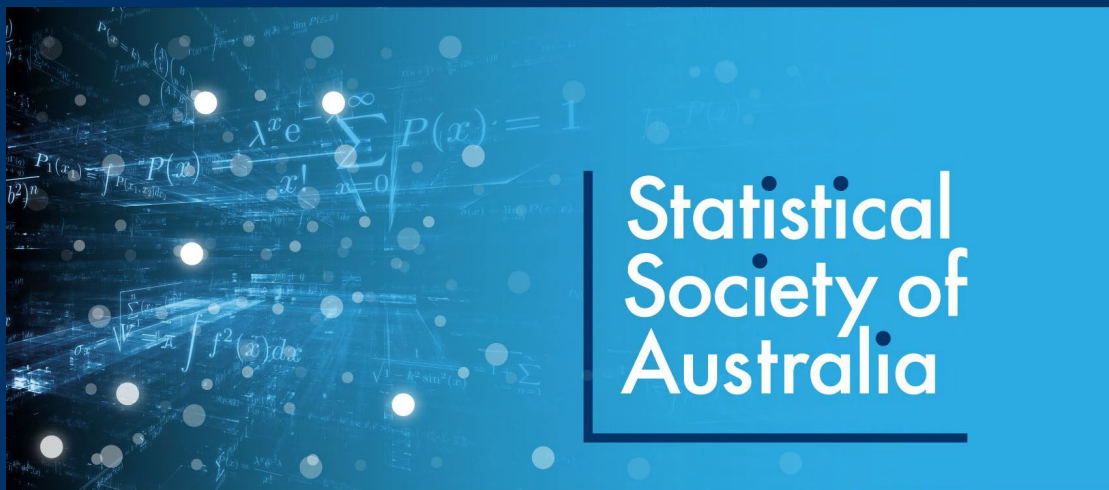


From: [Statistical Society of Australia](#)
To: [Marie-Louise Rankin](#)
Subject: Stats Matters & Events
Date: Thursday, 19 May 2022 1:19:25 PM



STATS MATTERS & EVENTS

19 May 2022

A big weekend lies ahead as the Federal Election is finally upon us. As I write this, my husband is out with our daughter and her friend who has never voted before, to take advantage of pre-polling. They are part of a massive group of voters, who will not venture out on Saturday to cast their vote then. According to the ABC's [Antony Green' Election Blog](#), fifteen per cent of voters have applied for postal vote, like me, and three to four times as many voters are making use of pre-polling venues. This means that any last-minute pitches by the politicians will be wasted on a large part of the population.

If you have not yet voted and are still mulling the options around in your head, you may find the latest media release from Science & Technology Australia (STA) helpful. Published only yesterday, it lists the pledges by the different political representatives to the science and technology sector. You can read all the promises [here](#).

If STA's media release is not enough to help you make up your mind, you may want to check out the [ABC's Vote Compass](#). This tool was developed by political scientists to help those of us who are not sure about where we sit on the political spectrum. Answer the questions, and the compass will show you how your views align with those of the major parties. I used it myself (and was

surprised by the result!) and suggested to our young adult children to check it out.

Whether we will be happy with the election outcome or not, aren't we privileged to live in a country where our vote matters?

[Marie-Louise Rankin](#)

Executive Officer

Read newsletter in your [browser](#)

Please note that the SSA office will be closed from 19 May until 6 June 2022 while I am on recreational leave.

For any **event-related matters** please contact SSA's Event Coordinator, [Jodi Phillips](#).

For any **newsletter items** for the 2 June 2022 issue, please email them to my usual [email address](#) with the words "Newsletter item" in the subject line before 9 am AEST on Thursday, 2 June 2022.

Thank you!

Marie-Louise Rankin

In this newsletter:

[Looking back with our Past Presidents - Geoff Lee](#)

[STATS + STORIES Podcasts: Becoming a Biostatistician](#)

