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From the Editor

Chixiang Chen

Dear ICSA members:

Happy New Year!

It is my great pleasure and honor to present the new year's issue of the ICSA Bulletin. As we enter a new year marked by rapid technological transformation, this issue is organized around the theme "Embracing the Era of Artificial Intelligence." Artificial intelligence is reshaping the way data are generated, analyzed, and interpreted across scientific disciplines, industry, and society at large. In this evolving landscape, statistical thinking remains more essential than ever, providing the foundation for principled inference, uncertainty quantification, and responsible deployment of AI-driven methodologies.

Before introducing the contents of this issue, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the ICSA leadership team, Board of Directors, committee members, and volunteers for their continued dedication and service. Their collective efforts sustain the growth and vitality of our association. I am especially grateful to our president (Dr. Rong Chen) and executive committee (Dr. Jun Zhao) for their leadership and vision, and to all contributors who generously shared their insights, experiences, and expertise. Their contributions have made this issue both timely and impactful.

In alignment with this year's theme, this issue highlights how statisticians and data scientists are engaging with the opportunities and challenges brought by artificial intelligence. Across academia, industry, and government, AI is accelerating discovery, transforming decision-making, and redefining professional roles. At the same time, it raises fundamental questions about interpretability, reliability, fairness, and reproducibility, areas where statistical principles play a central role. Through a collection of articles, reports, and perspectives, this Bulletin reflects ICSA's commitment to advancing methodological innovation while maintaining rigorous scientific standards.

This issue features a rich set of contributions from across the ICSA community. Readers will find messages from ICSA leadership, updates from committees and chapters, reports on recent conferences and outreach activities, and invited interviews sharing professional experiences from members at different career stages. Several contributions highlight how AI and data science are being integrated into real-world applications, including biopharmaceutical development, public health, and technology-driven industries, illustrating the expanding impact of our profession in the AI era.

In addition, this issue continues to emphasize mentorship, professional development, and community building, core missions of ICSA. Through initiatives such as webinars, mentoring programs, and experience-sharing columns, we aim to support students, early-career researchers, and established professionals alike as they navigate a rapidly evolving professional landscape shaped by AI and data-driven innovation.

I hope this issue of the ICSA Bulletin inspires reflection, dialogue, and collaboration within our community. Your feedback and suggestions are always welcome and deeply appreciated. I would also like to extend my heartfelt thanks to my editorial assistant for her outstanding support in preparing this issue.

Best wishes for a healthy, productive, and inspiring year ahead. I look forward to your continued engagement and contributions as we, together, embrace the era of artificial intelligence.

Chixiang Chen, Ph.D.
Editor-in-Chief, ICSA Bulletin
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University of Maryland, School of Medicine.

From the 2026 President, ICSA

Rong Chen

Dear ICSA Members and Friends,

Happy New Year! I am both thrilled and humbled to become the 2026 ICSA president. With the rapidly changing global geopolitical environment and fast-moving research, development and applications of artificial intelligence, ICSA, as an international community of statisticians, is facing tremendous challenges as well as opportunities. By better positioning our society in the changing environment, expanding our membership base, and finding ways to better serve our members, our beloved association will become even more vibrant and stronger.

The ICSA executive committee for 2026 consists of Dr. Jun Zhao (ICSA Executive Director), Dr. Xin He (ICSA Treasurer), Dr. Hongyu Zhao (Past President), Dr. Sammi Tang (President-Elect) and myself. I wish to use this opportunity to thank Dr. Xun Chen (2024 President) for her leadership over the past three years and her many accomplishments. I am also extremely grateful that Dr. Jun Zhao agreed to continue as Executive Director for another year after three years of hard work and sacrifice. I have learned a lot in the past year serving on the executive committee and witnessed how much effort and sacrifices that our board members, committee members, and other volunteers have made in making our society great.

We accomplished a lot in 2025. Our three main conferences – the ICSA 2025 Applied Symposium at University of Connecticut, the ICSA 2025 International Conference at Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan, and 2025 ICSA China conference at Beijing Normal University in Zhuhai, China – were all extremely successful, thanks to the great effort of the conference organizers and volunteers. Under the leadership of Dr. Qing Yang and Dr. Deli Wang, and a strong team of committee members and volunteers, our webinar series has been extremely successful, with a rapidly growing fan base. The newly established ICSA Mentoring Lounge kicked off on October 1, 2025, followed by a second session on December 5, 2025. It has received high praises from mentors and mentees. We thank Dr. Yushi Liu, the creator and committee chair of the mentor-mentee program, for his tireless effort

and his devotion to the career development of our junior members. These outreach activities have greatly increased ICSA's visibility and provided valuable services to our members. We hope they will continue to grow in size and impact in the future and become the crown jewel of ICSA. Of course, we all remember the wonderful cruise during JSM at Nashville, thanks to the efforts of Dr. Dandan Liu, the local organizer.

Many events are coming in 2026, starting with 2026 ICSA Applied Symposium (June 14-17) at George Mason University in Arlington, Virginia, with Dr. Lily Wang and Dr. Wanli Qiao as co-chairs of the organizing committee, and 2026 ICSA China Conference (June 27-29) at Southern University of Science and Technology, in Shenzhen, China, with Dr. Qiman Shao, Dr. Jianguo (Tony) Sun and Dr. George Tseng as co-chairs of the organizing committee. ICSA Taiwan chapter is organizing the 'International Conference for Statistics and Data Science' (June 24-26) at National Cheng Kung University, Tainan City, Taiwan, with Dr. Henry Horng-Shing Lu as the chair of the organizing committee. We all look forward to these exciting conferences.

I would like to welcome a new set of co-editors of Statistica Sinica, our flagship journal. Dr. Ian McKeague, Dr. I-Ping Tu, and Dr. Hui Zou will assume their duties starting August 1, 2026 for a three-year term. We are extremely privileged to have these world-renowned statisticians to guide the journal and to make it even better. We also thank the outgoing co-editors, Dr. Yi-Hau Chen, Dr. John Stufken, and Dr. Huixia (Judy) Wang, for their experienced, dedicated and tireless efforts. Our other journal Statistics in Biosciences will continue to have Dr. Margaret Gamalo and Dr. Jianguo (Tony) Sun as co-editors. Our members have all enjoyed reading the ICSA Bulletin and ICSA Monthly Newsletter. They will continue to be edited by Dr. Chixiang Chen and Dr. Grace Ying, respectively, and they welcome your contributions (news, comments and articles.)

Membership is the heart and soul of any professional society. A vibrant society consistently engages its members with attractive activities, establishes strong connections among its members, nurtures its junior members, and promotes its senior members. With today's social networking tools and proliferation of electronic access of journal articles, our society is facing the challenge of how to

provide better service to our members. Our webinar series and the mentoring lounge are two excellent examples of innovative activities in addressing these challenges. Additional approaches, such as establishing more regional or country chapters and providing additional support for activities of chapters, will allow members geographically close to each other may have a formal platform to get together for workshops and social gatherings, as well as participating in regional conferences with ICSA as a formal partner. A web-based free job/internship posting and resume posting services, with an extensive push of its awareness to our members, may provide a valuable service to students, who may become our future members. New services and approaches will be sought for

developing stronger connections among members in academia, industry and government.

I wish to thank all our members, especially all the volunteers, for your continued support of our society. Working together, we will raise the standing of ICSA and attract fresh talents to keep ICSA vibrant and dynamic. Please send any suggestions, proposals, and comments to me at rongchen@stat.rutgers.edu or ICSA executive committee at executive.director@icsa.org. I wish everyone a joyful, healthy, and prosperous 2026!

Rong Chen, Ph.D.
2026 ICSA President,
Distinguished Professor of Statistics,
Rutgers University.

From the 2025 President, ICSA

Hongyu Zhao

Dear ICSA Members and Friends,

Happy New Year! Wish everyone happy and successful in the Year of the Horse!

Much has happened in the second half of 2025 since the publication of the last ICSA Bulletin. Our society has continued to grow in membership, outreach, visibility, and impact! Thank you all for your great dedication and contributions to make this happen!

Following a new tradition of the ICSA gathering at the Joint Statistical Meetings in Portland in 2024, we had a fully scribed dinner cruise on the General Jackson Showboat, along the scenic Cumberland River with dazzling performance, great food and drinks, and, more importantly, the companionship of fellow ICSA members on a lovely summer night in the Music City. Special thanks go to Dr. Dandan Liu for this highly successful gathering! At JSM, many of our members were recognized for their achievements through election to the ASA and IMS Fellows, distinguished awards, and, most notably, Dr. Naitee Ting, who received the prestigious ASA Mentoring Award, which recognizes his exceptional contributions to mentoring that have had a profound impact on people, our profession, and society. Finally, we thank the many volunteers at the ICSA booth for representing our society under the

leadership of Dr. Dandan Liu.

After two successful conferences in June, including the ICSA Applied Symposium held at UConn and the ICSA China held at the Zhuhai campus of the Beijing Normal University, ICSA held the third major conference, the ICSA International, in December in Taipei from December 17th to December 20th. ICSA co-organized this 13th ICSA International Conference with the Institute of Statistical Science, Academia Sinica, in collaboration with the Chinese Institute of Probability and Statistics. This international conference was held jointly with the Taipei International Statistical Symposium. The conference featured the ICSA Peter Hall Lecture by Dr. Danyu Lin, Pao-Lu Prize Award and Lecture by Dr. Hui Zou, and keynote speeches by Dr. Jianqing Fan, Dr. Genevra Allen, and Dr. Amy Xia. With more than 500 participants from around the world and more than 100 invited sessions, this meeting provided an international forum for advancing statistical and data sciences in a rapidly evolving world. Special thanks go to the conference co-chairs, Dr. Ming-Chung Chang, Dr. Xinping Cui, and Dr. Ying Zhang, for the countless hours they spent putting together an outstanding program. We also thank the very generous support from our host at the Academia Sinica, led by the Director of the Institute of Statistical Science, Dr. Hsin-Chou Yang, and his colleagues, staff, and students.

The three ICSA conferences held in 2025 have served as a platform for ICSA members to come

together, share their research, and discuss the future of our profession. More importantly, the awards and invited sessions at these meetings offer a great opportunity to recognize and promote the future leaders of our society. There will be three ICSA meetings in 2026, the ICSA Applied Symposium to be held at the George Mason University from June 14th to June 17th, co-chaired by Dr. Lily Wang and Dr. Wanli Qiao, the ICSA Taiwan Chapter Conference to be held at the National Cheng Kung University from June 24th to June 25th chaired by Dr. Henry Lu, and the ICSA China Conference to be held at the Southern University of Science and Technology from June 26th to June 29th, chaired by Dr. Qiman Shao, Dr. Tony Sun, and Dr. George Tseng. I hope you will join one or more of these meetings in the very busy month of June for ICSA.

The second half of 2025 also saw the launch of the ICSA Mentor-Mentee Program to support junior statisticians transitioning from academia to industry, with two sessions held in October and December, respectively. This designated IM² Program is structured as a "Mentoring Lounge," where selected mentors engage in open, interactive dialogue with mentees. The first two mentor panels featured leaders in the pharmaceutical and tech industries. More sessions are being planned for 2026, and special thanks go to Dr. Yushi Liu and Dr. Hanfei Xu for their initiatives and organization! The second half of 2025 also saw many outreach activities, including three webinars, many of which can be viewed at `https://www.icsa.org/webinar s/past-webinars/`. We thank Dr. Qing Yang, Dr. Jun Zhao, and Dr. Deli Wang, for their efforts in putting together these highly informative and well-received presentations.

