

**From:** [Statistical Society of Australia](#)  
**To:** [Contact us](#)  
**Subject:** Stats Matters & Events  
**Date:** Thursday, 21 March 2024 2:29:32 PM

---



## STATS MATTERS & EVENTS

---

**21 March 2024**

As most of our branches have already completed their 2024 Annual General Meetings (AGMs), and others are scheduled to do so in the coming days, I'd like to say "thank you" to all outgoing committee members for their exceptional service to the Society. I hope that your volunteer experience has been enriching.

To our incoming branch council members, I extend a warm welcome and heartfelt appreciation for your willingness to take on a new responsibility. If you have any questions – and I'm sure you will! - please do not hesitate to contact me.

A sincere thank you especially to those who have committed to another term on their branch council. Your ongoing dedication is instrumental to the success of the Society.

If you are a member of a branch and have enjoyed the branch events held in the last twelve months, why not let your Branch Council know? While there are certainly many intangible rewards for volunteers, such as learning new things, making new friends and being an integral part of a community, nothing goes to the heart as much as few kind words put into an email or a card. No volunteer

deserves to have their contribution to SSA taken for granted, and everyone loves to feel appreciated.

Here's to another wonderful year of SSA activities!

[Marie-Louise Rankin](#)

Executive Officer

*Read newsletter in your [browser](#)*

**Important notice:** The SSA Office will be closed on Monday and Tuesday next week (25 and 26 March 2024). For urgent enquiries during this time please click [here](#).

---

### **In this newsletter:**

[News from the Vic&Tas Branch](#)

[News from the Bayesian Section](#)

[Expressions of interest - Bayes on the Beach 2025 or 2026](#)

[Empowering African statisticians: FAO's scholarships for agricultural data improvement](#)

[Brewing up statistics: The legacy of William Sealy Gosset, aka 'Student](#)

[Join the ECSSC2024 Committee – Applications close tomorrow!](#)

[SSA events](#)

[Other events](#)

[Current Job Vacancies](#)

---

### **News from the Vic&Tas Branch**

#### **February Event**

The SSA Vic & Tas branch kicked off the year with our first event in February with a seminar by Dr James Goldie from 360info titled “No installation required: instant coding demos and workshops using dev containers and WebR.” We learnt about how to easily run coding workshops using two main

methods. Codespaces allows any Github user 120 core-hours of free computation per month, meaning anyone can set up a free account and run code in that environment for the duration of a workshop. WebR on the other hand runs the code directly in the user's browser. These environments work for both R and Python and are great for teaching purposes, so more time can be spent on coding and analysis. Thanks James for introducing us to these new tools!

## March Event

In March the SSA Vic & Tas Branch hosted their AGM and successfully elected the council for 2024. The AGM was followed by a joint seminar by Helen Baird and Dr Fiona Manson from the Australian Bureau of Statistics about how the ABS develops standards. Helen began by explaining the importance of using statistical standards so that we can compare results from data collected by different people. She explained that the ABS strives to find a balance between updating standards so that they stay relevant and reflect the real world but also remain robust and consistent for time-series analysis. Fiona took us through the process of how standards are developed, emphasising the importance of using existing standards where possible and taking into account who will use the data and for what purpose.

Elena Tartaglia  
Secretary, SSA Vic & Tas Branch

---

## News from SSA's Bayesian Section

The [SSA Bayes committee](#) is putting out a call out for activity suggestions. The committee is currently planning webinars, sessions at external conferences and student travel scholarships for 2024. What else would you like to see or attend as a member of the section? Please fill in this [Google Form](#) with your ideas. Looking forward to reading all about them!

## Expressions of interest - Bayes on the Beach 2025 or 2026

The Bayesian Section of the SSA is looking for expressions of interest (EOIs) to organise the next instalment of "Bayes on the Beach", which is slated to take place in 2025 or 2026. This is a national meeting of Bayesian statisticians that normally features around 70 attendees and is held at a beachside location.

The deadline for sending an EOI is 31 May 2024. Your EOI should be 1-2 pages and should include the following information.

- The planned venue, which should allow for accommodation in the vicinity

at a range of prices.

- Potential dates.
- The names of the conference chair(s) and at least some committee members.

The Bayesian section of the SSA will select the top 2-3 EOIs, which will then be asked to send a full proposal detailing the budget.

Please send your EOI with title “Bayes on the Beach EOI” to the section co-chair [Leah South](#), whom you can also contact if you have any questions.