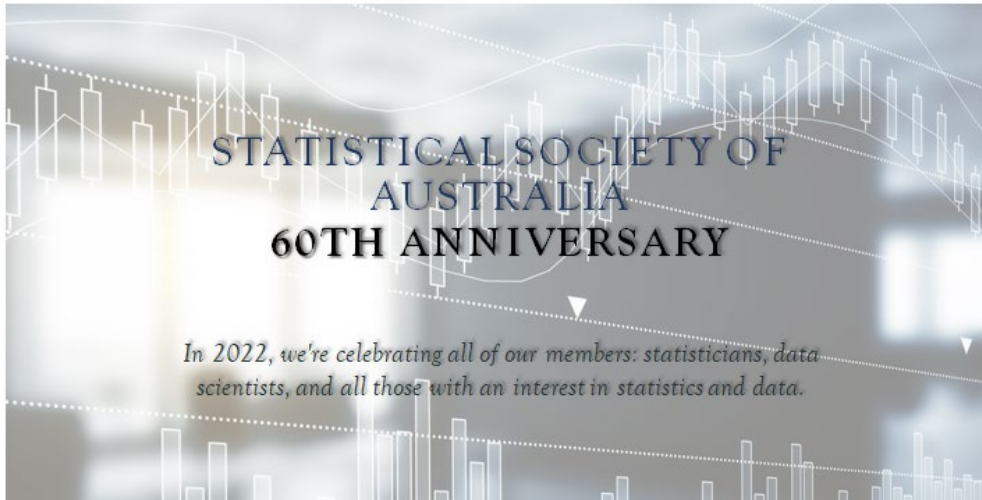
[Global support for Ukraine](#)

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Looking back with our Past Presidents:

Geoff Lee, President 2009-2011

I had the honour of being President of the SSA from 2009 to 2011. My initial thought was to describe it as a period of financial recovery and stabilisation, but as I worked on this reminiscence I realised it was more than that.

The ASC 2008 in Melbourne had placed a severe strain on the Society's finances (to say nothing of the stress it caused the executive!) when the conference organising company collected all the income from the conference, then went bankrupt, leaving the SSA legally responsible for the unpaid expenses. We had support from the RSS, and even an offer of a loan from the ASA, but in the end the Society was able to negotiate a settlement with the major creditor, which we were able to pay thanks to a set of loans from the individual branches, which fortunately are legally separate entities. It did leave both the SSA and the individual branches in very tight financial circumstances; the SSA had developed a very responsible business plan and expected to be able to repay the loans over the next 4 years.

In the end the loans were able to be repaid after 12 months, thanks to the way members rallied round to support the Society. Individual members took out multi-year pre-paid memberships. Paul and Alanna Sutcliffe from the SA branch took on the task of co-ordinating a sequence of CPD courses in various states, with all the registration and booking support provided by our Executive Officer, Marie-Louise Rankin. A number of members donated substantial amounts of their time and expertise to develop and present these early CPD courses, which were very well attended by members and many non-members as well. I can't recall all the presenters, but I do remember that Kerrie

Mengersen made a significant contribution. Getting these "national" CPD courses up and running was very pleasing, as they had been much discussed for some time prior to this.



*Past President Geoff Lee
with ASC2010 LOC Chair
Jane Speijers*

The SSA also managed to support a YSC event in Sydney in 2009, followed by the ASC 2010 in Fremantle. LOC Chair Jane Speijers, SPC Chair Brenton Clarke and their respective teams organised a very good conference; despite some initial trepidation about holding a conference "too far" away from the more populous states. It was financially successful, and even more importantly, it had an excellent scientific and social program. I recall a number of inspiring presentations about spatial statistics; one about statistical image processing to improve medical diagnoses; a contributed paper about using the GPU on a pc to reduce the elapsed time to fit a model from 18 hours to 30 minutes!; an afternoon of very well presented short talks by young statisticians - I pitied the judges who had to determine which one was best; an overlap with OzCOTS providing an opportunity to meet a new sub-group of our profession; a conference dinner that was short on speeches, and long on good company and entertainment; and a public lecture by Persi Diaconis which posed the question "What does random REALLY mean?". I still ponder that question to this day (hint: a shuffled deck of cards is probably not random, especially if the dealer is skilful; and sadly for the ANZAC game of Two-up, tossing coins is deterministic if done with care and precision).

I did however end my tenure having learnt the answer to an equally important philosophical question: "What makes a Society work?", the answer to which is "The members, and what they contribute!"

If you're curious about what it takes to become a biostatistician, Connor Jackson, Research Instructor in the Department of Biostatistics and Informatics at the Colorado School of Public Health, has the answers on the latest podcast episode of **STATS + STORIES**.

Conner Jackson is a Research Instructor in the Department of Biostatistics and Informatics at the Colorado School of Public Health. He serves as the chair of the Education Committee for the Center for Innovative Design and Analysis and teaches a 6-week short course about statistics and data science to bench scientists. His research focuses on the analysis of correlated data, largely in the context of infectious diseases.

[Check out his podcast here](#)

Global support for Ukraine

The outcome of last weekend's Eurovision Song Contest demonstrates the world-wide support of embattled Ukraine. Most of us are probably in agreement that the Ukrainian group did not win because their song was better than their competitors'.

If you want to see the support of Ukraine spelled out in numbers, interesting figures are available on the Statista website.

