From: Statistical Society of Australia
To: Marie-Louise Rankin
Subject: Stats Matters & Events
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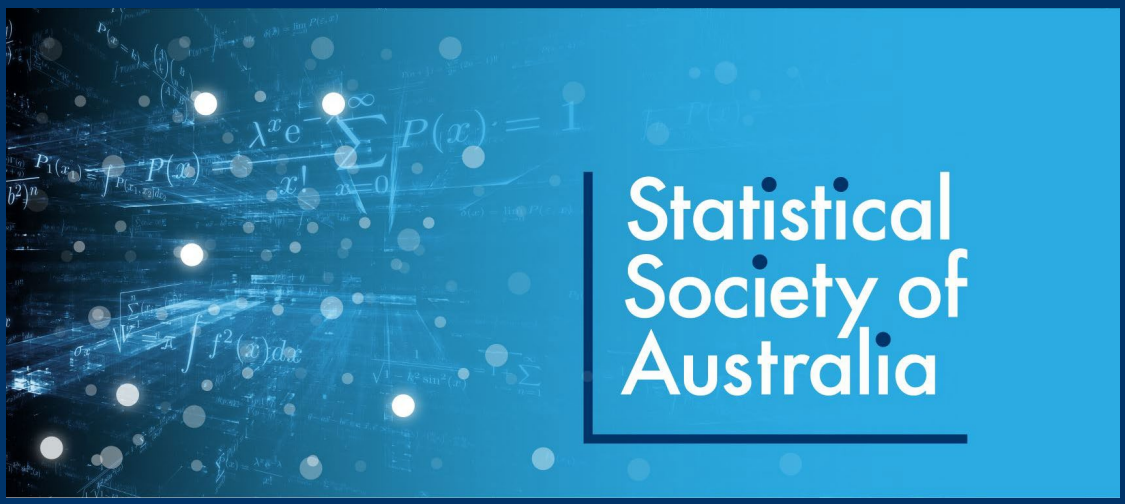

STATS MATTERS & EVENTS

22 June 2023

I have enjoyed the privilege of being the Event Coordinator for the SSA for 2.5 years now. I love setting up and running workshops and webinars and working on the last few conferences as well. This year's Australian Statistical Conference in Wollongong in December will be my first in person conference I have had the pleasure of working on. The Local Organising Committee(LOC) and Scientific Program Committee (SPC) have been working hard to make ASC and OZCOTS 2023 a wonderful experience. Abstracts have been approved and early bird registration is open.

The conference has incredible keynotes like Professor Sir David Spiegelhalter, Dr Kalinda Griffiths, Professor Xiao-Li Meng, Professor Julie Simpson and Professor Ian Gordon. New this year are the Horizon Lectures, acknowledging mid- career statisticians. Some amazing sounding lunchtime sessions are planned as well. I am currently working on creating an exhibit hall with some amazing booths for the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), La Trobe University, Wollongong University, the Social Research Centre (SRC) and SSA's Mentoring program and much more. Statistics-Data-Analysis-Solutions (SDAS) will present demos of Stata. Interested in being part of it and having your own booth? Just email me!

We are still planning the social activities on the Tuesday afternoon. The Early Career and Student Statisticians Network is having a reception on the Tuesday night at the Illawarra Brewery's outdoor terrace at the WINN and OZCOTS is having their social event on the Thursday night at Lucia's By the Sea. In keeping with ASC tradition, the LOC will set up a social event for the Wednesday night, so there will be many chances to socialise and network.

The conference organisers are also holding 3 workshops the day before the conference (10 December). They are:

- Essential Skills for Statistical Communication presented by Professor Sir David Spiegelhalter, University of Cambridge, A/Professor Jen Martin, University of Melbourne and Dr Linden Ashcroft, University of Melbourne
- Statistical Consultancy – The Essentials for Getting Started and Ongoing Success Presented by Professor Julie Simpson, University of Melbourne, A/Professor Emily Karahalios, University of Melbourne and A/Professor Karen Lamb, University of Melbourne, A/Prof Sue Finch from The University of Melbourne and
- Deep Statistics for More Rigorous and Efficient Data Science presented by Professor Xiao-Li Meng, Harvard University

Register for these now since spaces are limited.