---

## **Empowering African statisticians: FAO's scholarships for agricultural data improvement**

The Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics (GSARS), led by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), is offering scholarships to train young African statisticians in agricultural statistics.

This initiative aims to bridge the data gap in developing countries and improve agricultural productivity and sustainability.

An article published on 13 March 2024 on the website of the United Nation’s FAO showcases two students enrolled in the master’s program in agricultural statistics in Côte d'Ivoire, Désirée Christelle and Deborah Conan. These young women are learning about agricultural processes like tapping rubber trees to understand statistical concepts like yield. The master's program they're enrolled in combines theoretical knowledge with practical experience tailored to the challenges of the agricultural sector.

The FAO emphasises the importance of reliable agricultural statistics for policymaking, resource allocation and market planning. Through scholarships and training, the FAO seeks to address gender disparities in the field, with 43% of recent graduates being women.

The goal is to equip statisticians, particularly women, with the skills to provide accurate data for informed decision-making in agriculture.

Read more about this fascinating work [here](#).

### **Learn more**

- Website: [FAO & Food and Agriculture Statistics](#)
- Website: [Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics:](#)

[Côte d'Ivoire](#)

- Website: [FAO Statistics](#)

---

## **Brewing up statistics: The legacy of William Sealy Gosset, aka 'Student'**

What do beer and statistics have in common? If he were still alive, William Sealy Gosset would have the answer for you. He was a Guinness brewer, who made significant contributions to modern statistics under the pseudonym "Student" with his paper "The Probable Error of a Mean" published in 1908 by *Biometrika*. The paper introduced a technique for making precise forecasts using limited data, later recognised as "Student's t distribution," which has since become a fundamental tool in modern statistics and scientific inquiry.

Gosset's inspiration stemmed from challenges in assessing hop resin levels for brewing quality, demonstrating the method's utility in beer production. Despite initial obscurity, the method later gained recognition through Ronald Aylmer Fisher's endorsement.

Gosset's death in 1937 was followed by acknowledgment of his international reputation and advancements in agricultural experimentation methods. This narrative underscores the scientific rigour embedded in brewing and highlights the role of brewers like Gosset in advancing scientific research.

Read Gosset's whole story in [this article by Erik Ofgang](#), Forbes, 13 March 2024. If you enjoy this type of thing, you may also be interested in a book co-written by Erik together with his father, Dr Harry Ofgang: "The Good Vices: From Beer to Sex, The Surprising Truth About What's Actually Good for You" and Erik's book "Buzzed: Beers, Booze, & Coffee Brews."

---

## **Join the ECSSC2024 Committee – Applications close tomorrow!**

The Early Career and Student Statistician Network (ECSSN) is busy preparing for the Early Career and Student Statistician Conference (ECSSC) 2024, to be held across multiple venues in WA, Tasmania and New Zealand later this year.

We are currently looking for some energetic members to get involved and help shape ECSSC2024. Being able to add a role on the ECSSC2024 committee to your resume is attractive to employers and funding bodies, is a great opportunity to expand your network, and is a lot of fun!

To apply for a role on the committee and get involved with the conference planning for our Early Career and Student Statisticians, please click [here](#) and

submit your Expression of Interest by Friday, 22 March 2024.

---

## **Election of Executive Members**

Members are advised that the Executive positions of Secretary and Treasurer will become vacant at the Society's Central Council Annual General Meeting in 2024.

Members of SSA are invited to submit nominations for the two positions to be vacated. Nominations must be in writing and signed by the nominator(s), and must be accompanied by a written and signed statement from the nominee accepting the nomination. Nominations should be submitted to the SSA President ([president@statsoc.org.au](mailto:president@statsoc.org.au)) or to a Branch President before 1 May 2024.

**Doug Shaw**, Secretary

---

## **SSA Events**

### **SSA NSW: 2024 AGM + Lancaster Lecture**

Presented by Dr. Gordana Popovic.

28 Mar 2024, 4:30 PM – 7:00 PM (AEDT), Room 4082, Anita B. Lawrence Centre (previously Red Centre), UNSW

---

### **Statistical Consulting Network Monthly Meet-Up**

22 March 2024, 12:30 PM – 1:30 PM AEDT, 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) (unless it's a public holiday, like this month, when we will hold the event the week before). 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](#)

Password: 660145

[Slack Workspace link](#)

---

### **Canberra Branch AGM - 26 March 2024, 5:00pm AEDT**

The Canberra Branch AGM will be held in hybrid format, both in person at ANU and by Zoom, at 5.00pm AEDT on Tuesday 26 March 2024. After the AGM there will be a talk given by Pauline Ding, the outgoing branch president.

