

# Jamila Gordon

## *IT & Digital Leader, Lumachain Founder & CEO, & Keynote Speaker*

Jamila is a global technology executive with over 20 years' experience, including as Qantas Airway's Chief Information Officer and implementing some of IBM's largest engagements around the world. She was included on the BBC's '100 Women' list for 2021, highlighting women who are leading the way to 'reinvent our society, our culture and our world'.

After starting life in a tiny village in the backblocks of Somalia, she found herself as a displaced person in Kenya, on her own and practically homeless due to the Somali civil war. Thanks to the kindness of a backpacker, she came to her new home Australia, where she learned English, got into university and fell in love with software engineering.

Her corporate career included Deloitte and IBM Europe, including running some of IBM's largest global (US\$1B+) megadeals for Solectron Manufacturing, AXA Insurance and ABN AMRO Bank, based out of Nice, Paris and Amsterdam. Qantas Airways brought her back to Australia as the Group Chief Information Officer, and she then went on to be Group CIO of CIMIC, the largest construction and contract mining company in the Southern Hemisphere, before she eventually Founded Lumachain.

### **Awards**

- 2021 Women in AI Awards Innovator of the Year, ANZ
- 2020 New South Wales Tech Entrepreneur of the Year
- 2018 Microsoft's Global Awardee in the International Women's Entrepreneurship Challenge

In addition to Lumachain, Jamila sat on the Advisory Board of Questacon, Australia's National Science Centre. She resigned in September 2022, due to her relocating to the US.

### ***Jamila Gordon talks about:***

- **The power of dreams and having the courage to pursue them** - Jamila's personal goals have constantly expanded and grown. As a young girl, her dream was simply to avoid being married off at the age of thirteen, as most of her cousins had been. In Kenya, her dream was simply to survive. Today she is living her greatest dream yet: steering the rapid growth and global expansion of a best-in-class publicly-listed tech & digital businesses as well as



unlisted start-ups.

- **Leading effectively through challenge and complexity** – Jamila has built her career on her capacity to bring diverse groups together and drive transformational change, at scale. She shares the leadership principles that have served her well.
- **The role of resilience and positivity** – Jamila’s has faced major challenges throughout her life, yet she has always found that the greatest adversity also brings the seed of opportunity. It is the developable capacity to bounce back and remain positive that is crucial to success.

## Client testimonials

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“ Some messages in life simply have to be heard. You could have literally heard a pin drop. We were spell bound hearing about her journey that has led her from her days growing up in Ethiopia, to Eritrea then Kenya and ultimately to Australia. It is a remarkable story of achievement in itself and a testament to the human spirit that Jamila has not only survived but seemingly thrived from such an unimaginable challenge to simply stay alive. Then to hear how she has made it in the world of IT&C and to be instrumental in helping shape some of the most prominent organisations in our business community only adds to the respect one feels for Jamila and her accomplishments. I have no hesitation in recommending Jamila as an inspirational and inspiring speaker.

- *Commonwealth Bank*

“ Jamila is an inspirational woman with a story that must be heard to be believed. Jamila spoke to our group of young leaders and the audience was spellbound. Starting in Australia without any formal education and without knowing the language and culture, Jamila went on to lead some of the most recognisable organisations in the world. Her incredible story of resilience, hard work, determination, and perseverance offers powerful insights into what brings success in life. Notwithstanding how tough her life has been, Jamila has a warm and wonderful nature that makes her instantly likeable. I highly recommend Jamila for her ability to inspire and move people.

- *Young Australia/Israel Chamber of Commerce*

“ Jamila brings a sense of humour, charm, humility and a fierce intellect to tell an amazing story from her birth in a nomadic tribe in Somalia to roles as the global CIO for vast multinationals. Jamila presented to a large gathering of our clients and you could hear a pin drop as she spoke. Hers is an inspirational story of perseverance and triumph over adversity in the face of mortal danger in Mogadishu and Mombassa, and more latterly in the boardrooms of Australia and Europe. She is articulate, warm, intelligent, and an amazing testament to the power of never giving up. When we talk about the difficulties of creating an inclusive environment in our workplaces we think of things like gender, religion and ethnicity – the experiences Jamila had on all three fronts in her early days in the ghettos of Mombassa inform her approach to working in the male dominated world of corporate IT and we can all learn much from her

**- Commonwealth Bank**

“ She was great! Authentic and articulate – a great story teller. She really touched on every emotion, from shock and sadness in the face of unfathomable adversity and atrocity, to laughter and joy at the amazing success that she has achieved in spite of it all. She certainly resonates her mantra of the power of positive thinking!

**- KPMG Australia**

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