As of May 2022 the number of global territories with sanctions against Russia was 43. Close to one thousand enterprises terminated operations in Russia. In Poland, more than 44 percent of the population are boycotting brands that remain operative in Russia. These are just some examples.

[Want to see more? Click here.](#)

Last Chance! Bill Venables Award for new developers of open source software for data analytics

SSA's Statistical Computing and Visualisation Section is pleased to announce the creation of the Bill Venables award for new developers of open source software for data analytics, sponsored by the Australian Research Data Commons (ARDT). The goal of this award is to encourage new open source software development from the Australian community with a view to support efforts to develop and share data science and statistics methodology.

The application deadline is 24 May 2022. More information is available [here](#).

SSA Events

Sampling Course -12 October – 7 December 2022, 11:00 AM (AEDT), held online

The Social Research Centre (SRC) and the Statistical Society of Australia (SSA) are very proud to offer statistical training from the International Program in Survey and Data Science (IPSDS).

The 8-week online sampling course is aimed at working professionals who are interested in expanding their data collection skills. The course will be available fully online with pre-recorded videos that students are expected to watch on their own time plus weekly 1-hour live interactive sessions with the instructor, Raphael Nishimura, Director of Sampling Operations at the University of Michigan.

For more information and to register please click [here](#).

SSA NSW Branch: May Event - Michael Bewley, From AI to Action

19 May 2022, 6:30 PM – 7:30 PM (AEST), F07.01.173.Carslaw Building.Carslaw Lecture Theatre 173

We are very pleased to announce that Michael Bewley from nearmap will give a talk about geospatial analysis of tree canopy data at Sydney University this month. This is an in person event, and we hope you can join us at Sydney Uni. If you would like to attend virtually, you can register for a zoom link.

For more information on the lecture and to register please click [here](#).

Early Career Bayes Seminar for 2022- 26 May 2022, 4:00 PM – 5:30 PM, QUT Gardens Point and online

The QLD Branch of the Statistical Society of Australia (SSA) and Centre for Data Science, Queensland University of Technology are delighted to present our second Early Career Bayes Seminar for 2022 with Mary Llewellyn, School of Mathematics at the University of Edinburgh.

Mary will be presenting “Discretising a Continuous World: Accelerated Inference for State-Space Models via Hidden Markov Models”.

[Click here for more information and to register](#)

Statistical Consulting Network May Meet-Up- 27 May 2022, 12:30 PM – 1:30 PM (AEST), held online

Come along with your thinking cap, maybe a problem, and some lunch!

The Statistical Consulting Network invites you to their monthly meet-up, a virtual lunchtime meeting where statisticians help each other out with problems that they aren't sure how to deal with.

[For more information click here.](#)

Perth Biostatistics/Bioinformatics Meetup

This is a joint event supported by the [WA Branch](#) of the Statistical Society of Australia (SSA), the SSA [Biostatistics and Bioinformatics Section](#), [Clinical Trials Enablement Platform WA](#) (CTEP-WA).

Tuesday, 14 June 2022, from 5:30pm AWST
McCusker Auditorium, [Harry Perkins Institute of Medical Research](#) (North),),
QEII Medical Centre, 6 Verdun Street, Nedlands

The purpose of this event is to bring together those with expertise and/or interest in medical and healthcare statistics in Perth. It is an opportunity to socialise and network, and encourage upcoming professionals to pursue a career in this worthwhile field.

We have invited two speakers to give brief addresses this evening:

- Dr Julie Marsh (Telethon Kids Institute) who will speak on "Bayesian Approaches to Platform Trials", and
- Dr Alyce Russell (University of Sydney) who will speak on her recent work.

[Click here for more information and to register](#)

Other Events

The International Environmetrics Society (TIES) has launched a new TIES Webinar Series on Data Science for Environmental Sciences (DSES).

For colleagues who live in Australia, the event will be held online on 20 May, at 9 am AEST.

The speaker is Andrew Zammit-Mangion, University of Wollongong, Australia, presenting:

Bayesian inference on carbon dioxide surface fluxes using satellite data.

You can virtually access the webinar and register via the website

Data Ethics Workshop # 3

2 June 2022, 12 pm – 1 pm (AEST)

The Australian Data Science Network is proud to present another workshop in our series on Data Ethics. The aim of this series is to share open questions, spark discussion, and facilitate collaborations. The workshops will be led by Professor Rachel Thomas, co-founder of Fast.ai and Professor of Practice at the QUT Centre for Data Science. Our guest speakers and topics are:

- Lachlan McCalman, Gradient Institute, "Ethical AI Governance Gaps in Finance"
- Thao Phan, Monash University, "Economies of Virtue: The Circulation of 'Ethics' in Big Tech"
- Jake Goldenfein, University of Melbourne, "Law's consumers vs platforms users: competing imaginations of the human in platform ecosystems"
- Samantha Floreani, Digital Rights Watch, "Human Rights in the Digital Age"

Register your interest and/or get the zoom link

Missed the first two Data ethics workshops?