It was truly my privilege to have your trust to serve as the President for the ICSA in 2025. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to my fellow Executive Committee Members, especially ICSA Executive Director Dr. Jun Zhao, for guiding me along the way; to the members of the ICSA Board of Directors; to the Chairs and Members of all the committees; and to the editors of the ICSA journals and publications. I would also like to thank all of you for making ICSA a base for our members to grow professionally and personally. With AI shaping all aspects of our lives in the coming years, statistical thinking will prove more critical than ever, and as statisticians, we have much to offer. Our society is in good hands with Dr. Rong Chen as the President and Dr. Sammi Tang as the President-Elect for 2026! I look forward to continuing to work with all of you to further the growth of ICSA for many years to come!

Hongyu Zhao, Ph.D.
2025 ICSA President,
Ira V. Hiscock Professor of Biostatistics,
Yale University.

From the 2026 President-Elect, ICSA

Rui (Sammi) Tang

Dear ICSA Members and Friends,

Happy New Year! I wish you and your families a healthy, successful, and prosperous 2026. I am deeply honored and truly grateful to be elected as the 2026 President-Elect of the International Chinese Statistical Association (ICSA). I would like to sincerely thank all ICSA members and the Executive Committee for your trust and support. It is a privilege to serve this community and to work alongside such a dedicated group of volunteers and leaders.

Since its founding, ICSA has grown into a truly global professional society, bringing together statisticians and data scientists from academia, industry, and government. Through scientific exchange, leadership development, and community service, ICSA provides an important platform for members around the world to connect, collaborate, and advance statistics and data science.

Over the past year, ICSA has continued to make strong progress across many dimensions. In addition to our flagship Applied Statistics Symposium, the Association has successfully organized and co-sponsored many important regional and international conferences, including conferences in North America, China, Asia-Pacific regions,

and joint or locally organized events led by ICSA chapters and partner institutions. These regional conferences are a vital strength of ICSA —they expand our global reach, support local statistical communities, and provide accessible, high-quality forums for scientific exchange, collaboration, and professional development.

ICSA has also expanded its webinars, webinar series, mentoring programs, outreach activities, and social events, offering year-round opportunities for members at different career stages to learn, engage, and connect across geographies and disciplines. These initiatives reflect ICSA's continued commitment to inclusiveness, innovation, and service to the broader statistical and data science community.

All of these achievements are made possible by the extraordinary volunteer efforts of our leadership and members. I would like to express my deepest appreciation to the current and prior ICSA Presidents, as well as the Executive Committee and committee chairs, for their dedication, vision, and selfless service. Their leadership has been instrumental in guiding ICSA's growth and success, and in thoughtfully passing on a strong foundation and shared responsibility to the next generation of leaders. I am sincerely grateful for their trust, mentorship, and continued support.

As I look ahead to serving as President in 2027, I take great pride in helping to strengthen the linkage of ICSA's global efforts. My focus will be on further connecting regions, enhancing collaboration across communities, and strengthening industry–academia partnerships so that innovation and methodology discussed at ICSA events can translate into real-world impact. I also aim to increase ICSA's visibility and influence while continuing to provide inclusive and vibrant forums where members can meet, connect, and exchange scientific ideas. I look forward to working closely with our leadership team and with all of you to build on ICSA's strong foundation and to serve our members and the broader community with purpose and excellence.

With warm regards and best wishes for a wonderful year ahead,

Rui (Sammi) Tang, Ph.D.
2026 President-elect,
SVP, Head of Quantitative Sciences and Evidence Generation,
Astellas Pharma,
441 Morgan Ave, Cambridge, MA 02139.

From the Executive Director 2023-2026

Jun Zhao

Happy New Year, friends and colleagues. This is my 3rd year as the ICSA Executive Director. As always, I wish you and your family a healthy, successful, and prosperous 2026. In the new year, ICSA will continue to improve and excel its professional platform and provide members with a unique place to exchange knowledge, research and leadership in statistics and data science.

Overall, ICSA achieved its goals and made great progress and expansion in the past year. Led by the ICSA president Dr. Hongyu Zhao, past president Dr. Xun Chen, president-elect Dr. Rong Chen, and the leadership team, directed by the ICSA board, all committees have fulfilled their goals. In addition, new workstreams have been initiated and are in great progress.

As an association founded and based in the US, the ICSA concluded the year 2025 with significant contributions from members on the cutting-edge scientific research in theoretical statistics, applied statistics and beyond, including in the fields of artificial intelligence, data science and medical research. Here I would like to thank all the researchers, speakers, and the editors of ICSA sponsored or co-sponsored Journals, including Statistica Sinica, Statistics in Bioscience and book series, and the organizers of the ICSA sponsored or co-sponsored conferences, including Applied Statistics Symposium, China Conference, ICSA International Conference, ICSA chapter

symposiums, and other co-sponsored conferences. On behalf of the Executive Committee, I want to express our sincere thanks to you for the support you have given to our association and statistical society, and significant effort, dedication, and contributions to promote statistical science and ICSA. Thanks to all the committee chairs and task force leaders who lead their committees and workstreams, to make the association smoothly functioning and more attractive. Thanks to all the members who voiced thoughtful suggestions and provided ideas to optimize policy and operational work. Meanwhile, I also give my appreciation to all the committee members and volunteers, especially the student volunteers, in helping with the conferences, in staffing the ICSA booth and activities in JSM, in fulfilling all the taskforces, among others.

Special thanks go to the dedicated teams for making ICSA communications smooth, including IT team led by Dr. CJ Jiang, Monthly Newsletter team led by Dr. Grace Li, ICSA Bulletin team led by Dr. Chixiang Chen, and the Outreach and Engagement Committee led by Drs. Jin Zhou and Qing Yang. I strongly recommend that all members should follow up the ICSA communication channels, including social media channels, to broaden your knowledge, leadership skills, and social benefits.

Last but not the least, I would like to promote the Webinar/Webinar Series which were started in 2024 and have launched 14 webinars so far, and the Mentor/Mentee program which was started in late 2025 and have launched 2 sessions of its mentoring lounge. The two workstreams recently are welcoming new members and volunteers to join their teams.

In the Year 2026, we expect that ICSA will continue to perform enhancement and improvement. Meanwhile, ICSA would like to organize more events in addition to the scientific activities organized by the organization.

Jun Zhao, Ph.D.
ICSA Executive Director,
Senior Director, Statistics,
Antengene Corp.

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- Past-President: Hongyu Zhao (`hongyu.zhao@yale.edu`)
- President-elect: Sammi Tang (`Sammi.tang@astellas.com`)
- Executive Director: Jun Zhao (`executive.director@icsa.org`)
- ICSA Treasurer: Xin He (`treasurer@icsa.org `)
- The ICSA Office Manager: Grace Ying Li (`oicsa@icsa.org`)

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- Xiaojing Wang (`xiaojing.wang@uconn.edu`)

Awards Committee:

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Special Lecture Committee:

- Ronghui Xu (`rxu@health.ucsd.edu`)

Publication Committee:

- Lan Wang (`lanwang@mbs.miami.edu`)

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Lingzi Lu Award Committee (ASA/ICSA):

- Qing Yang (`qing.yang@duke.edu`)

ICSA Representative to JSM Program Committee:

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  Hongjian Zhu (`zhuhongjian83@gmail.com`) (2027)

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Call for Nominations of Candidates for 2027 ICSA Officers

Due by April 1, 2026

The ICSA 2026 Nomination and Election Committee is seeking for nominations of candidates for ICSA 2027 officers: ICSA President-Elect 2027 and ICSA Board of Directors (2027-2029). The committee plans to identify two candidates for the ICSA President-Elect 2027 and 10-12 candidates for ICSA Board of Directors (2027-2029) for general election. Candidates for all positions need to be active ICSA members in 2025 and 2026 and have strong interests in serving ICSA. According to the ICSA Bylaws, President-Elect should rotate on a three-year cycle–one year from academia, one year from non-academia, and one year without restrictions. The candidates for President-Elect 2027 will fall under the unrestricted year. We hope that the candidates for Board of Directors are balanced with respect to gender, region, and area of employment (academia, industry/business, or government). Please file your nomination through the Google form at `https://forms.gle/kV1BSnKL yfa9zv2D9` by April 1, 2026. You may contact Dr. Hongjian Zhu at `hongjian.zhu@systimmune.com` if you have any questions.

The Inauguration of the Industry Leadership Summit - Bridging Theory and Practice

The field of statistics is a vast and interconnected ecosystem. While our organization has a proud history of fostering deep theoretical breakthroughs, the strength of our profession lies in the synergy between academic rigor and real-world application. To celebrate and strengthen this connection, we are proud to introduce a new cornerstone of our annual Applied Statistics Symposium: The Industry Leadership Summit.

A Modern Vision for a Unified Profession

The rationale for this summit is to highlight the vital role of industrial statistics within our community. Today, statisticians are at the helm of innovation in almost every sector. However, as the professional landscape evolves, we recognize a growing need to create a dedicated space where the practical challenges of industry and the innovative solutions of academia can meet.

The Industry Leadership Summit is designed to:

- Elevate Visibility: Showcase the sophisticated work being done in the industry sector and integrate those insights into our collective knowledge base.

- Empower the Next Generation: With an increasing number of students and junior members moving into corporate roles, this summit provides a crucial bridge. It offers them direct access to career pathways, mentorship, and a clearer understanding of how their skills translate to the workplace.

- Foster Collaboration: By bringing together diverse perspectives, we ensure our organization remains at the cutting edge of both research and practice.

Inspiring Leadership Across Sectors

We are inviting a distinguished group of leaders from industry who embody the passion and diversity of our field. From Biopharmaceuticals and Financial Services to the front lines of Data Science and Technologies the speakers will share more than just technical results. They will offer inspiration, discuss the nuances of leadership, and explore the future of the profession.

Strengthening Our Community

The Industry Leadership Summit is an enhancement of the annual Applied Statistics Symposium. It is an invitation to close the gap between classroom learning and professional execution. We want our members to see a future full of possibilities and our seasoned professionals to find a community that values the impact of their applied work.

Outline Pathways for Involvement

We invite you to join us for this inaugural event at the 2026 ICSA Applied Statistics Symposium, which will be held in Arlington, Virginia from June 14-17. Whether you are a researcher, a practitioner, or a student, your voice is essential to this dialogue. You may recommend speakers, organize topics, involve in discussions, or volunteer in the organization. Together, we can ensure that our organization remains a vibrant, inclusive home for all statisticians.

Impact Award

Approved by the ICSA board of directors, a new ICSA award, named "Catalyst for Impact Award", is established for applied/industry statisticians. The evaluation criteria for Statistical Contribution and Achievement in the Industry have been drafted and are ready for finalization.

Impact on Innovation

- Advancement and application of statistical methods that are recognized by both the industry and regulatory agencies.
- Recognition through: Impact of publications and citations, and Receipt of awards and fellowships.

Community Engagement

- Demonstrating leadership through active engagement within the broader community.

- Commitment to driving positive change beyond organizational boundaries.

- Promotion of statistics as a discipline, highlighting its significant impact and influence.

Mentoring and Developing the Next Generation of Statisticians

- Dedication to the professional growth of emerging statisticians.

- Providing guidance and sharing knowledge with the next generation.

- Creating opportunities for young professionals to grow and succeed in their careers.