### **Canberra Branch Meeting - Optimising Twin Uniform Distribution for Multiplicative Noise Data Masking**

26 Mar 2024, 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM (AEDT), In-person and online via Zoom

SSA Canberra invites everyone to attend its post-AGM branch meeting, where our outgoing branch president Pauline Ding will be dazzling us with her research on data masking!

Multiplicative noise masking is a well-known method to perturb data for privacy protection purpose. Twin uniform distribution has been introduced in the literature as a distribution for multiplicative noise, given the simplicity in its mathematical form and the ability to provide good value protection without sacrificing statistical utility. We further explore the impact of various distribution parameters on the performances of privacy protection and utility loss when multiplying twin uniform noise for data masking. An approach to optimise the multiplicative noise scheme with twin uniform noise distribution is proposed. We apply the optimisation algorithm to a real accounts payable dataset, and conclude that it yields good results for both privacy and utility.

To obtain the Zoom link or sign up for the dinner click [here](#).

---

### **Fast Integrative Factor Models: Applications from Nutritional Epidemiology to Cancer Genomics**

10 April 2024, 4:30 PM (AEST), online

The Bayesian Section of SSA is hosting the webinar: Fast Integrative Factor

Models: Applications from Nutritional Epidemiology to Cancer Genomics presented by Dr. Alejandra Avalos-Pacheco. Learn about novel sparse latent factor regression (FR) and multi-study factor regression (MSFR) models, designed to tackle covariate effects and systematic biases. Explore dimensionality reduction and sparse low-rank covariance estimation techniques, while gaining insights into bioinformatics applications.

To register click [here](#).

---

## **Other events**

### **NY/PANJAAPOR Young Public Opinion Scholars Competition**

Please see below the last call for abstracts for the NY/PANJAAPOR Young Public Opinion Scholars Competition. Student submissions are due by Thursday, 28 March 2024.

Please find the official flier below for the Annual Young Public Opinion Scholars Competition, co-sponsored by the New York and Pennsylvania/New Jersey chapters of the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR). Participants in this virtual event will not only receive feedback from leading scholars in the field, they will also be competing for cash prizes!

Current students and recent graduates (within the past year) are eligible to submit an abstract in the fields of public opinion and methodology, including theory, substantive findings, research methods, and/or statistical techniques. If accepted to compete, participants will pre-record themselves narrating a slideshow presentation in which they discuss their research. Each participant will also have a Q&A period with our panel of judges during the event.

**To apply, submit a 250 word abstract by Thursday, 28 March 2024.**

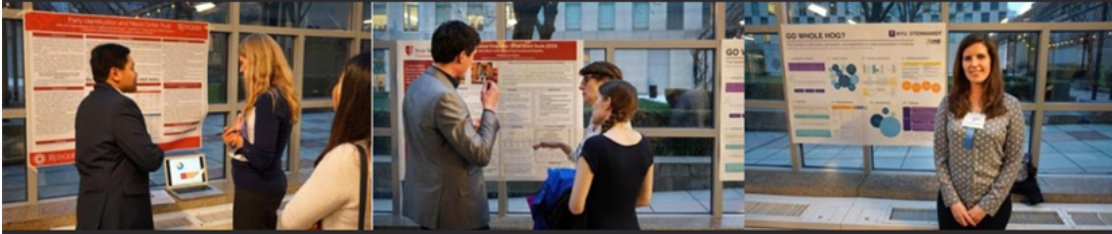
[Submission link](#)

**The event will be held virtually on Thursday, April 25th at 6pm EST.**

If you have any questions, you can contact the [organising committee](#).



# Young Public Opinion Scholars Competition 2024



Thursday, April 25, 2024 at 6pm

**About the Event:** The award committee welcomes submissions in the fields of public opinion and methodology, including theory, substantive findings, research methods, and/or statistical techniques. Applicants are limited to one submission each as the primary author.

**Virtual Format:** Participants will pre-record themselves narrating a slideshow presentation in which they discuss their research. During the event, participants will respond to questions from the judging panel.

**Eligibility:** Undergraduate and graduate students, as well as young professionals who have completed their degrees within the last year are eligible to apply. Applicants must be based at a college, university, or company in CT, NJ, NY, or PA.

