario,
the plan everyone wants to follow,

it was a poetic
way of thinking
that made it so.

Now imagine if your workflow
was as smooth as a bowling green
and every query smelt like cut grass
resolution was partnered with elegant solutions
that tasted like fine wine in a crystal glass

and this was the experience
of governance,
making a difference,
to the bottom line -
every time.



The grass would be greener
under your feet,
your data warehouse sweet,
your catalogues neat.

Ask yourself
does your data governance
have a heartbeat.

We all existed before the AI boom,
so I wrote this poem
for the humans in the room.

It's been my honour to reflect
back the wonder of this event.
The beauty and the truth
of the shared human experience
that is each and everyone of you
participating in this conference.

(and I'll leave you to analyse
the data gaps
in appropriate forms
of post event feedback)

Finally please know this.
If you have been wowed
by my eloquence
I can only reflect back
the brilliance
of this community.

So don't underestimate
or complicate
the value that you bring,

and remember no one ever said
a heartbeat was boring.

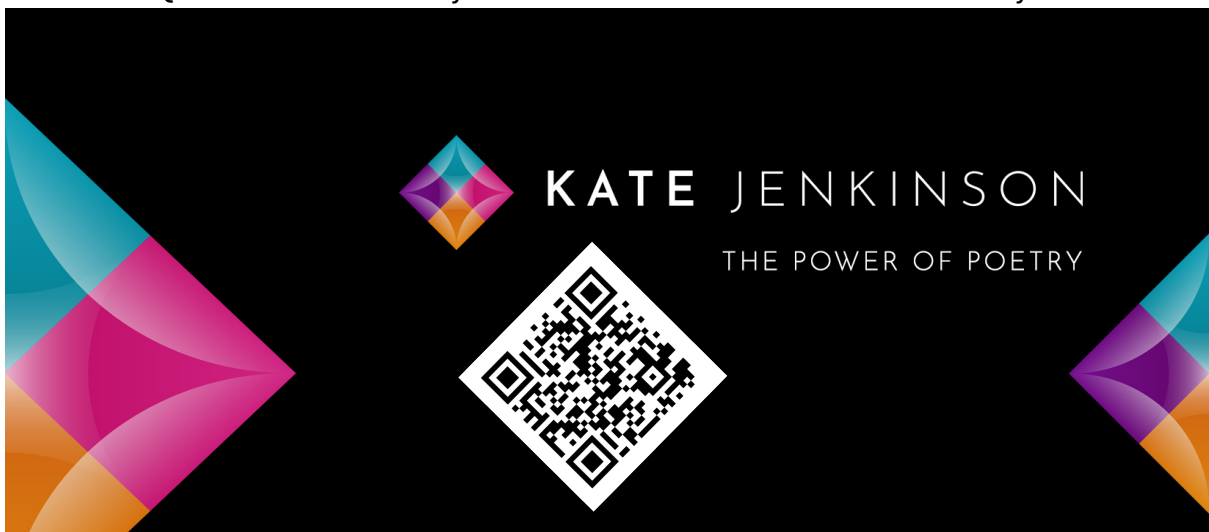


Designed, delivered and performed by



KATE JENKINSON

Follow the QR code for The Poetry in Business Conference and more Poetry Services



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