Kai D. Leifert

AI governance adviser to boards and leadership teams.
CEO & Founder, GUARD GRC.
Former Regional CRO and COO, Northern Trust.

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SHORT BIO

Kai D. Leifert advises boards and leadership teams on owning AI at the top: who is accountable, where the limits are, and how to keep the proof. He is CEO & Founder of GUARD GRC in Dubai, author of the GUARD framework for AI oversight, and builder of an AI governance platform that turns AI regulation into controls, policy and audit-ready evidence. He brings twenty-five years in leadership across two regulated industries, fourteen of them in financial services at Credit Suisse and Northern Trust. At Northern Trust in London he held risk oversight of more than USD 150 billion in assets under management as Regional Chief Risk Officer, then ran operations for up to 60 staff across eight offices as Chief Operating Officer for EMEA and APAC. He has held three board seats. His book, AI-Native Governance: Leading a Workforce That Never Sleeps, is published on 11 December 2026.

USD 150bn+

Assets under management under his risk oversight as Regional Chief Risk Officer, Northern Trust

60 staff

Across eight offices in Europe and Asia Pacific, run as Chief Operating Officer

3 board seats

Northern Trust Global Investments International Ltd, the Dublin fund board, and VA Airline Training

25 years

In leadership across two regulated industries, fourteen of them in financial services

WHAT HE ADVISES AND SPEAKS ON

01 What the board owns in AI, and the questions to ask.

02 Telling an AI project worth funding from one that only looks good in a demo.

03 Risk and AI owned at the top, sized to the organisation.

04 AI is not a technology to control. It is a workforce to lead.

05 Governance enables innovation.

LONG BIO

Kai D. Leifert advises boards and leadership teams on AI: who owns it, where its limits are, and how the organisation keeps the proof. Most organisations use AI before anyone has set the rules for it. He works with them in two ways that run on their own or together: board and leadership advisory, from board briefings on AI oversight to a working AI governance foundation, and fractional executive roles as Chief Risk Officer or Chief AI Officer. He sets the rules and checks the tools; the business owners choose and run them.

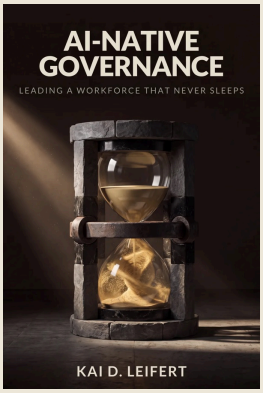
Since December 2025 he has led GUARD GRC in Dubai as CEO & Founder. He is the author of the GUARD framework for AI oversight, five board-level categories of AI risk, each mapped to binding obligations across jurisdictions and turned into controls a firm can implement, and the builder of a working AI governance platform. He has been in AI governance full time since 2024.

His approach comes from twenty-five years in leadership across two regulated industries, fourteen of them in financial services. At Credit Suisse, in Frankfurt and London, he built the first risk function in the asset management business and went on to oversee all investment risk for Credit Suisse Asset Management in the United Kingdom. At Northern Trust in London he was Regional Chief Risk Officer for EMEA and APAC, with risk oversight of more than USD 150 billion in assets under management, and then Chief Operating Officer, running operations for up to 60 staff across eight offices in Europe and Asia Pacific. He went on to establish the firm's office in Germany as Managing Director, and has held three board seats. Throughout he was the principal contact for regulators including the FCA, BaFin, CSSF and FinMA.

He holds the Financial Risk Manager (FRM) and Professional Risk Manager (PRM) designations and an MBA-equivalent qualification in financial engineering, corporate finance and software engineering from the University of Frankfurt. His book, AI-Native Governance: Leading a Workforce That Never Sleeps, is published on 11 December 2026.

The frameworks are new. **The problem is not.**

THE BOOK



AI-Native Governance

Leading a Workforce That Never Sleeps

Out 11 December 2026

CONTACT

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