ICSA Financial Report

International Chinese Statistical Association
Profit and Loss
Jul 1, 2025 through Dec 31, 2025

Beginning Cash Balance (Bank/Stripe/Symposium/PayPal Accounts)	7/1/2025	$	543,387.03
Income:			
Membership		$	23,311.00
2025 Donations		$	6,500.00
2025 JSM Event Registration Fees		$	8,315.42
2025 ICSA International Conference Registration Fees		$	38,985.00
Springer Science & Taylor Francis		$	3,055.00
Job Posting		$	750.00
Interest		$	41.24
Total Income		**$**	**80,957.66**
Expense:			
ICSA Office Cost		$	(33,217.70)
2025 ICSA Applied Symposium Expense		$	(1,520.59)
2025 ICSA Applied Symposium Short Course		$	(1,000.00)
2025 ICSA Applied Symposium Student Paper Awards		$	(1,610.00)
2024 JSM Event Cost		$	(65.00)
2025 JSM Event Cost		$	(16,087.80)
2025 ICSA China Conference Expense		$	(64,370.00)
2025 ICSA International Conference Speaker Honorarium		$	(3,000.00)
2025 ICSA Awards		$	(12,500.00)
2026 ICSA Applied Symposium		$	(5,000.00)
2025 NISS Workshop Sponsorship		$	(1,000.00)
ICSA Mentor-Mentee Program		$	(219.90)
Statistica Sinica Postage		$	(789.39)
IT Cost		$	(16,078.13)
Bank Fees		$	(12.00)
PayPal Fees		$	(659.79)
Total Expense		**$**	**(157,130.30)**
Net Total Income		**$**	**(76,172.64)**
Ending Cash Balance (Bank/Stripe/Symposium/PayPal Accounts)	12/31/2025	**$**	**467,214.39**
ASSETS			
JP Hsu		$	37,825.21
Bank/Stripe/Symposium/PayPal		$	467,214.39
Vanguard Investment Balance		$	1,712,904.37
TOTAL ASSETS		**$**	**2,217,943.97**
LIABILITIES & EQUITY			
Equity			
Main Accounts Opening Balance on Jul 1, 2025		$	538,687.03
Jul 1 to Dec 31, 2025 Net Income(+)/Expense(-)		*$*	*(76,172.64)*
2018 ICSA Symposium Bank Account Opening Balance on Jul 1, 2025		$	4,700.00
JP Hsu Account Opening Balance on Jul 1, 2025		$	34,717.09
Jul 1 to Dec 31, 2025 Award		*$*	*(550.00)*
Jul 1 to Dec 31, 2025 Investment Income(+)/Expense(-)		*$*	*3,658.12*
Vanguard Investment Account Opening Balance on Jul 1, 2025		$	1,585,934.25
Jul 1 to Dec 31, 2025 Investment Profit(+)/Loss(-)		*$*	*126,970.12*
Total Equity		**$**	**2,217,943.97**
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY		**$**	**2,217,943.97**

Xin He, PhD,
Treasurer, ICSA,
Associate Professor of Biostatistics,
University of Maryland.

The Spotlight from the Joint Meetings of the 2025 Taipei International Statistical Symposium and the 13th ICSA International Conference (December 17–20, 2025)
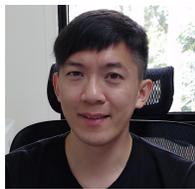
Ming-Chung Chang, Xinping Cui, Ying Zhang

The Joint Meetings of the 2025 Taipei International Statistical Symposium and the 13th ICSA International Conference (Joint2025) were successfully held from December 17 to December 20, 2025, in Taipei, Taiwan. The conference was hosted by the Institute of Statistical Science, Academia Sinica, in collaboration with the International Chinese Statistical Association (ICSA). Joint2025 was co-chaired by Ming-Chung Chang (Academia Sinica, Taiwan), Xinping Cui (University of California, Riverside, USA), and Ying Zhang (University of Nebraska Medical Center, USA), with academic oversight provided by an international Scientific Committee comprising distinguished scholars from Asia, North America, and Europe. Through the close collaboration among the Co-Chairs, the Scientific Committee, and the organizing team, Joint2025 was established as a major international academic gathering in statistics and data science, attracting broad participation from scholars around the world.

The conference was conducted as a fully in-person event and officially opened on the morning of December 17. The opening ceremony featured welcoming remarks by Mei-Yin Chou, Vice President of Academia Sinica, Hsin-Chou Yang, Director of the Institute of Statistical Science, Academia Sinica, and Hongyu Zhao, President of the International Chinese Statistical Association. Their remarks emphasized the importance of international collaboration, the central role of statistics in addressing contemporary scientific challenges, and the significance of Joint2025 as a platform for global academic exchange.

The scientific program commenced with a series of plenary and keynote lectures delivered by internationally renowned scholars. The keynote addresses were delivered by Danyu Lin (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill), who discussed the evaluation of COVID-19 vaccine effectiveness over time; Jiangqing Fan (Princeton University), who presented recent advances in factor-informed deep learning for causal effect estimation; Genevera Allen (Columbia University), who addressed inference and interpretability in machine learning; and Amy Xia (Amgen Inc.), who shared insights on the expanding role of pharmaceutical statisticians in the AI era. In addition, Hui Zou (University of Minnesota) delivered the ICSA Pao-Lu Hsu Award Lecture, presenting recent methodological developments in high-dimensional clustering via latent transformation mixture models. Over the course of the four-day meeting, the conference program further featured plenary lectures, invited sessions, and contributed poster presentations, covering a wide spectrum of topics including statistical theory, experimental design, machine learning, artificial intelligence, biostatistics, econometrics, and interdisciplinary applications. Joint2025 attracted a total of 511 registered participants, including 110 participants from Taiwan and 392 participants from overseas institutions, clearly demonstrating the strong international appeal of the conference and its role as a global forum for statistical research. In summary, Joint2025 was a highly successful international conference that fully achieved its objectives of promoting scholarly exchange, strengthening international collaboration, and enhancing Taiwan's visibility in the global statistical community. The academic interactions, professional networks, and collaborative initiatives fostered during the conference are expected to generate lasting benefits for both domestic and international research communities.

Ming-Chung Chang, PhD,
Associate Research Fellow,
Institute of Statistical Science,
Academia Sinica, Taiwan.

Ying Zhang, PhD,
Professor and Chair,
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College of Public Health,
University of Nebraska Medical Center.

Xinping Cui, PhD,
Professor and Chair of Statistics,
University of California, Riverside.

Report from the Springer/ICSA Book Series in Statistics

Ding-Geng Chen

The ICSA Book Series in Statistics (Print ISSN: 2199-0980, Electronic ISSN: 2199-0999) was established in the year 2012 between ICSA and Springer. It is aimed to showcase research from the International Chinese Statistical Association that has an international reach. It publishes books on statistical theory, applications, and statistical education. All books are associated with the ICSA or are authored by invited contributors. Books may be monographs, edited volumes, textbooks, and proceedings.

Since it was established in 2012, this book series has successfully published thirty (30) books in statistics, biostatistics, bioinformatics, biopharmaceutical biostatistics, data sciences, and public health, as listed online at `https://www.springer.com/series/13402`. In 2025, one new book was published with an additional book in press and to be published in 2026:

- Dose Finding and Beyond in Biopharmaceutical Development (2025). Jingjing Ye, Ding-Geng Chen, Wen Zhou, Qiqi Deng, Joseph C. Cappelleri.
- Big Data Analytics in Biostatistics and Bioinformatics (2026). Yichuan Zhao and Ding-Geng Chen.

To all ICSA members, you and your colleagues are professionally welcome to contribute to this book series to make it successful for our International Chinese Statistical Association. Please contact Professor Ding-Geng Chen (`dinchen@asu.edu`) and Professor Yichuan Zhao (`yichuan@gsu.edu`) for your interest.

New Call for "Springer Book on Biostatistics and Bioinformatics"

Professors Yichuan Zhao and Ding-Geng Chen would like to showcase the scientific output for our workshop on Biostatistics and Bioinformatics to reflect new challenges and advances in Biostatistics and Bioinformatics. We welcome submissions from all areas of statistics, data science and interdisciplinary areas. Submitted papers are expected to present new methods in statistics and data science, new theories in biostatistics, and applications in bioinformatics. Below are our plans in details:

1. You are encouraged to submit your research that is related to biostatistics and bioinformatics.

2. To include high quality papers to the book, all submissions will be subject to peer review. Each submission will also be independently reviewed by the co-editors. The final accepted papers will be those selected by the co-editors.

3. To move the process smoothly,

   - If you wish to submit a paper, we would like you to indicate your intent of submission by January 31, 2026, with a tentative title of the paper (you can change the title later), your name (first, middle and last), and your affiliation. Please email this information to Yichuan Zhao at yichuan@gsu.edu.

   - A manuscript is sent to Dr. Yichuan Zhao by March 31, 2026. The decision will be reached by October 31, 2026.

   - The book is expected to be published by March 31, 2027.

Ding-Geng Chen , PhD,
ASA Fellow,
Executive Director and Professor
in Biostatistics,
College of Health Solutions,
Arizona State University,
Phoenix, AZ , USA.

Statistica Sinica Co-Editors' Report

Co-editors: Yi-Hau Chen, John Stufken, and Judy Wang
July 2, 2025

Since 2023.8.1, there have been 853 submissions to *Statistica Sinica.* And 108 papers are under reviewing. 81% of the papers [651 ÷ (853-47)] reached final decision. 6% of them [47 ÷ (853-47)] are waiting for revision.
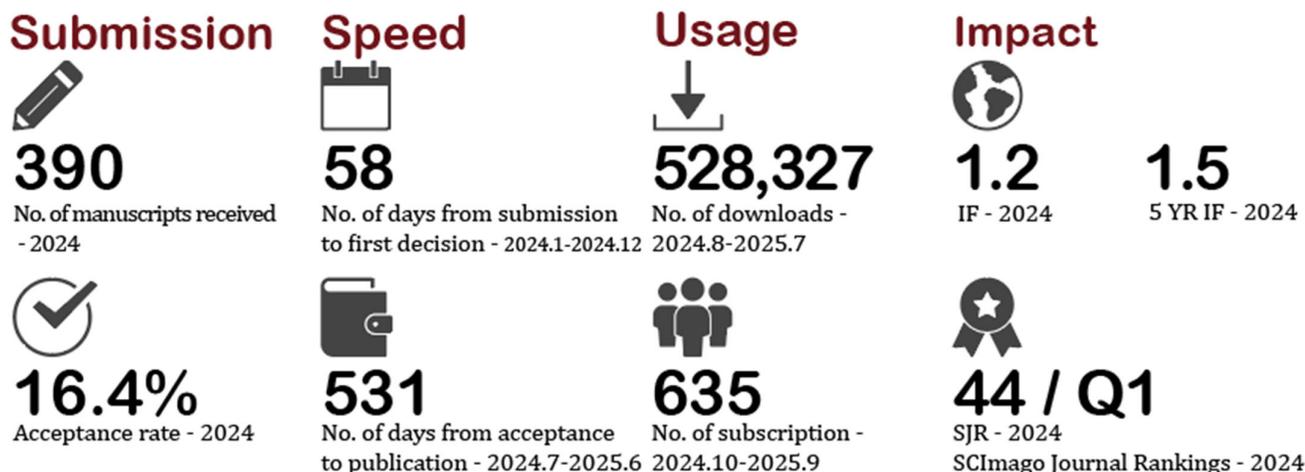
Total submissions	853
(A) Ongoing	108
Under 1st review	82
Awaiting **SAE** Score	0
Awaiting **AE** Recommend	56
In the CE Center or Awaiting **CE** Decision	26
Under 2nd review	26
Awaiting **AE** Recommend	20
In the CE Center or Awaiting **CE** Decision	6
(B) Reached final decision	651
Accept	112
Reject or Reject & resubmit	539
(C) Waiting for revision	47
Major revision	42
Minor revision	5
(D) Unsubmitted	46
(E) Withdrawn	1

*updated on Jun. 30., 2025

Currently we have a huge backlog of accepted papers. Up to 2025.6.30, there are 193 accepted papers (Vol.35 No.4~Vol.37 No.4) in the backlog, with the online-only discussion paper "Causal and Counterfactual Views of Missing Data Models" and three discussion articles included. There are around 9 regular issues and 1 online-only Discussion Paper in the backlog. Vol.35 No.4 will be published in October this year, and Vol.37 No.4 will be published in October, 2027. All accepted articles are posted online immediately after acceptance on *Statistica Sinica*'s official website as the just accepted author version in the section of "Future Papers".

