

# Delivering people-focused data strategies

**CDAO UK**  
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**Remi Martins-Tonks**  
**Head of Data and Analytics, Money & Pensions Service**

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# Intro

# Money & Pensions Service

We are an arm's-length body, sponsored by the Department for Work and Pensions and deliver financial guidance and support across five core functions:

## Pensions guidance

We provide information to people about **pensions**.

## Money guidance

We provide information designed to enhance people's **understanding and knowledge of financial matters**.

## Consumer protection

We work with government and the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) to **protect consumers against financial scams**.

## Strategy

We coordinate delivery of the **UK Strategy for Financial Wellbeing**.

## Debt advice

We are the largest single funder of **free debt advice** in England.

# Remi Martins-Tonks

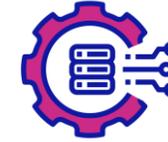
## Head of Data and Analytics



**I help people use data and AI to maximise opportunities and drive decisions to improve financial wellbeing in the UK.**

- Putting people, data and processes in the right places since 2012.
- Former economist; forever football fan.
- Enjoys playing golf and spending time with family.

### Roles



Data leader & analytics strategist



Governance orchestrator & knowledge delivery



Coaching & enablement

### Goals



Evidence based decision-making



AI value



Culture & experience

### Personal Values



Trust



Curiosity & collaboration



Empathy

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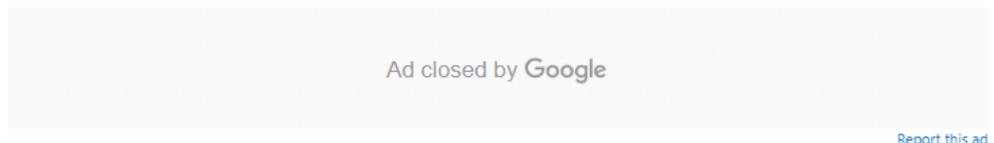
**Context – people,  
tech and processes**

# Context – people, tech and processes

Home Questions AI Assist Tags Challenges Chat Articles Users Companies COLLECTIVES STACK INTERNAL

## How to check that date exist without broken data pipeline in R?

Asked 5 years, 7 months ago Modified 5 years, 7 months ago Viewed 89 times Part of R Language Collective



I have a data pipeline in R, and stuck with the error of converting a string into date for non-existent date in a future

```
s_date <- "2021-02-29"
as.Date(s_date, origin = "1970-01-01")
```

This code generates error "Error in charToDate(x) : character string is not in a standard unambiguous format"

Here is a more detailed code from pipeline:

```
# Fixed month and day
date_month <- "2"
date_day <- "29"

# Loop by years
for(date_year in c("2020", "2021")) {

  s_date <- paste0(date_year, "-", date_month, "-", date_day)

  # BUG
  date_selected <- as.Date(s_date, origin = "1970-01-01")
}
```

How it's possible to process this bug without a broken pipeline. For example, by adding the next valid date "2021-03-01".

Thanks!

This solution uses package `lubridate`. The code first checks if the date in the `for` loop is valid and if not calls auxiliary function `nextDate`.

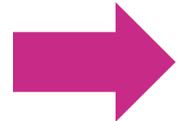
```
nextDate <- function(y, m, d){
  y <- as.integer(y)
  m <- as.integer(m)
  d <- as.integer(d)
  days <- lubridate::days_in_month(paste(y, m, 1, sep = "-"))
  as.Date(paste(y, m, min(days, d), sep = "-")) + 1L
}

date_month <- "2"
date_day <- "29"

# Loop by years
for(date_year in c("2020", "2021")) {
  s_date <- paste0(date_year, "-", date_month, "-", date_day)
  #
  repeat{
    date_selected <- tryCatch(as.Date(s_date, origin = "1970-01-01"),
                             error = function(e) e
    )
    if(inherits(date_selected, "error")){
      s_date <- nextDate(date_year, date_month, date_day)
    }else break
  }
}
```