Watch the recordings [here](#) (scroll all the way down).

Women in Data Science Celebration

15 June 2022, 11 am – 1 pm AEST

The QUT Centre for Data Science is hosting a Women in Data Science celebration. The event will be a hybrid in-person/online event and feature a keynote talk from Professor Rachel Thomas followed by a panel discussion and networking.

[More information / register](#)

IASS (International Association of Survey Statisticians) webinar: On calibration and balanced sampling: webinar in memory of Jean-Claude Deville

25 May 2022 at 2:00 – 3:30 pm CEST (from 10:00pm AEST)

Jean-Claude Deville is well known to official statisticians for his break through paper in 1992 with Carl-Eric Saerndal on model-assisted calibration weighting for population surveys. He headed at the time the methods group at INSEE, the French national statistical office. The group had developed software to calibrate official surveys to demographic and other benchmarks, and was working on a programme to calculate associated estimate variances. ABS adapted the French calibration system CALMAR (calibration on marginals) and leapt over the French in including capacity for variance estimation, but POULPE never materialised on the French side, with Deville leaving the agency and concentrating on a new line of research that resulted in balanced sampling.

The webinar is a tribute to Jean-Claude Deville, and a showcase for progress in this area of methods development.

Find out more about this event [here](#).

[Register here](#)

eCOTS 2022: "Preparing the Modern Student"

The Consortium for the Advancement of Undergraduate Statistics Education (CAUSE) is excited to announce the 2022 Electronic Conference on Teaching Statistics which will be held online from 23-26 May 2022. The conference theme is **"Preparing the Modern Student"**. The conference will include four keynote addresses by Mine Cetinkaya-Rundel at Duke University, Talithia Williams at Harvey Mudd College, Nathan Taback from the University of Toronto and Rob Gould at University of California, Los Angeles. There will also

be thirty-minute or seventy-minute breakout sessions, online workshops, birds of a feather sessions, virtual poster sessions and reading groups.

CAUSE are calling for proposals for workshops and breakout sessions focusing on these four tracks.

1. Statistical and Data Literacy for the Modern Student – what every student needs to know in their personal and professional lives.
2. Diversity, Inclusion and Social Justice in data science and statistics.
3. Preparing Mentors, Leaders, and Teachers for tomorrow.
4. The (old and new) skills needed for the modern data scientist and statistician.

This conference strives to drive the conversation on how to prepare the modern student.

In addition to the online content, there will also be regional face-to-face meetings to encourage discussion in local statistics and data science education communities. The registration fee is only US\$25.

[Learn more](#)

WAPOR 75th Annual and WAPOR Asia Pacific 5th Conference “75 Years of Worldwide Public Opinion Research”

10 Nov 2022– 15 Nov 2022, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

The World Association for Public Opinion Research (WAPOR) will hold its 75th Annual Conference together with the WAPOR Asia Pacific 5th Annual Conference on **10-15 November 2022** in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. The WAPOR conference will convene before and overlap with the 5th WAPOR Asia Pacific regional conference.

The conference committee welcomes proposals on topics related to public opinion broadly, especially those related to the conference theme.

[For more information on the submission process or the conference please click here](#)

Check out current job vacancies in SSA's Career Centre here:

[Principal Science Statistician](#)

Wellington

Department of Conservation

Toitū te marae a Tāne, toitū te marae a Tangaroa, ...

[Statistician](#)

New South Wales

Total Brain Ltd

Statistician Neurocognitive Brain Research ...

[Senior Research Statistician](#)

Australian Capital Territory

The Australian National University

Classification: Senior Research Statistician, ...

[Biostatistician - Analyst](#)

New South Wales

University of Sydney

8 FTE, part time fixed term until April 2023, ...

[Lecturer \(Education Focused\) in Business Analytics - Business School](#)

New South Wales

University of Sydney

[View All Jobs](#)

Would you like to see your job advertised here? Our newsletter has an opening rate of 60%, which means that over 500 statisticians or student statisticians will see your ad. Place an ad in SSA's [Career Centre](#), and it will be automatically listed in this newsletter.

If you have news from the Australian statistical community to share in Stats Matters and Events, please get in touch [with us](#)! We love getting feedback too.

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