The journal's two-year impact factor is 1.2 in 2024, which is lower than that in 2023. Its five-year IF in 2024 is 1.5, which is the same as that in 2023. For SCImago Journal Rankings, it is 44 in 2024, lower than 31 in

2023. For the past year (Vol.34 No.3-Vol.35 No.2, with one special issue included), the number of average days from acceptance to publication is 531 days, which is higher than that in previous year (516 days). As *Statistica Sinica* has a huge backlog, papers after acceptance may wait longer for publication. The following illustration shows its journal metrics:

Submission

390
No. of manuscripts received - 2024

16.4%
Acceptance rate - 2024

Speed

58
No. of days from submission to first decision - 2024.1-2024.12

531
No. of days from acceptance to publication - 2024.7-2025.6

Usage

528,327
No. of downloads - 2024.8-2025.7

635
No. of subscription - 2024.10-2025.9

Impact

1.2
IF - 2024

1.5
5 YR IF - 2024

44 / Q1
SJR - 2024
SCImago Journal Rankings - 2024

1. Submissions and Acceptance Statistics

Table 1 shows the number of submissions and the acceptance rates from 2020 to 2024. Table 2 shows the number of submissions by country from 2022 to 2024. And Table 3 aims to present countries with accepted papers for the recent 3 years.

Table 1. Number of Submissions and Acceptance Rate from 2020 to 2024

	Jan 1, 2020 – Dec 31, 2020	Jan 1, 2021 – Dec 31, 2021	Jan 1, 2022 – Dec 31, 2022	Jan 1, 2023 – Dec 31, 2023	Jan 1, 2024 – Dec 31, 2024
Accept	126	125	155	110	64
Number of Submission	452 (524^{ID}-$43^{u/w}$-29^{re})	403 (455^{ID}-$30^{u/w}$-22^{re})	387 (419^{ID}-$20^{u/w}$-12^{re})	410 (435^{ID}-$13^{u/w}$-12^{re})	390 (440^{ID}-$27^{u/w}$-23^{re})
Acceptance rate	27.9%	31%	40%	26.8%	16.4%

*The data was updated on Jul. 1, 2025. In 2024, Statistica Sinica receives 390 original submissions (revised, resubmitted papers not included). The total number of original submissions is lower than that in 2023. About 12% of the papers submitted in 2024 haven't reached their final results.

* ^{ID} means the number of paper IDs obtained in a year. For example, in 2023, the submitted paper IDs range from SS-2023-0001 to SS-2023-0435. So in 2023, the number of paper IDs is 435, which includes the original submitted papers, unsubmitted or withdrawn papers, and the resubmitted papers.

* $^{u/w}$ means the unsubmitted or withdrawn papers.

* ^{re} means the resubmitted papers.

Table 2. Top ten countries with the highest original submissions from 2022 to 2024

Rank	Jan 1, 2022– Dec 31, 2022		Jan 1, 2023– Dec 31, 2023		Jan 1, 2024– Dec 31, 2024	
1	China	149 (37.3%)	China	158 (37.6%)	China	183 (44.1%)
2	USA	117 (29.3%)	USA	110 (26.2%)	USA	93 (22.4%)
3	Canada	17 (4.3%)	Hong Kong/ India	14 (3.3%)	Canada	13 (3.1%)
4	Taiwan	11 (2.8%)	Canada	12 (2.9%)	Hong Kong	11 (2.7%)
5	Hong Kong	10 (2.5%)	Japan	11 (2.6%)	India/Taiwan	10 (2.4%)
6	Kenya	8 (2.0%)	Pakistan	10 (2.4%)	Italy	9 (2.2%)
7	India/ Italy/ Japan/ United Kingdom	7 (1.8%)	Iran	9 (2.1%)	Japan/ United Kingdom	7 (1.7%)
8	Australia	6 (1.5%)	Singapore	8 (1.9%)	Singapore	6 (1.4%)
9	Germany/ Iran	5 (1.3%)	France/ United Kingdom	6 (1.4%)	Turkey	5 (1.2%)
10	France/ Saudi Arabia/ Singapore	4 (1.0%)	Italy/ Taiwan	5 (1.2%)	Australia/ Korea/ Netherlands/ Pakistan	4 (1.0%)

*Note: Information based on original submissions and country of **submitting author**.

Table 3. Countries with accepted papers for the recent 3 years

Year 2022		Year 2023		Year 2024	
Country	Number of accepted papers	Country	Number of accepted papers	Country	Number of accepted papers
United States	54	China	53	China	50
China	29	United States	45	United States	47
Taiwan	7	Hong Kong	6	Canada	7
Canada	5	Canada/ Taiwan	4	Hong Kong	4
Australia	4	Australia/ Germany/	3	Australia/ Singapore/	2

		United Kingdom		United Kingdom	
Italy/ Japan	3	India/ Italy/ Japan	2	Brazil/ Chile/ Italy/ Japan/ Taiwan	1
Hong Kong/ United Kingdom/	2	Belgium/ France/ Israel/ Korea/ Netherlands/ Saudi Arabia/ Spain	1		
Denmark/ Germany/ Korea/ Netherlands/ Saudi Arabia/ Singapore/ Spain/ Switzerland	1				

*Note: Information based on the number of papers accepted and country of **submitting author.**

2. Manuscript Processing Time

Table 4 shows the turnaround statistics of initial decisions from 2022 to 2024, with the decision times censored on May 28, 2025. About 50% of the editorial decisions during 2024 take less than 35 days, but 5% take over 165.3 days. From 2022 to 2024, the average reviewing time ranges from 53 days to 74 days. From table 5, it can be seen that a large percentage of papers get the initial reviewing decisions within 30 days.

Table 4. Percentiles of review time in days from 2022 to 2024

Period	5th	25th	50th	75th	95th	Average Review Days
Jan 2022 – Dec 2022	3	9.25	62.5	107	232	74
Jan 2023 – Dec 2023	1	5	28.5	89.25	146.1	53
Jan 2024 – Dec 2024	2	9	35	97	165.3	58

Table 5. Comparison of review time in days from 2022 to 2024 (with 30 days group)

2022

2023
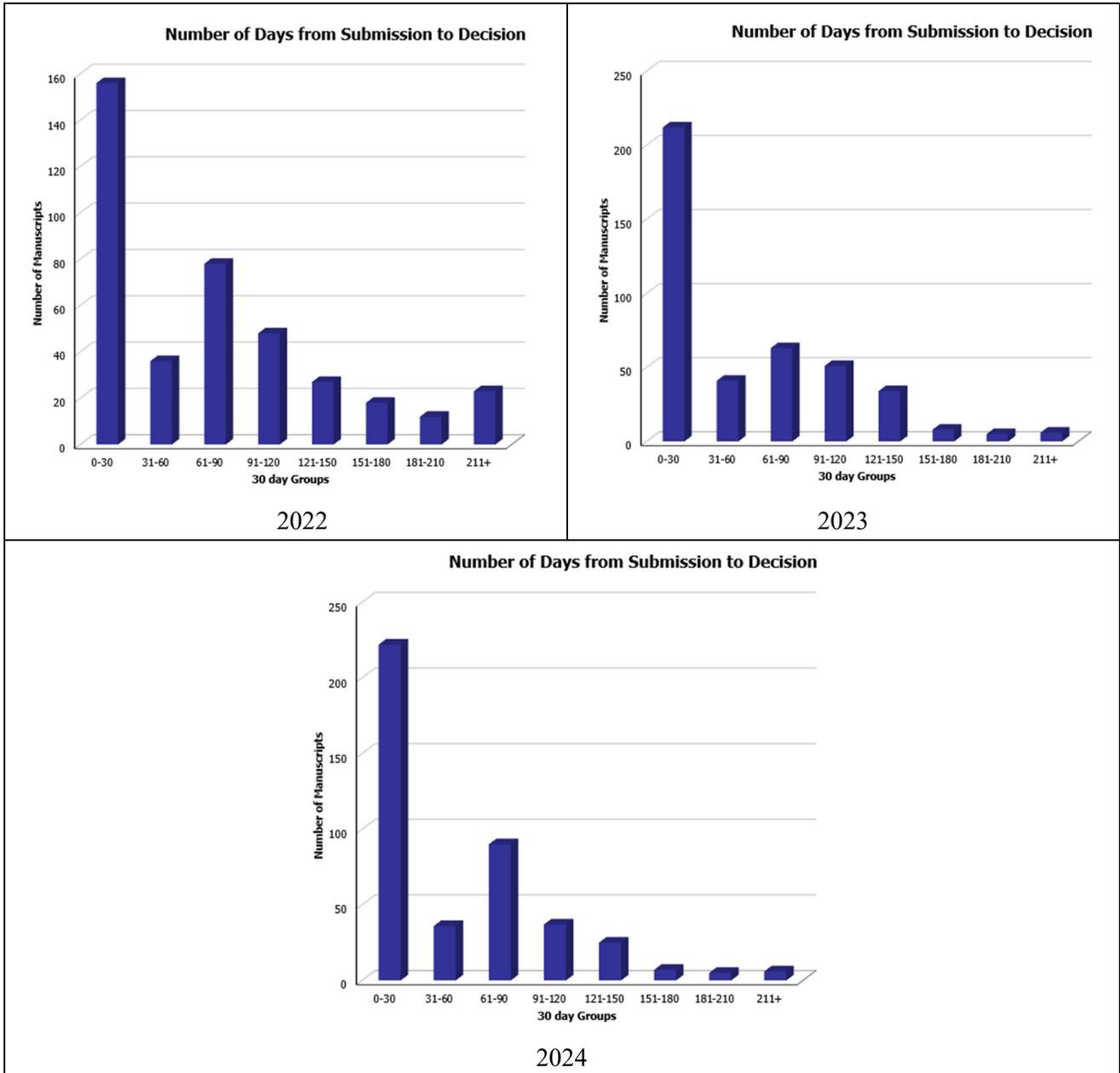
2024

3. Rankings and Impact Factors

Table 6 shows the ranks of *Statistica Sinica* based on the 2-Year Impact Factor and the 5-Year Impact Factor provided by the Journal Citation Reports (JCR) in the area of Statistics and Probability from 2015 to 2024. Table 7 shows the ranks of *Statistica Sinica* in Scimago Journal Rankings among all journals of Statistics and Probability in the Scopus database from 2015-2024. The ranking is performed using the algorithm Google PageRank™. And Table 8 presents total citations for the recent five years.