**Cash Prizes:** 1st Place: \$1000  
2nd Place \$500

**How to Apply:** Submit a 250-word abstract by March 28, 2024. Full papers are not required at any stage of the competition. Submission Link:  
<https://forms.gle/9s2LnFSXzjzKD6Jm6>

**Contact:** [youngscholars@nyaapor.org](mailto:youngscholars@nyaapor.org)

**About Us:** The American Association for Public Opinion Research is the leading association for public opinion and survey research professionals. The NY and PA/NJ chapters provide additional educational and networking opportunities for their members.



**Triennial International Statistics Conference, Sri Lanka**

The [Triennial International Statistics Conference](#) is one of the main events

organised by the Institute of Applied Statistics Sri Lanka (IASL) since its inception. The last three conferences were held in the month December of 2011, 2014 and 2017 respectively, and after a lapse of the COVID-19 pandemic, the forthcoming International Statistics Conference is being organised to be held on 28–29 December 2024.

The main objective of the event is to bring together Data Scientists/Statisticians from across the world and provide a platform for them to share their latest research findings on theory and applications of Data Science/Statistics with Sri Lankan Data Scientists/Statisticians.

Further, this will be an immense opportunity for Sri Lankan Data Scientists/Statisticians to develop collaborations with world renowned Data Scientists/Statisticians, and it will contribute to the development, especially the knowledge economy, of the country. The focus of the conference is Statistical, Machine Learning and Big Data Analytics Techniques.








## IMPORTANT DATES

Paper/abstract Submission Deadline: 15 May, 2024  
 Author Notification Sent by: 15 July, 2024  
 Submission of Camera-ready Copy: 15 August, 2024  
 Early-bird Registration Closes: 31 August, 2024

### PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOP

DATE: 27 December, 2024  
 RESOURCE PERSON: Professor Tim Swartz, SFU, Canada  
 THEME: Sports Analytics  
 VENUE: University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka

## CONFERENCE TRACKS

Probability and statistical inference, Statistical modelling, Time series and forecasting, Sampling and surveys, Experimental designs and analysis, Spatial and longitudinal data analysis, Actuarial statistics, Data mining and big data analytics, Machine learning and AI, Data visualization & predictive analytics, Econometric modelling, Sports analytics, Biostatistics, Bioinformatics and healthcare analytics, Developments in statistical software, Ecological modelling, Financial and marketing data analytics, Manufacturing, telecommunication, Transport and energy data analytics, Education and social science data analytics, Agricultural statistics, Food and environment data analytics, Operations research applications and other relevant areas.

## OUTSTANDING SPEAKERS



**Prof. Tim Swartz**  
 Professor of Statistics  
 Simon Fraser University, Canada  
 Keynote Speaker



**Prof. Rob Hyndman**  
 Professor of Statistics  
 Monash University, Australia  
 Guest of Honour/  
 Keynote Speaker



**Emeritus Prof. Jay Emmerson**  
 Professor of Statistics & Data Science  
 Yale University, USA  
 Guest Speaker



**Prof. Ji-Hyun Lee**  
 Professor of Biostatistics  
 University of Florida, USA  
 President-Elect 2024  
 American Statistical Association  
 Guest Speaker

Grab your chance to present your latest research work, meet renowned international/local researchers and a possible publication in Springer Nature or Sri Lankan Journal of Applied Statistics (SLJAS) or ISC2024 Proceedings!

Conference Co-Chairs:

Dr. Niroshan Withanage & Prof. Chandima Tilakaratne





Co-organizers International Collaborator Main International Sponsor

For More Information  
<https://isc24.iassl.lk>



## Current Vacancies in SSA's Career Centre

[View All Jobs](#)

[Sydney Horizon Educators \(Faculty of Medicine and Health\)-School of Public Health Lecturer \(Education Focused\)](#)

New South Wales

The University of Sydney

Full time continuing academic Lecturer Education ...

[Statistician- Centre for Primary Health Care Equity \(CPHCE\), Faculty of Medicine & Health](#)

New South Wales

University of New South Wales

Employment Type:Part Time- 21 hours per week ...

[Assistant Sheriff, Administration/ Chief Financial & Administrative Officer](#)

Los Angeles County, CA

Los Angeles County - Los Angeles, CA

Position/Program Information The Los Angeles ...

[Chief Financial Officer \(CFO\)](#)

NM

X-Ray Associates of New Mexico

Join an Exceptional Medical Organization with ...

[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.

[Unsubscribe](#)