Branches of the Statistical Society are offering funding for student and early career members of the society to attend the conference. For Canberra (check your email for 'Canberra branch ASC & OZCOTS 2023 rego grant, NSW (application form), Queensland (application form), South Australia & Northern Territory (application form), Victoria & Tasmania (application form) and Western Australia (application form)

I will update you more soon!

Marie-Louise and I will both be at the conference. We hope you'll come and say hello. Early bird registration ends on July 31 so register now!

See you there.

Jodi Phillip
SSA Event Coordinator

Read newsletter in your browser

In this newsletter:

Winner of the 2023 Betty Allan Award Announced

Winners of the 2023 Bill Venables Award Announced

The Royal Statistical Society appoints new Chief Executive

Podcast - Crime in the Community

Captivate your audience with statistics....and stories!

SSA events

Current Job Vacancies

Congratulations to Elizabeth Korevaar,

this year's winner of the SSA & CSIRO's Data 61 Betty Allan Travel Award.

This is national award honours Betty Allan's contribution to Australian statistics. Frances Elizabeth (Betty) Allan (1905 to 1952) was CSIRO's first statistician and provided statistical support across the organisation. She also lectured in mathematics and statistics at Canberra University College and Australian Forestry School.

Lizzie will travel to London for the Cochrane Colloquium in September 2023. There she will present the results from her empirical research on the comparison of statistical methods used to meta-analyse results from interrupted time series studies. Lizzie will also lead the delivery of a workshop titled Introduction to analysis and meta-analysis of interrupted time series studies, which is underpinned by her doctoral research, and will co- facilitate a workshop titled Advanced meta-analysis 1: Random-effects methods to be implemented in RevMan.

The award is jointly funded by the Statistical Society and CSIRO's Data61.

Winners of the 2023 Bill Venables Award Announced!

Congratulations to the 2023 winners of the Venables Award for New Developers of Open Source Software for Data Analytics sponsored by the

ARDC:

Matthew Sainsbury-Dale and Andrew Zammit-Mangion with “Fixed Rank Kriging” and the runner-up team, Rex Parsons, Robin Blythe, Adrian Barnett, Susanna Cramb and Steven McPhail with "predictNMB”. More details can be viewed here.

The Royal Statistical Society appoints new Chief Executive

The Royal Statistical Society (RSS) has appointed Dr Sarah Cumbers as its new chief executive. Dr Cumbers, who will assume the role in September 2023, will lead the RSS's activities, including accreditation schemes, publications, conferences, events, and policy work. Currently serving as the evidence and insights director at Lloyd’s Register Foundation, she has been involved in leading global surveys on risk and safety and has a background in evidence-based policy and practice.

Dr Cumbers takes over from Nicola Emmerson, who has been serving as interim director since May. The president of the RSS, Dr Andrew Garrett, expressed confidence in Dr Cumbers' ability to advance the RSS's mission and advocate for the responsible use of statistics and data.

Dr Cumbers emphasised the importance of statistics and data in today's world and the RSS's role in ensuring their proper use and understanding.

Read the full media release here

Do you enjoy a good podcast?

Episode 282 of Stats + Stories, titled "**Crime in the Community**," features insightful discussions with Nancy La Vigne (Director of the US National Institute of Justice) and Alexis Piquero (Director of the US Bureau of Justice Statistics).

The episode addresses the increasing concern over rising crime rates and emphasises the significance of reliable research and data in understanding a situation accurately. Nancy La Vigne shares her extensive expertise in criminal justice policy, covering areas such as policing, corrections reform, and evidence-based practices. Alexis Piquero benefits from more than 25 years of experience as a nationally and internationally recognised criminologist, heavily involved in data collection on matters related to crime and the justice system.

The episode aired on 15 June 2023, and aims to provide an informed assessment of the current crime landscape.

Listen to the podcast here

Captivate your audience with statistics ... and stories!

Being a statistician, you are probably quite good at retaining numbers. Can you also tell a good story?

According to the article "Looking to Leave a Mark? Memorable Leaders Don't Just Spout Statistics, They Tell Stories" by Scott Van Voorhis (20 June 2023, Harvard Business School website), it can be beneficial if a statistician is a good storyteller. It's an interesting article and I highly recommend reading it!

Van Voorhis refers to a study conducted by Thomas Graeber, Assistant Professor at Harvard Business School, which revealed that people are more likely to remember information when it is presented in the form of a story rather than statistics. I can't say I'm surprised.