Table 6. JCR rankings for the recent 10 years

Year	Number of Journals	Ranking (2-Year Impact Factor)		Ranking (5-Year Impact Factor)	
2024	**167**	**79**	**(1.2)**	**70**	**(1.5)**
2023	168	43	(1.5)	65	(1.5)
2022	125	64	(1.4)	69	(1.4)
2021	125	78	(1.330)	70	(1.481)
2020	125	76	(1.261)	64	(1.647)
2019	124	72	(0.968)	67	(1.230)
2018	123	71	(0.947)	66	(1.256)
2017	123	71	(0.886)	51	(1.399)
2016	124	70	(0.899)	46	(1.632)
2015	123	66	(0.838)	42	(1.611)

Table 7. SCImago journal rankings for the recent 10 years

Year	Total Number of Journal	Journal Rank	Quartile
2024	**290**	**44**	**Q1**
2023	268	31	Q1
2022	258	42	Q1
2021	250	45	Q1
2020	257	50	Q1
2019	246	41	Q1
2018	219	41	Q1
2017	196	23	Q1
2016	183	26	Q1
2015	179	20	Q1

Table 8. Total citations for the recent 5 years

*Data retrieved from "Web of Science".

6

4. Online-Only Special Issues and Discussion Paper

Special issues are published as online-only issues. In 2023, we published four regular issues and one special issue (High-Dimensional Statistics) containing 118 articles in total. In April 2024, the special issue, "Sequential Monte Carlo," was published, with nine articles included. "Data Privacy" included 8 papers and was published in January this year. "Network Data Analysis" also collected 8 papers, and was published in July. The call for manuscripts for the special issue, "Covariate Adaptive Randomization and Covariate Adjusted Analysis in Clinical Trials" was released at the end of 2024, and the submitted papers are under reviewing. Hopefully, it will be published in 2026. In 2026, the online-only discussion paper, "Causal and Counterfactual Views of Missing Data Models," with 6 discussion articles included, is scheduled for publication. Table 9 provides a quick overview of the special issues and discussion paper for the recent five years.

Table 9. Online-only special issues and discussion paper for the recent five years

Year	2022		2023	2024	2025		2026	
	special issues		special issue	special issue	special issues		discussion paper	special issue
Subject	Causal Inference and Short Notes	Sliced Inverse Regression After 30 Years, In Honor of Prof. Ker-Chau Li	High-dimensional Statistics	Sequential Monte Carlo	Data Privacy	Network Data Analysis	Causal and Counterfactual Views of Missing Data Models	Covariate Adaptive Randomization and Covariate Adjusted Analysis in Clinical Trials
No. of Papers published	8	10	29	9	8	8	1 paper, 6 discussants	4 papers received
Status	published	published	published in May 2023	published in April 2024	published in January, 2025	published in July, 2025	2 discussion articles still not received	3 under reviewing, 1 unsubmitted

5. Publication statistics (2021~2025)

The following two tables show the number of papers published per year and per issue respectively for the recent 5 years.

Published articles amount (Per year)

Statistica Sinica is published quarterly in January, April, July, and October.

Year	Published articles
2021	102
2022	113
2023	118
2024	105
2025	85+

Published articles amount (Per issue)

	JAN	Special issue	APR	Special issue	JUL	Special issue	OCT	Special issue
Vol. 31 (2021)	22		23		24		24	9
Vol. 32 (2022)	25	8	23		24		23	10
Vol. 33 (2023)	24		23	29	21		21	
Vol. 34 (2024)	24		24	9	24		24	
Vol. 35 (2025)	23	8	23		23	8	To be published	

News from the ICSA-Canada Chapter

Wenqing He

The 7th ICSA-Canada Chapter Symposium will take place on Aug. 7-9, 2026 at McGill University in Montreal, Canada. It will showcase the cutting-edge developments in statistical sciences, with a strong emphasis on methodological advances for complex and high-dimensional data.

The symposium will feature two plenary speakers, Dr. Aurore Delaigle from the University of Melbourne and Dr. Xiaotong Shen from the University of Minnesota, as well as a banquet speaker, Dr. Annie Qu from the University of California at Santa Barbara. The sessions will be highly interdisciplinary, bridging theoretical innovations with impactful applications in areas such as medicine, public health, artificial intelligence, and the social sciences.

We invite contributed submissions for both oral and poster presentations. If you would like to participate in this esteemed event, please submit your abstract to the Program Committee via the link: `https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1B-DvF IrXt4TauNywjCnqeYY425nrWBZavzzpIndO7BU/ed it`.

Submissions will be accepted until all available slots are filled. All abstracts will be reviewed by the Program Committee for appropriate placement within the symposium program. Additional details can be found at `https://icsa-canada-chapter.o rg/symposium2026/`.

Wenqing He, PhD,
Chair, ICSA Canada Chapter,
Professor of Statistics,
Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science,
University of Western Ontario, Canada.

News from the ICSA-Midwest Chapter

Ziqian Geng, Man Jin

We organized the 2025 ICSA Midwest Chapter & NIC-ASA Joint Fall Meeting, held on the campus of Astellas Pharma Inc. at Northbrook, IL, on October 02-03, 2025.

On Day 1, the meeting consisted of 2 short courses:

- Adaptive Phase 2/3 Designs: Statistical Considerations and Beyond, given by Dr. Cong Chen, Merck & Co., Inc.
- Unleashing the Power of Machine Learning and Deep Learning to Accelerate Clinical Development, given by Dr. Yunzhao Xing, Dr. Sheng Zhong, and Dr. Li Wang, AbbVie Inc.

On Day 2, the meeting consisted of:

- Opening remark given by Dr. Rui (Sammi) Tang, Head of Quantitative Sciences & Evidence Generation, Astellas Pharma Inc.
- Keynote speech, Statistics and Statistician in the AI Era: Deepen the Roots, Widen the Branches, given by Dr. Xun Chen, Head of Data & Statistical Sciences, AbbVie Inc.

- Seven scientific sessions with invited speakers from academia and industry.

- Two student focused events: poster exhibition and a student roundtable.

With the accumulated experience from 2025 and previous years, we plan to continue the collaboration with NIC-ASA and co-organize the joint meeting in 2026.

Ziqian Geng, Ph.D., Director and TA Lead in Gastroenterology, Statistics, Abbvie, USA.
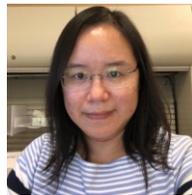
Man Jin, Ph.D., Director and TA Lead in Therapeutic Toxin, Statistics, Abbvie, USA.

Speak with an Industry Team

Chenguang Wang, Nusrat Rabbee, Guohui Wu, Xian Sun

Column Description: the column offers industry research teams an opportunity to share their experiences, including insights into research focus, mentorship, and team management. These contributions aim to support new team leaders, particularly junior and mid-career researchers, as they build and lead their own scientific teams.

Virtual Interview for the Team Leaders

Chenguang Wang, Ph.D.,
Executive Director,
Head of Quantitative Innovation and Statistical Strategy,
Biostatistics and Data Management,
Regeneron Pharmaceuticals.

Nusrat Rabbee, Ph.D.,
Senior Director,
Head of Quantitative Innovation and Statistical Strategy,
Biostatistics and Data Management,
Regeneron Pharmaceuticals.

Guohui Wu, Ph.D.,
Director,
Head of Quantitative Innovation and Statistical Strategy,
Biostatistics and Data Management,
Regeneron Pharmaceuticals.

Xian Sun, Ph.D.,
Associate Director,
Head of Quantitative Innovation and Statistical Strategy,
Biostatistics and Data Management,
Regeneron Pharmaceuticals.

Question 1: Can you briefly describe the primary research focus of your lab and the specific problems in data science that you are currently addressing?

Dr. Wang: I am part of the Quantitative Innovation and Statistical Strategy (QISS) group at Regeneron. Fueled by quantitative science and technology, this group advances drug development from end to end, delivering innovative and actionable solutions that seamlessly integrate with portfolio processes to drive impactful outcomes.

In the pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical industries, statisticians often focus their research on clinical trial design and analysis, particularly in the context of regulatory decision-making. At QISS, go beyond traditional design and analysis by applying quantitative thinking to the entire clinical development process. This covers everything from protocol and SAP development to site initiation, subject enrollment, centralized monitoring, statistical monitoring, reporting, and more. Furthermore, we extend our methodologies beyond classical statistical approaches to include machine learning and large language model-based artificial intelligence.

Rather than addressing a specific problem or set of problems, QISS is focused on answering a broader question: How can statisticians further contribute to drug development?

Question 2: How do you foster an innovative and collaborative environment in your lab that encourages new ideas and interdisciplinary research?

Dr. Rabbee: Innovation is very important to boost productivity, fostering creativity potentially leading to transformative solutions. Innovation works best when combined with frameworks, like F.A.I.R. (findable, accessible, interpretable and reproducible), that enhance collaboration, discipline about modeling and coding, accelerates discovery and maximize the value of data assets and modeling. In our group, we ask team members to work closely with not only other statisticians, but also clinical colleagues or coworkers from other relevant areas, like geneticists, manufacturing engineers or digital medicine. Without the involvement of science and the scientists, the statistician's innovation will be limited or may miss the mark, and the reverse is true as well - since a scientific solution must be mathematically and statistically sound for assessment of strength of evidence.

Question 3: What strategies do you use to mentor and support your lab members, especially

junior researchers, in their career development?

Dr. Rabbee: Be available to answer questions and mentor junior colleagues. Identify their key strengths and new skills that are useful to the team/organization and help them explore their strengths applied to a problem at hand. Encourage them to read external research. Give positive feedback on effort and constructive feedback to improve their work.

Question 4: Can you share some insights into the team management practices you use to maintain productivity while ensuring a healthy work-life balance for your team?

Dr. Rabbee: First, we treat team members with respect and acknowledge that adults have full lives with many dimensions, only one of which is work. Even though in our industry work is very intense and timeline driven with multiple projects competing for one's attention - we focus on productivity and healthy boundary between work and other life. Second, members are encouraged to take PTO, attend conferences, have time to prepare for and present in such conferences on topics related to their focus area. Third, we encourage team members to pair or team up with others for backup support when away for longer times and in general we support collaboration to maintain productivity, transparency and skilling/re-skilling.

Question 5: How do you prioritize projects and allocate resources (time, personnel, funding) across the various research initiatives within your team?

Dr. Wang: Running with relatively limited resources is the norm for many teams, and QISS is no exception. As such, prioritization is both essential for effective operation and critical for success.

At QISS, we prioritize projects that have the potential for significant impacts on portfolio development. For instance, we place greater emphasis on projects that can transform processes and practices, thereby improving multiple studies and delivering substantial benefits. Additionally, we prioritize projects that provide "business-as-usual" tools, which can significantly support our study teams in their daily work.

Notably, we place great value on methodological breakthroughs and prioritize projects that can

potentially achieve such advancements through our industry-academia collaborations.

Question 6: How do you integrate emerging technologies and methods in data science into your research and ensure that your lab stays at the forefront of the field?

Dr. Wang: In this AI era, answers to this question are likely the most critical strategies that all of us need to develop. At QISS, we have organized our efforts from the following three perspectives:

1. Relying on our internal talents. QISS is an extremely talented group with diverse backgrounds and expertise. We encourage all our members to pay close attention to updates in their specific fields and educate others about what they have learned. For example, we have several reading clubs at QISS, led by team members, that focus on keeping up with emerging technologies and methods.

2. Fostering industry-industry and industry-academia collaborations. Our slogan is "Collaboration for a Better Tomorrow." Our academic colleagues often stay at the forefront of their fields, and we are always eager to learn from them through collaborations. Additionally, QISS encourages our members to regularly participate in professional community activities, both as audience members and presenters.

3. Finding talent among the next generation of scientists. We constantly create opportunities, such as internships and co-op programs, so that we can work with students and learn from them. Our student colleagues naturally represent next-generation technology, and we sincerely value their contributions.

Question 7: What advice would you give to students or early-career researchers about succeeding in a data science lab and making the most of mentorship and research opportunities?