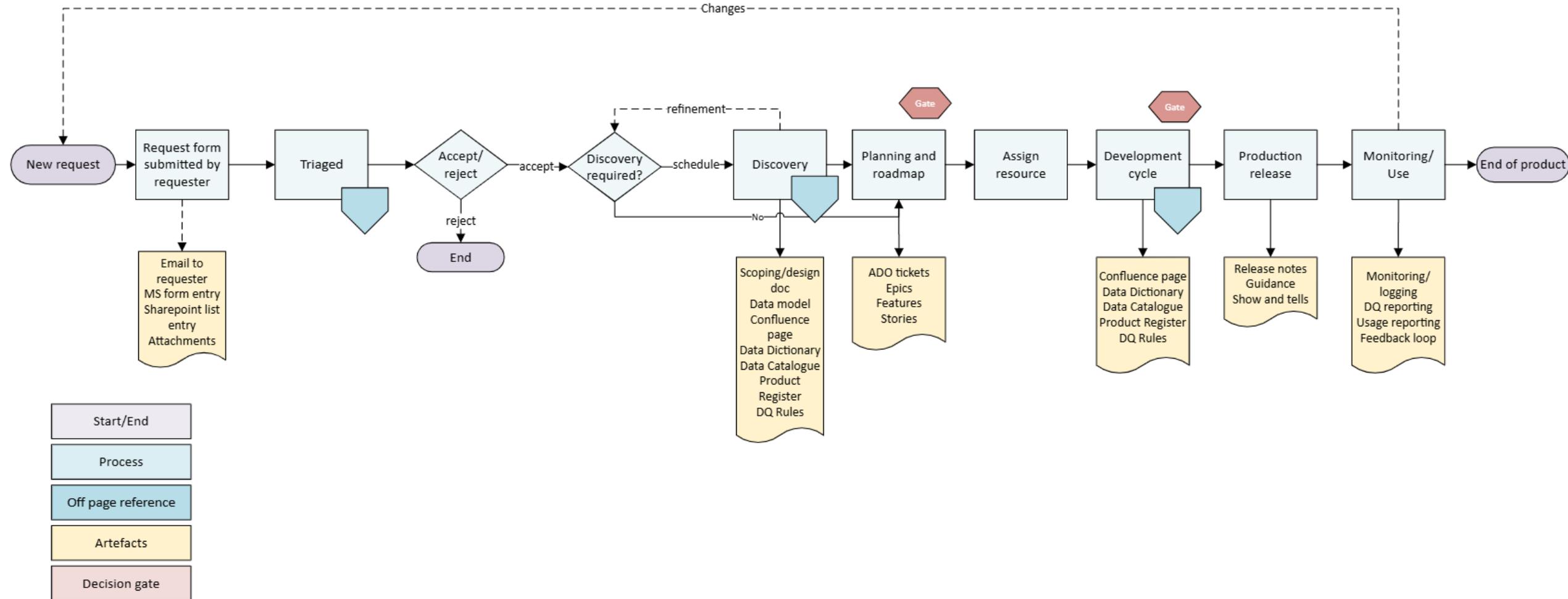
See the result.

```
s_date
#[1] "2021-03-01"
```



# Context – people, tech and processes

## Data & Analytics Demand Process Flow



**What does a data strategy include?**

# From strategy to delivery

Money & Pensions Service Strategic Plan 2025-28

Business Strategy

Data and Analytics mission statements

Data and Analytics goals and strategic key results

Data Strategy

Roadmaps

Quarterly objectives and key results

Monitoring and Performance

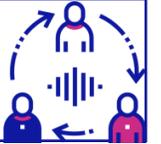
**How to  
successfully deliver  
a data strategy?**

# Delivering people-focused data strategies

## Practical tips

### 1. Find the 'right' people

- *Interview questions– problem solving, scenario-based conversations*



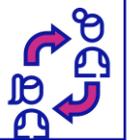
### 2. Organisational structure – specialisation

- *Roles and objectives*



### 3. Personal structure

- *Interactions – particularly 1-2-1s*



### 4. Learning and Development

- *Online courses, mentors, conferences*



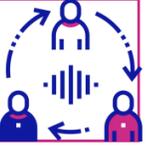
### 5. Motivated and happy!

- *Team wins whiteboard, career paths, interesting projects, prioritisation of work*



# What about everyone else?

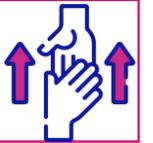
1. Find the 'right' people



2. Organisational structure



3. Personal structure



4. Learning and Development



5. Motivated and happy!



# Key takeaways

- 1. Start with one of the practical tips**
- 2. Review your team against the 5 elements**
- 3. Continuously reflect on the environment you're creating**

# Q&A

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