Graeber's research indicates that stories have a longer lifespan in memory compared to statistics, which fade more quickly. The numbers are important, but you may need to sandwich them between some funny stories for your audience to remember them.

While there are certainly situations where statistics will be the most effective way of conveying what you want to say, often stories have a more lasting impact because they usually include details or context that make it easier to recall them.

However, packaging your numbers into riveting anecdotes can carry a risk as it can help contribute to the spread of misinformation.

The study conducted by Graeber suggests that if you want your audience to remember specific information for more than a day, it is crucial that you wrap it in a compelling story. Keep it simple though: extreme stories may lead to selective recall and thus, over time, to potentially harmful misperceptions about reality.

Marie-Louise Rankin
SSA Executive Officer

Read Voorhis' full article here

Mentioned in previous newsletters:

SSA Branches have opened applications for funding to attend ASC/OZCOTS 2023

Branches of the Statistical Society are offering funding for student and early career members of the society to attend the Australian Statistical Conference (ASC) and Australian Conference on Teaching Statistics (OZCOTS) in Wollongong, 10th - 15th December 2023. All branch funding will cover registration to the conference, with some branches covering additional travel if funds allow. For full details see each branches' announcement.

- Canberra (check your email for 'Canberra branch ASC & OZCOTS 2023 rego grant')
- NSW (application form)
- Queensland (application form)
- South Australia & Northern Territory (application form)
- Victoria & Tasmania (application form)
- Western Australia (application form)

With best wishes,

ASC & OZCOTS 2023 Programming Committee

SSA Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee: We want you!

The SSA's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee is charged with ensuring that our Society is welcoming and accessible to all. Since its formation in 2021, we've done many things to ensure diversity of our Society, including developing guidelines to help ensure Branch and Section events are welcoming and inclusive, seeking feedback on EDI issues from our members, and providing feedback to the Australian Bureau of Statistics on the inclusion of questions on sex and gender in future censuses. You can find out more about the committee here.

If you're enthusiastic about equity, driven by diversity, or interested in inclusion, then we'd like to invite you to join the EDI Committee. For more information, please get in touch with the EDI Committee chair, Jess Kasza.

SSA Events

Statistical Consulting Network May Meet-Up

30 June 2023, 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. This virtual meeting is held on Zoom at lunchtime on the last Friday of each month, 12:30-1:30 PM (AEDT). We start each meet-up with announcements, or occasionally a special topic discussion, then discuss problems that attendees have brought along with them.

We also have a Slack workspace where members of the consulting network can communicate between meetings, or post problems or relevant materials they would like to discuss during a meeting.

Zoom link

Slack Workspace link

Statistics and Data Science Education: Connecting Disciplines

23 Jun 2023, 2:00 PM – 5:30 PM, Gibson Room, QUT Gardens Points Campus

Together with UQ's morning symposium ***Statistics and Data Science Education in Society***, the day's theme is ***Statistics and Data Science Education for All***. There will be two presenters: **Matt Beckman**, Department of Statistics and Statistics & Data Science Education Research Lab, Penn State University **Title**: *Progress toward natural language processing (NLP) assisted formative assessment feedback and* **Dani Ben-Zvi**, Professor in Statistics Education and Educational Technologies, Faculty of Education, University of Haifa, Israel. **Title**: *Reasoning with Data across Disciplines in Student-Based Citizen Science*

Nibbles will be provided after the presentation, and for those who wish to then continue discussion, we will move elsewhere for drinks. For more details and to register click here.

NSW Branch, SSA: June event: Prof Lucy Marshall and Yiyi Ma -

Quantifying the known unknowns

27 Jun 2023, 12:30 PM – 3:00 PM (AEST), 14SCO T2 Theatre, Macquarie University and via Zoom

Environmental models are essential tools for understanding complex natural systems and predicting the impacts of human activities on the environment. By simulating the behavior of physical, chemical, and biological processes in natural systems, environmental models can help make informed decisions about environmental management, policy, and planning. Environmental modeling has undergone significant advancements in recent years, transitioning from simplistic representations of ecological systems to sophisticated and integrated modeling platforms. However, these opportunities heighten the debate about the use of methods like machine learning in disciplines like hydrology, ecology, or biogeochemistry, that traditionally has relied on the knowledge of natural and engineered systems for model development (also known as 'physically-based' models). This presentation will provide insight into these issues across a range of modeling scenarios with a focus on Bayesian inference and its application to environmental systems

To register click here.