Dr. Wu: If I could speak to my younger self from ten years ago, I would offer him the following pieces of advice:

1. Be Curious: Always start by asking questions: What is the problem we are trying to solve? Why does it matter? A curious mindset drives you to understand the broader context–the

business, the data, and the people behind the problem. Don't limit curiosity to technical aspects; explore the workflow, decision-making processes, and how they connect to the problem you want to solve and the people you are collaborating with. Curiosity motivates you to think strategically and be innovative and can lead to better solutions to improve processes and workflows.

2. Keep Learning to Build Your Skill Set: The field of data science evolves at an incredible pace. With the rise of AI and online learning resources, expanding your skills has never been more accessible. To be a resourceful data scientist, you must be a lifelong learner. A competent data scientist should know how to frame the right problems, translate them into analytical or statistical formulations, apply problem-solving skills, implement solutions effectively, and communicate insights clearly in terms that others can understand and act on. Embrace both breadth and depth: learn new tools but also understand the underlying principles that make them work.

3. Focus on Communication Skills: Technical excellence can take you far, but not always where you want to go. The ability to communicate your findings clearly and persuasively is what turns analysis into impact. As data scientists, we serve as bridges between analytical teams and business stakeholders. Practice telling stories with data–explain not only what insights the data show, but how we can act on those insights. Effective and clear communication builds trust, fosters collaboration, and amplifies influence.

The key lessons that I learned from my own experience are that understanding the business you serve–including its workflows, stakeholders, and decision-making processes– is crucial. When you grasp how things work in a business context, your solutions become practical, targeted, more readily adopted, and more valuable.

Question 8: What attracted you to join this specific lab, and how did you go about selecting a research environment that aligned with your goals in data science?

Dr. Sun: QISS fosters a robust environment for research and collaboration, emphasizing both technological innovation and problem-solving

through quantitative strategies. The goal is to enhance the role of biostatisticians, data managers and statistical programmers across all stages of clinical development, not just by focusing on individual studies or programs, but by addressing clinical development as a whole. This broader perspective seeks to create solutions that have a wider impact. As a former clinical trial biostatistician, I was profoundly inspired by the commitment to delivering new medications to patients. At QISS, we go beyond the confines of individual studies by leveraging data science to connect programs and establish unified statistical strategies. This approach not only streamlines processes but also enhances efficiency while maintaining the highest quality standards.

Question 9: What strategies have you found effective for managing your time and balancing multiple research projects or responsibilities within the lab?

Dr. Sun: The industry demands intensive work and often involves competitive timelines, making effective time and project management essential. To stay organized and efficient, I rely on the following strategies:

- Prioritization: When managing multiple tasks simultaneously, I assess priorities by considering factors such as urgency, impact on subsequent work, dependencies, and estimated time required. Based on this evaluation, I classify tasks and establish reasonable timelines to ensure efficient workflow.

- Transparent Communication: Collaboration is key in our industry, so I ensure that colleagues are kept informed about work progress. This includes sharing updates on tasks, delivery timelines, changes made, and expectations. Clear communication ensures that everyone remains aligned and can adapt to any changes seamlessly.

- Organized Workspaces and Logs: I maintain well-structured shared folders and regularly update work logs to track project progress. This system helps streamline collaboration and provides easy access to project information for all team members.

New Column: Virtual Interviews

By staying organized and reliable, we can build trust among team members and foster a collaborative and productive work environment.

Question 10: How do you approach communication and collaboration with your PI, lab colleagues, and other teams, and what have you learned about effective teamwork in a research environment?

Dr. Sun: In clinical development, biostatisticians work cross-functionally, making effective collaboration essential. The key to successful teamwork is understanding the perspectives of other functions with respect and communicating in a way that is easy for them to grasp. For example, when explaining statistical methods to clinicians, it's important to focus on the goals, outcomes, and aspects they care about most, rather than overwhelming them with technical details. Start with simple concepts and gradually build to more complex ones. If confusion arises early on, the discussion may turn defensive, and the audience could lose interest or patience.

Another crucial aspect of communication is understanding personality differences. A strategy that works well with one person may not be effective with another. Building rapport and getting to know your colleagues helps identify the most comfortable and productive way to communicate. This is not about treating people differently, but rather about fostering collaboration through mutual comfort and understanding.

Finally, the mode of communication matters. In the industry, where data is sensitive, it's critical to be mindful of what and how information is shared. Written communication is often required for documentation and traceability, while oral communication can be more effective for quick discussions and clarifications. Choosing the appropriate method ensures clarity, efficiency, and compliance with business needs.

Question 11: What challenges have you faced during your time in the lab, and what strategies did you use to overcome them, whether in research, mentorship, or project management?

Dr. Wu: I navigated several complex challenges that significantly shaped my approach to project management and problem-solving.

One of the first challenges was gaining a deep understanding of how cross-functional teams function–their workflows, dependencies, and decision-making processes. Learning how the business functions was essential to developing practical and relevant solutions.

A second challenge involved translating broad business objectives into specific, actionable data problems. This required close stakeholder engagement to truly understand their priorities and pain points, followed by developing targeted solutions. This process demanded consistent communication, iteration and alignment to ensure effectiveness.

Equally challenging was ensuring that our data-driven tools and recommendations could be seamlessly integrated into stakeholders' daily workflow. This necessitated not just analytical excellence, but a deep understanding of user experience and collaborative implementation approaches.

To overcome these challenges, I relied on three core principles:

- Collaboration: leveraging diverse expertise across teams to create comprehensive solutions

- Communication: Maintaining open and consistent dialogue to build trust and ensure stakeholder alignment

- Continuous learning: Staying current with both business domain knowledge and emerging technologies to adapt quickly and refine our approach.

Speak with an Established Lab

George Tseng, Silvia Shuchang Liu, Rick Chang

Column Description: the column offers labs an opportunity to share their experiences, including insights into research focus, mentorship, and lab management. These contributions aim to support principal investigators, particularly junior and mid-career researchers, as they build and lead their own scientific teams.

Virtual Interview for the Principal Investigator (PI)

George Tseng, Ph.D.,
Professor and Vice Chair for Research,
Department of Biostatistics and Health Data Science,
University of Pittsburgh

Question 1: What motivated you to establish your team in the field of data science, and how has your research focus evolved over time?

Dr. Tseng: My motivation for establishing a research team in data science grew organically from my training and the unexpected trajectory of my career. My research group now focuses on statistical machine learning and modeling for omics and bioinformatics, with the goal of advancing public health and precision medicine. I received my BS and MS degrees in Mathematics and Statistics from National Taiwan University. When I came to the United States for my PhD in 1999, this career path was entirely unforeseen. At that time, communication was limited to email and sparse web resources, and I joined Dr. Wing Wong's research group expecting to work on what I considered "traditional" statistics. With only minimal high-school biology background, I had no idea that I was about to enter the rapidly emerging field of genomics and bioinformatics.

By the time I graduated in 2003, my dissertation focused on statistical methodology for microarray data. Although I was fortunate to be among the earliest researchers in the genomics data science wave, my initial research philosophy remained largely method-driven: statistical innovation led the science, rather than the other way around. A major turning point came through close collaboration with several young, talented, and patient biomedical collaborators, from whom I learned hypothesis-driven and problem-centered scientific thinking. Being selected for a clinical K award through the Pitt CTSI in 2007 further shaped my development, providing what felt like a belated postdoctoral training in grant writing, team building, and interdisciplinary research.

Influenced by my PhD work, my early independent research focused on preprocessing and normalization of omics data, as well as high-dimensional clustering for gene modules and disease subtyping–two themes that continue to anchor my work today. Beginning in 2009, motivated by collaborative projects, my group became among the first to work on omics meta-analysis and multi-omics data integration. This marked a fundamental shift in my research philosophy: biological questions and data characteristics began to drive methodological development. To address these problems, I expanded into new areas of machine learning, pathway analysis, gene regulatory networks, dimension reduction, and p-value combination methods.

While my first R01 focused on power calculations for sequencing studies–a relatively method-centric project—this evolving scientific perspective enabled my team to increasingly lead NIH-funded projects addressing substantive biological and clinical questions. These include cross-species omics concordance, circadian omics analysis, complex disease subtyping, lethal cancer subclonal dynamics, and circadian regulatory mechanisms. Overall, sustained collaboration and continuous dialogue with experimental and clinical scientists have been the central forces guiding the evolution of my research focus and motivating the interdisciplinary team I have built in data science.

Question 2: How do you foster an innovative and collaborative environment in your lab that encourages new ideas and interdisciplinary research?

Dr. Tseng: I foster an innovative and collaborative research environment through long-term, student-centered mentorship and flexible, project-driven team organization. I have a genuine interest in working closely with PhD students over the full duration of their training–typically five years–supporting them through periods of struggle, growth, and eventual independence. As a result,

my group is composed primarily of PhD students, with a small number of MS and BS trainees, and I have not recruited postdoctoral fellows so far. This structure allows me to devote sustained attention to each student's intellectual development and career trajectory.

With this model, I typically recruit one to two PhD students per year, often beginning in their first year. During the initial year, students are engaged in collaborative and methodologically focused startup projects that expose them to real data, biological context, and team-based research. As their interests and strengths emerge, I dynamically adjust their research direction in later years, tailoring training to their intended career paths in academia, industry, or government. I emphasize cultivating individual strengths while deliberately addressing gaps in technical, scientific, or communication skills. I also intentionally limit detailed instructions and focus on broad direction, creating room for students to explore ideas, take ownership, and mature into independent scientists.

Several concrete practices help promote innovation and interdisciplinary thinking. First, I strongly encourage students to "get their hands dirty" by working directly with data and biological problems, rather than remaining at a purely methodological level. Second, I form working groups dynamically around projects, enabling students to rotate across different scientific domains and analytical challenges. Third, each student is expected to lead one to two major projects while contributing as a collaborator on additional side projects, fostering both ownership and teamwork. Fourth, I pair senior students with junior students, with the junior student taking the lead and the senior student serving as a mentor. This peer-mentoring structure accelerates technical learning for junior trainees while helping senior students develop leadership, communication skills, and scientific maturity.

More broadly, I believe that intentional team building will become increasingly important for data science as the field evolves and AI tools become more powerful. I believe team building and effective mentorship structures are highly context-dependent, and I regularly reflect on my institutional environment–such as the ability to recruit PhD students–and adapt my approach through experience and iteration. Were I in a different university or research setting, I would likely design a different team structure. When I look back, the willingness to adapt, experiment, and learn has been essential to sustaining an innovative and collaborative research culture.

Question 3: How do you integrate emerging technologies and methods in data science into your research and ensure that your team stays at the forefront of the field?

Dr. Tseng: As a faculty member in a Biostatistics department in the United States, I work in a "soft-money" funding environment (meaning most of my salary and trainee funding come from federal government grants) that many view as a disadvantage. While this is true, I have come to see this structure as a strength in several ways. It incentivizes sustained, high-quality collaboration and pushes me to engage deeply with disease domains where data science can achieve genuine translational impact. At the same time, it disciplines my research choices, discouraging the pursuit of emerging "hot" topics solely because they are fashionable.

When integrating new data science technologies and methods into my research, I evaluate opportunities through four complementary lenses: the strength of in-campus collaborations, alignment with my team's statistical expertise, anticipated clinical or biological impact, and my own scientific interest. This framework helps me navigate an increasingly crowded and rapidly evolving data science landscape, where technical possibilities often outpace meaningful scientific questions. Rather than adopting methods opportunistically, I prioritize problems where methodological innovation is both necessary and impactful, and where my group has a clear comparative advantage.

