Dr Jim Weatherall, PhD

Vice President and Head of Data Science & Artificial Intelligence, Biopharmaceuticals R&D, AstraZeneca

Dr Jim Weatherall is the Vice President of Data Science & Artificial Intelligence, in Research and Development at AstraZeneca, where he leads in the application of advanced analytics as a way of unlocking the full potential of data – through data & text mining, machine learning & artificial intelligence, visual analytics, modelling & simulation, advanced statistical methods, and exploration of new technologies. He is driving a transformation in the way medicines are discovered & developed, through applications of advanced data science, in order to make a meaningful difference to the lives of patients around the world. He has already played a key role in helping to shape the new approach to data that is emerging across Research & Development. Externally, Jim is Vice Chair of the Data Science section at the Royal Statistical Society in the UK as well as an Honorary Reader in Computer Science at University of Manchester.

A particle physicist by training, Jim spent time as an academic researcher, before becoming a scientific software engineer consulting across a range of different industries, including the life sciences, before joining AZ. Jim obtained his doctorate in High Energy Particle Physics from the University of Manchester, before embarking on a 3-year postdoctoral fellowship studying the subtle differences between matter and antimatter. On leaving academia, he joined Tessella as a scientific software consultant, working directly as a lead software engineer and data scientist on many large-scale projects across the consumer products, petrochemicals, life sciences, automation and public sectors. He joined the Biomedical Informatics team in AstraZeneca in 2007, and has been in leadership positions of increasing responsibility since 2009. He has made critical contributions to, and published in, a number of diverse fields such as data visualisation, cryptography, text mining, machine learning and health data science.