CHAIR

Dr Ian Oppermann

NSW Chief Data Scientist and Industry Professor, UTS

Dr. Ian Oppermann is the NSW Government's Chief Data Scientist working within the Department of Customer Service.
He is also an Industry Professor at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS). From 2015 to 2019, Ian was also the CEO of the NSW Data Analytics Centre (DAC).

Ian is considered a thought leader in the area of the Digital Economy and is a regular speaker on "Big Data", broadband enabled services and the impact of technology on society. Ian has an MBA from the University of London and a Doctor of Philosophy in Mobile Telecommunications from Sydney University.

Ian is a Fellow of the Institute of Engineers Australia, a Fellow of the IEEE, a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering, is a Fellow and President of the Australian Computer Society, Fellow of the NSW Royal Society, and a graduate member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Mark Monfort

Co-President, DSAi

Mark is co-head of DSAI and has over a decade of experience working in data analytics across multiple industries with strong experience in the financial markets where he has worked in start-ups, investment banks and currently runs a data consultancy with Arturo called OpenInsight.

Mark also builds data product such as ETFtracker, an Australian focused ETF research and interactive analysis platform. His analysis and expertise are seen in the media via sites like ausbiz, Livewire Markets, Equity Mates and more.

Arturo Rodriguez

Co-President, DSAi

Arturo is co-head of DSAI and has 16 years experience building sophisticated data pipelines and designing monetisation strategies for various businesses in multiple industries.

He spent 13 years in London running a technology business and working at global investment banks (RBS, BofA Merill Lynch) and co-founded ClearMacro, a provider of macroeconomic signals for investors. Current project include cloud-based managed infrastructure solutions that focuses on the design, management and monetisation of data pipelines.

Paul Conyngham

Co-Founder/Director, DSAi

Paul is a director of the non for profit - Data Science & Ai Association of Australia, and a Cofounder of the Startup JobLaunch - an artificial intelligence startup helping people get jobs. Paul also co-founded Core Intelligence, a full stack machine learning development consultancy firm. The podcast "The Humans of Ai" is hosted by Paul, which is available on all podcast providers and he is also one of the co-creators of StarAi, a critically acclaimed advanced machine learning course.

Paul also a Co-Founder of the Startup JobLaunch - an AI startup helping people get jobs. Paul is also a Cofounder of Core Intelligence, a full stack machine learning development consultancy firm.

James Bailey

Director of Education, DSAi

James is a mathematician at heart and immersed in all things technology. His specialty is in mitigating risk and promoting sound data governance. He focuses on making sure critical data is available, assured, and has accountability.

James has worked across the Finance industry, where he traded bond futures at a proprietary desk, was part of an insurer's in-house actuarial team, consulted for a big 4 in quantitative analytics, and finally specialising in operational risk scenarios at a major bank.

Dr Catherine Lopes

Founder/Director at OpsDo Analytics

Dr. Catherine Lopes is a strategist and thought leader with 20+ years' experience in data, analytics, Data Science, and AI. Her recent focus is on helping organizations to uplift business performance by developing data analytics strategy, building broad range analytics use cases including machine learning and AI, establishing data analytics capability and culture through a governed enterprise data management framework and process.

Catherine serves on multiple advisory boards and an entrepreneur in data analytics and AI. She founded Ada's Tribe, an Australian based community supporting women in analytics, Data Science and AI. She is also an active mentor bridging the gap between academia to industry.

Dr Alex Antic

Strategic Data Science & AI Expert

Alex is a trusted and experienced Data Science and AI Leader, Consultant, Advisor, and a highly sought Speaker and Trainer. He has 18+ years post-PhD experience and expertise in areas that include Advanced Analytics, Machine Learning, Artificial Intelligence, Mathematics, Statistics and Quantitative Analysis, developed across multiple domains: Federal and State Government, Asset Management, Insurance, Academia, Banking (Investment and Retail) and Consulting.

Alex was recognised in 2021 as one of the Top 5 Analytics Leaders in Australia by the Institute of Analytics Professionals of Australia. He also holds several advisory roles across industry, government, start-ups and academia, and is an Adjunct Associate Professor at RMIT University.

His qualifications include a PhD in Applied Mathematics, First Class Honours in Pure Mathematics, and a double degree in Mathematics and Computer Science.

Distinguished Professor Fang Chen

Executive Director Data Science, UTS
Executive Director, UTS Data Science Institute

Distinguished Professor Fang Chen is a prominent leader in AI/data science with an international reputation and industrial recognition. She has created and deployed many innovative solutions using AI/data science to transform industries worldwide.

Fang won "Oscar Prize" in Australian science – Australian Museum Eureka Prize 2018 for Excellence in Data Science. She is the Winner of WAI Australia and New Zealand Award in AI in Infrastructure category 2021. She has been appointed to the inaugural NSW Government AI Advisory Committee, and serves as the Co-Chair, The National Transport Data Community of Practice (NTD-CoP) at ITS Australia.

Through impactful successes, she led the team and gained many recognitions such as the ITS Australia National Award 2014, 2015 and 2018, and NSW iAwards 2017, VIC iAwards 2019 and 2020. She is the NSW "Water Professional of the Year" 2016, winning National and NSW "Research and Innovation Award" by Australian Water association 2018.

Professor Chen has more than 300 publications and 30 patents in 8 countries, and delivered many public speeches including TEDx. She is the Executive Director Data Science at University of Technology Sydney.

Dr Mahendra Samarawickrama

Senior Manager/Data Science and Analytics, Australian Red Cross

Dr Mahendra Samarawickrama (GAICD, MBA, SMIEEE, ACS(CP))
is a senior leader in the AI and data science sector with rich experience
across a wide range of people, cultures, technologies and governance.

He is extremely passionate about empowering people, innovations,
and creativity to enhance the businesses and customer experience.
His experience spans across conceptualising, building and managing a
variety of AI and data science teams, systems and processes.

In the Australian Red Cross, he leads the AI and data-science strategy
while building capabilities for social justice and sustainability with
diversity, equity and inclusion in AI and data science by mobilising
the power of humanity.

He is an author, inventor, mentor and regular speaker in various tech
forums, conferences and events worldwide. He holds a PhD in computer
science with double masters in business administration (MBA) and
project management (MPM). He is skilled in machine learning, deep
learning, statistics, big-data analytics and high-performance computing.

He is a graduate of the AICD (GAICD), an ACS certified professional (CP),
a senior member of IEEE (SMIEEE), an honorary visiting scholar at the
University of Technology Sydney and an industry mentor in the UNSW
business school.

Jamie Leach

Regional Director, FDATA Australasia
CEO, Open Data Australia

Jamie Leach is a data champion, fintech fanatic, the regional director of FDATA Australasia and founder of Open Data Australia. She has experienced a diverse corporate career, holding senior roles across the banking, technology, defence, and telecommunications sectors.

Her work with data commenced as an Electronic Warfare Linguist in the Royal Australian Navy, transitioning into technical finance roles, before culminating in the leadership of tech companies focused on predictive analytics, geospatial disciplines, and the application of AI. Her passion and work on the Consumer Data Right see the amalgamation of her extensive financial services career, her continuing work with public policy, and her passion for increasing the quality and sharing of data.

Through her thought-leadership on data portability and leveraging AI to enhance the customer experience, Jamie has worked with numerous banking brands and international vendors on re-designing and engineering their open banking/open energy solutions and policies. An advisor to the United Nations Capital Development Fund, the World Bank, and the Tony Blair Institute, Jamie's work includes Digital Identity, Digital Transformation, and Financial Inclusion across developing nations, both in technology and policy development.