Question 4: What advice would you give to early-career researchers looking to start their own team in data science? What key lessons have you learned from your own experience?

Dr. Tseng: I hesitate to offer prescriptive advice on team building for the next generation of data scientists, as the field is evolving rapidly and individuals differ widely in their strengths, personalities, institutional environments, and constraints. What has worked for me may not translate directly to others. Instead, the most valuable lesson I have learned is the importance of periodic and honest self-reflection.

Throughout my career, this practice has helped me recalibrate priorities amid competing

demands. Balancing a large research group with significant personal responsibilities–including raising six children–often creates pressure to operate continuously on deadlines and agendas. Since my college years, I have maintained a habit of stepping back during annual periods of quiet reflection, originally through church retreats and later by intentionally reserving time around Thanksgiving or Christmas after I began my faculty career. During these moments, I review my research directions and commitments, reflect on how I have spent my time, and often express gratitude by writing to individuals who have had a meaningful impact on my life and career.

These pauses have consistently helped me regain focus, restore energy, and make more deliberate choices about where to invest my effort. They have also reinforced a "less is more" principle–focusing on fewer, more meaningful projects and relationships rather than pursuing breadth at the expense of depth. For early-career researchers starting their own teams, I believe that developing a habit of reflection–tailored to one's own values and circumstances–is as important as any specific strategy for recruitment, funding, or project management.

Virtual Interview for the Team Members

Silvia Shuchang Liu, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department of Pharmacology & Chemical Biology, the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine.

Rick Chang, PhD candidate, Department of Biostatistics and Health Data Science, University of Pittsburgh

Question 1: Can you describe the most rewarding aspect of your work in this lab, and how it has helped you grow as a researcher?

Dr. Liu: Dr. Tseng's lab is dedicated to both methodological development and collaborative applications. Through training in statistical

algorithm development, I have gradually learned how to identify the significance of a research problem, formulate appropriate models, optimize algorithmic accuracy and efficiency, conduct simulation studies, and apply methods to real-world data.

Through collaborative projects, I have learned how to communicate effectively with collaborators, understand their scientific needs, gain hands-on experience with real datasets, and provide meaningful biological interpretations. Together, these experiences have been instrumental in my growth as an independent researcher.

RIck: One of the most rewarding aspects of my experience in the team has been the gradual process of building professional trust with my collaborators and advisors. Early in my training, I focused primarily on producing careful, technically sound analyses, often working behind the scenes and uncertain about how my work would be perceived. Over time, as I consistently delivered results that were reliable, well-documented, and scientifically meaningful, I began to see a shift in how others engaged with my work. Discussions increasingly centered on my analyses, and my results started to shape project direction, manuscript development, and collaborative decisions.

This growing trust had a profound effect on my development as a researcher. It pushed me to take greater ownership of my work, not only in terms of technical execution but also in interpretation and communication. I learned that strong science is not only about generating correct results, but about being able to defend, explain, and contextualize those results in conversations with collaborators. As my collaborators came to rely on my contributions, I became more confident in articulating my ideas, raising concerns, and proposing alternative analytical strategies. Through this process, I transitioned from viewing myself as a technical contributor to seeing myself as an independent scientific partner within the team.

Question 2: What strategies have you found effective for managing your time and balancing multiple research projects or responsibilities within the lab?

Dr. Liu: When working on multiple projects, I first learn the expected timeline for each one and estimate the amount of effort required. I then prioritize by starting with the most challenging tasks

and breaking them down into manageable sub-steps. Given the nature of computational genomic data analysis, a substantial amount of time is often spent writing scripts; however, once a script is launched, it may run for hours or even days. I use this waiting period to work on smaller, faster tasks from other projects.

I have also developed an organized file-management system in which each project has its own main folder, with subfolders corresponding to individual analysis steps and data types. When writing scripts, I include concise but informative comments, which makes it easier to revisit, understand, and revise the code later. These habits make me switch among different projects efficiently. Together, these strategies have helped me effectively manage and balance multiple projects within a team environment.

Rick: To manage multiple projects within a collaborative research environment, I have developed a realistic and disciplined approach to both time and capacity. One of the most important lessons I have learned is to understand my own limits and to prioritize work accordingly. When a project exceeds what I can reasonably handle on my own, I have found it much more effective to involve another team member early, rather than waiting until a deadline is close. This approach helps prevent last-minute pressure and ensures that the quality of the work is not compromised. At the same time, I have worked to become more efficient in how I use short and fragmented periods of time. Because meetings and discussions often break up the workday, I try to structure each project into a set of smaller, clearly defined tasks. This allows me to make meaningful progress even when my available time is limited.

Question 3: What advice would you give to students or early-career researchers about succeeding in a data science lab and making the most of mentorship and research opportunities?

Rick: Curiosity is the most common characteristic I see among successful researchers. I would strongly encourage junior students to ask questions, even when those questions may seem simple. In a data science team, much of the most meaningful learning happens not through formal instruction, but through daily interactions with mentors, collaborators, and other researchers. For early-career researchers, there is often unnecessary hesitation about speaking up. But, asking questions

is one of the best ways to build both technical insight and scientific confidence. It also provides a valuable opportunity to practice how to frame a good question clearly and constructively.

Over time, I have noticed that in seminars and project meetings, many principal investigators and senior researchers stand out not because they talk the most, but because they consistently identify and ask the key questions. Developing this habit early helps junior researchers move beyond simply executing analyses and toward thinking critically about the underlying scientific goals.

Question 4: What attracted you to join this specific team, and how did you go about selecting a research environment that aligned with your goals in data science?

Dr. Liu: I enrolled in the Joint CMU-Pitt PhD Program in Computational Biology (CPCB) in 2012. My research interests include structural biology and computational genomics, and Dr. Tseng's laboratory has a strong focus on high-throughput genomic data analysis. During my rotation in his lab, I found it to be an excellent match for my interests and training goals.

First, the overarching vision of the lab is both significant and innovative. Although a growing number of statistical and machine learning approaches have been applied to high-throughput genomic data analysis, strategies for integrating multi-omics datasets across different cohorts remain underdeveloped. Existing batch-effect correction algorithms also carry the risk of over- or under-normalizing data. To address these challenges, the lab emphasizes meta- and integrative genomic data analysis. Rather than pooling and normalizing datasets directly, we aim to develop novel methods for principled data integration.

Second, the working environment is friendly and highly supportive. As a first-year PhD student transitioning directly from a Bachelor of Science program, I needed to build a broad foundation of knowledge and technical skills. Instead of being pushed immediately into intensive project work, I was given the time and space to learn and grow. Dr. Tseng has been exceptionally patient in explaining fundamental concepts and is highly respectful of my learning pace. I have also received substantial support from senior lab members, who are always willing to share resources and hands-on experience.

Question 5: How do you approach communication and collaboration with your PI,

team colleagues, and other teams, and what have you learned about effective teamwork in a research environment?

Dr. Liu: While I was a PhD student in Dr. Tseng's lab, we held weekly one-on-one meetings. Typically, I would begin by updating my weekly progress, followed by discussing questions with my advisor and outlining a short-term plan for the next one to two weeks. Dr. Tseng consistently provided thoughtful and professional feedback on my projects, along with clear guidance on the next steps. Periodically, we also discussed the long-term timelines of my projects to ensure they remained on track. When I was busy with exams or other commitments, Dr. Tseng was very respectful of my time and adjusted expectations accordingly.

I communicated daily with members in the team. Depending on the needs of the project, these interactions ranged from brief updates to in-depth discussions. Team members were eager to learn from one another and openly shared resources and experiences, fostering a highly collaborative environment. In addition, I also collaborated with researchers in other labs, with whom we held weekly or bi-weekly meetings to review progress and plan next steps. When necessary, we followed up via email to address specific details.

I believe an effective research environment is built on trust, mutual respect, and open communication. It should allow room for mistakes and learning, while also encouraging recognition and appreciation of one another's successes. Lab members are not pushed to work under negative pressure; rather, they are enthusiastically eager to learn and develop.

Question 6: What challenges have you faced during your time in the team, and what strategies did you use to overcome them, whether in research, mentorship, or project management?

Dr. Liu: In research, challenges were encountered on a daily basis. For minor issues–such as bugs encountered while running scripts–I would first attempt to resolve them independently through online searches or by consulting the literature. If a problem proved difficult to solve, I would then seek input from my team members to address technical details. For more conceptual challenges, such as selecting an appropriate method from multiple candidates, I would first form my own judgment and then consult my advisor for feedback. If certain issues could not be resolved within the lab, we would reach out to collaborators in other labs for assistance. Overall, we approached challenges with a positive mindset and viewed each step as an opportunity to gain experience and grow.

Experience-Sharing from Successful Young Researchers

Heng Zhou, Xiao Wu, Qijia Jiang, Dennis Sun

In this ICSA Bulletin, we are excited to have three excellent junior/middle-year researchers in statistics, biostatistics, and data science who would like to share their personal experience and insight they with early-career researchers. They are Dr. Heng Zhou (HZ), a Principle Scientist, Biostatistics from Merck & Co., Inc; Dr. Xiao Wu (XW), an Assistant Professor of Biostatistics from Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health; Dr. Qijia Jiang (QJJ), an assistant professor of Statistics and Applied Math from University of Califonia, Davis; and Dr. Dennis Sun (DS), an Associate Professor (Teaching) of Statistics at Stanford University and a Staff Data Scientist-Research at Google. The following is the summary of this virtual interview. Their diverse backgrounds span academia and industry, offering valuable perspectives on research, interdisciplinary collaboration, emerging trends, and professional development.

What inspired you to pursue a career in statistics or data science, and how did you find your specific niche within the field (e.g., academia, biopharma)?

QJJ: I've always been fascinated by understanding how things work, both the natural world around us and the many interesting phenomena in society at large. There are very few disciplines as versatile as Statistics –once one internalizes this language, data science becomes a magical toolbox that can be used to make sense of whatever one's curiosity leads to. This aspect of the subject has never lost its charm for me and is what first set me on this path.

DS: I came to statistics and data science through teaching. I have always known that I wanted to be an educator, and statistics is one of the most rewarding subjects to teach. Like math or chemistry, it is a technical discipline, so teaching it well demands intellectual energy. But unlike those subjects, statistics can connect with every student's interests because you can bring in data from almost any domain. I have used examples from medicine, sports, law, video game–sometimes all in one lecture!

What are the key differences you' ve observed between data science work in academia and in industry settings? How did you adapt your mindset or workflow when moving between the two?

DS: Academia rewards novelty – you spend a lot of time positioning your work relative to prior literature. Industry rewards impact – if a well-established approach works, that's a success, not a limitation.

Another difference is the audience. In academia, the primary reviewers are technical peers, so methods can involve a fair amount of sophistication and theory. In industry, the audience is often cross-functional, so methods that are transparent and explainable can build trust more easily.

As someone who works both as a professor in academia and a data scientist in industry, I find myself constantly switching between the two contexts. I try to remind myself of my audience; in industry, the stakeholders are ultimately interested in the bottom line, not the statistical methods.

How do you balance technical rigor with real-world impact in your current role, especially when working with interdisciplinary teams or stakeholders?

HZ: As a biopharma statistician, working closely with interdisciplinary teams and stakeholders is a core part of my day-to-day work. I believe technical rigor and integrity should always be our highest priorities, as they fundamentally define who we are as statisticians. We must uphold sound principles of statistical design and analysis, while also helping collaborators from other functional areas understand these principles.