Canberra Branch Meeting -- Statistically Significant or Signifying Statistics?

Presented by Dr. Carolyn Huston, CSIRO Data61, Melbourne

27 Jun 2023, 5:45 PM – 7:00 PM (AEST), online (Zoom)

There is a gap that needs to be filled that exists between explainable statistical (and machine learning) models, and what is needed for typical consumers and citizens to feel comfortable and confident applying, or allowing statistic and machine learning models to be integrated into systems in our everyday life. Both statistics and ML methods form the basis of many modern artificial intelligence (AI) systems. These systems are increasingly permeating our everyday life and work, and are increasingly being scrutinised and investigated to try to ensure that their social license is legitimate, and to understand how to regulate them effectively. As a partial and proposed solution to this quandary, she wants to introduce the audience to ideas from design thinking, such as affordances, signifiers, and human centred approaches to thinking about how models can, are, and should be used and communicated with end-users and society at large. Hopefully these ideas stimulate some interest and robust discussions with the audience on paths forward!

There is dinner after the lecture. Please click here to register.

SSA Vic & Tas mentoring night

27 Jun 2023, 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM (AEST), online (Zoom)

Are you a student or early in your career? Curious to learn more about what a career in statistics looks like or where it could take you? The SSA Vic & Tas branch is hosting a mentoring night to help answer these very questions! Come and meet a diverse range of mentors with experience working in different fields and sectors that involve statistics and data science. Participants will get to 'speed date' our mentors in small groups and ask them questions.

For more details and to register click here.

SSA QLD Branch Meeting: Structural Choice Modelling: An Extension and Generalisation of McFadden's Multinomial Logit

presented by Assoc Prof Len Coote and Dr Thomas Magor, University of Queensland

28 Jun 2023, 5:00 PM – 6:30 PM, Room 67-146 - Priestley Building, UQ St. Lucia Campus / online

In 2000, Daniel McFadden – Professor Emeritus at UC Berkeley – was awarded the Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences for theory and analysis of discrete choice. McFadden's model – multinomial logit – retrieves the aggregate preferences of decisions makers. Extensions of his model – the random coefficient and error component forms of mixed logit – in addition retrieve unobserved (latent) sources of preference heterogeneity. These models are estimated using maximum likelihood and maximum simulated likelihood approaches, respectively. McFadden's model and its extensions are used in applied economics, including environmental, health, and transport economics (and in quantitative marketing) – principally for forecasting demand for discrete choices. McFadden's model and extensions of his model are fit to the microdata of individual choices

Our contribution – in a series of papers in the Journal of Choice Modelling – is the development of a very general and flexible form of mixed logit (or "structural choice model").

To hear more about this talk and to register click here.

Check out these pre-conference workshops held in Wollongong on 10 December 2023:

- Essential Skills for Statistical Communication presented by Professor Sir David Spiegelhalter, University of Cambridge, A/Professor Jen Martin, University of Melbourne and Dr Linden Ashcroft, University of Melbourne

- Statistical Consultancy – The Essentials for Getting Started and Ongoing Success Presented by Professor Julie Simpson, University of Melbourne, A/Professor Emily Karahalios, University of Melbourne and A/Professor Karen Lamb, University of Melbourne, A/Prof Sue Finch from The University of Melbourne and

- Deep Statistics for More Rigorous and Efficient Data Science presented by Professor Xiao-Li Meng, Harvard University

Australian Statistical Conference (ASC) and Australian Conference on Teaching Statistics (OZCOTS)

10th - 15th December 2023, Wollongong

Current Vacancies in SSA's Career Centre

Internal Revenue Agent (Examiner) - DIRECT HIRE (12 MONTH REGISTER)

Multiple Locations (See Description)

Internal Revenue Service

WHAT ARE THE APPEALS (AP), LARGE BUSINESS AND ...

Revenue Officer- DIRECT HIRE (12 Month Register)

Multiple Locations (see description)

Internal Revenue Service

Duties WHAT IS THE DIVISION? SMALL BUSINESS ...

Internal Revenue Agent (Examiner) - Direct Hire (12 Month Register)

Multiple Locations (see description)

Internal Revenue Service

Duties WHAT ARE THE APPEALS (AP), LARGE BUSINESS ...

View All Jobs

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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