At the same time, to enhance the real-world impact of our work, it is equally important for us to learn the language and perspectives of other functional areas. Communicating effectively–often in clear, layman-friendly terms–helps us work more efficiently with cross-functional teams.

I do not see a contradiction between technical rigor and real-world impact. In fact, I firmly

New Column: Experience-Sharing from Successful Young Researchers

believe that strong technical rigor leads to more meaningful real-world outcomes, and that insights from real-world applications, in turn, motivate us to pursue and achieve even higher levels of rigor.

XW: I am a firm believer that the future of statistics lies in its deep integration with domain-specific knowledge. Recent AI advance provides an unprecedented opportunity for statisticians to engage more deeply with broad contexts. I use AI tools as catalysts for understanding domain knowledge faster and for processing unstructured information that traditional methods might miss. By putting myself in the shoes of domain experts in an interdisciplinary team, I could earn the trust needed to drive technical rigor smoothly and ensure statistics serves as a powerful lens for solving complex, real-world problems.

Further, in an interdisciplinary team, I approach my role not as a passive supporting function for narrowly defined statistical questions, such as building a statistical model and/or running a hypothesis test. Instead, I act as a co-pilot of scientific discovery, contributing to every phase of decision making, from the initial conceptual design to the interpretation of findings. To be a successful statistician, I always enjoy being a 'bilingual' professional who can translate complex mathematical rigor into actionable domain insights. Ultimately, real-world impact is achieved when we stop treating a statistics question as an end in itself and start treating it as a powerful lens through which we are confident to solve the world's most complex, domain-specific problems.

QJJ: It doesn't have to be either-or. Even for people who don't do statistics for statistics' sake and care primarily about downstream applications, there is often a strong desire for assurance about the correctness of the methods being used, or understanding of the failure modes. At the same time, real-world constraints frequently inspire the right methodological questions to ask. In that sense, it's a two-way street, and in the best cases, each informs the other.

How do you approach the diversity of tasks in your work, such as research, data analysis, writing, project management, and communication? Do you have strategies for staying productive or avoiding burnout?

XW: I approach the diversity of tasks in my work not as a series of disconnected chores, but as a cohesive lifecycle. I find that context-switching between different topics and modes of thinking serves as a vital "mental refresh" that helps me avoid burnout. For instance, after a long marathon of intensive coding, I enjoy transitioning into quality grant writing. Although both are intellectually demanding, grant writing requires a shift in focus toward mastering descriptive skills and detailed narrative building, which is a refresh from the logic of programming. By viewing my responsibilities through this lifecycle lens, I can maintain high productivity across various domains– research, analysis, and communication–ensuring that each task informs and strengthens the others.

While I embrace a diverse workload, it is essential to stay on priority. To effectively manage simultaneous tasks, I set clear time boundaries that allow me to stay on priority and ensure that high-impact work is never compromised by lower-impact tasks. I am particularly mindful of avoiding 'priority clutter' that can lead one down unproductive rabbit holes. To counter this, I always protect a window for strategic planning and thinking before transitioning into the detailed execution.

Have you had any mentors who played a key role in your professional development? What did you learn from them, and how has that shaped your approach to mentorship or collaboration today?

HZ: I feel truly fortunate to have had many mentors throughout my career who have played significant roles in my development. When I began my PhD at MD Anderson Cancer Center, I was privileged to become a student of Dr. Ying Yuan. Clinical trial design has always been my passion and long-term career goal, and learning from a world-renowned researcher in this field gave me an exceptional foundation. His dedicated mentorship, remarkable work ethic, and unwavering diligence showed me exactly what it takes to achieve excellence.

After graduating from MD Anderson, I was fortunate to join the early oncology statistics group at Merck under the leadership of Dr. Cong Chen. Dr. Chen is the best biopharma statistician I could imagine–someone with an extraordinary instinct for identifying what truly matters and an endless stream of inspiring ideas. He taught us that statisticians should never be mere "calculators" for clinicians, but leaders who shape the direction of

clinical trials. His contributions were instrumental to the success of Keytruda, a perfect example of how statisticians can make real-world impact.

My current manager, Dr. Linda Sun, is the kindest person I have met in my career. With her deep expertise in both methodology and operations, she is always capable of resolving challenges with remarkable calmness and clarity. She is always the first person I turn to for guidance, and she continually inspires me to keep improving. There are many other mentors, role models, and peers who have shaped who I am today. I firmly believe that mentorship has been the most important influence in my career.

What advice would you give to students or early-career professionals looking to build a fulfilling career in statistics, biostatistics, or data science?

HZ: Here is my advice: 1) Beyond technical skills–which are always essential for statisticians–never stop improving your communication skills. Learn to explain complex statistical concepts in clear, layman-friendly language, and be confident in speaking up and asking questions. 2) Follow the paths of your mentors and learn as much as possible from their experience. Their guidance can shape your growth in ways that textbooks cannot. 3) Stay open-minded and avoid saying no too quickly. Take on as many opportunities as you can to demonstrate your value across different areas. 4) Think deeply and strive to provide meaningful insights. Build your unique strengths and leadership rather than focusing solely on routine tasks–those are the first to be replaced by AI.

XW: I would encourage everyone to cultivate an insatiable intellectual curiosity that extends beyond the boundaries of your specific thesis topics. Statistics, biostatistics, and data science are arguably the most dynamic fields in modern science. We are currently witnessing a period where the "frontier" moves every few months, if not every day. Many of the methodologies we consider state-of-the art (SOTA) today in causal inference and artificial intelligence simply did not exist a year ago. If you stop learning the moment you receive your graduate degree, your skillset will have a very short half-life. In addition, curiosity in statistics is not just about mastering the how of a statistical model or an algorithm; it is about having the intellectual drive to uncover the why behind the data itself. By seeking to understand the underlying meaning of our data, we ensure that our work is not just mathematically sound, but contextually significant and capable of solving real-world problems.

QJJ: Life, in many ways, is a reinforcement learning problem–and that's not always easy to internalize. As I've moved along in my career, I've come to realize that many people, especially early on, tend to make greedy decisions: they focus on what feels best in the moment and gravitate toward familiar paths. But as mathematics reminds us, that's rarely the best strategy when you're optimizing for long-term rewards. To avoid getting stuck in a local minimum or specializing too early, you need to strike a balance between exploration and exploitation.

So take your time. Be patient. Explore the world. Make mistakes and take the risks you need to figure out what you like. There are many ways to make meaningful contributions with statistics, and you don't want to be stuck with what-if's. Adapt and adjust as you go.

DS: Take opportunities to learn as much as you can and meet different people, especially mentors in potential career paths. Mentors do not necessarily need to be senior people; even an older classmate can help kickstart or advance your career. Also, keep an open mind about your career trajectory. When I was a student, I would never have imagined that I would have one foot in academia and another in industry– or that it would even be possible to do both!

Summary

In this virtual interview, three accomplished early- to mid-career researchers share their journeys into statistics and data science, reflecting on what inspired their career paths and how they found their professional niches. They discuss strategies for balancing technical rigor with real-world impact, staying current in a rapidly evolving field, managing diverse responsibilities, and preventing burnout. The panel also offers practical advice for students and early-career professionals, emphasizing lifelong learning, interdisciplinary communication, and the importance of curiosity. Together, their insights provide a thoughtful and inspiring resource for those navigating careers in statistics, biostatistics, or data science.

New Column: Experience-Sharing from Successful Young Researchers

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Tips for Moderating a Conference

Kelly H. Zou

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Over the years, I have chaired, moderated, or presented a fair share of conferences. Hence, I have observed a thing or two about what makes an electrifying session.

Below are a few tips for moderating a conference.

Practice Makes Perfect

Research all speakers, practice pronouncing their last names (surnames), review their bios, and familiarize with their work, especially a keynote speakers. Ironically, many times, my own last name (a rarity) is misspelled, while my middle name (again, another rarity) is relaxed by another much more common character in my home tongue. Preparations lead to informed questions and keep the momentum down the line.

Create a Trusting Atmosphere

Make sure all speakers comfortable, alert, authentic, and genuine. Explain the format in advance and encourage them to be themselves, not as actors or imposters.

Keep it Succinct

Keep opening introductions welcoming but concise and to the point. Let's get the first session started, not making the audience want to fast-forward. The lineup of that first speaker is critical, as he or she sets the stage for later citations throughout the day.

Ask Inqusitive Questions

Encourage dialogues by asking open-ended and inquisitive but not overly intimidating questions that spark insightful responses. Avoid dry binary questions or ones that can be too nuanced, leading to "it depends - well, how much time do we have, another day" to explain?

Listen Attentively

Pay close attention to speakers' contents and to follow up or respond thoughtfully. Attention shows respect to help with the flowing and momentum.

Watch the Pace

Keep the conversation flow at a good pace. Don't drag on too long, but also don't rush through important points. As a moderator, make it unified and interactive, not just a plate of loose sand (a Chinese idiom).

Handle Debates with Care

If disagreements arise due to difference in polarizing opinions, remain calm and neutral to facilitate a respectful dialogue. Encourage speakers to share their unique perspectives to be constructive, rather than argumentative. It can be useful to prepare a two-sided time reminder at the last 10- and 5-min marks.

Know Your Audience

Encourage audience's participation by briefly poling its preference, taking thought-provoking Q&A, or incorporating interactive elements such as Slido. Let the audience be invested throughout the entire summit for a valuable and memorable experience. Speed networking fairly early on can make them more willing to share thoughts and ifeas.

Remain Flexible

Things won't always go as planned. Be prepared to adapt to last-minute cancellations, unexpected weather, technical issues such as A/V, or multimedia glitches. Have a Plan B handy without scrambling as the show must go on.

Spark Interests

Moderating a conference can be a blast! Share deep passion to keep all informed and wanting to follow up after such experience!

Report From Outreach and Engagement (O&E) Committee

Dandan Liu

Highlights from the ICSA Annual Banquet at the 2025 JSM

The ICSA Annual Banquet at the 2025 Joint Statistical Meetings (JSM) in Nashville, Tennessee was truly a memorable and unique event. Held on August 6, following the member meeting, 115 attendees were transported by two pre-arranged charter buses to the iconic General Jackson Showboat for an unforgettable dinner cruise.

The evening began with an elegant southern-style buffet dinner, offering attendees a taste of classic regional cuisine. After dinner, guests were treated to stunning views of Nashville's skyline along the Cumberland River as the sun set, creating a picturesque backdrop for the evening's entertainment. The highlight of the evening was the high-energy stage show featuring live performances that celebrated Nashville's musical heritage. From country legends and bluegrass pioneers to rock 'n' roll favorites, performers wowed the audience with dazzling costumes, powerhouse vocals, and a dynamic live band, bringing the spirit of Music City to life on the Cumberland River. The banquet was offered at an exceptional value, with special ticket pricing of $60 for adults (compared to the standard group rate of $96) and $30 for children aged 12 and under. Proceeds from ticket sales covered meals, taxes, and tips, ensuring that the event was both affordable and enjoyable for all attendees.

The success of the banquet was made possible by the incredible teamwork and dedication of ICSA officers and the local committee. Special thanks go to Hongyu Zhao, Jun Zhao, Xin He, Grace Li, and Chengsheng Jiang for their invaluable contributions to organizing the event. Additionally, the Vanderbilt University Medical Center Biostatistics graduate students deserve recognition for their outstanding support in staffing the ICSA booth and distributing dinner cruise tickets.

This one-of-a-kind banquet was a shining example of collaboration and community, leaving attendees with cherished memories and a shared appreciation for the spirit of ICSA and the vibrant culture of Nashville.

Dandan Liu, PhD 2025 JSM Local Committee Chair, ICSA
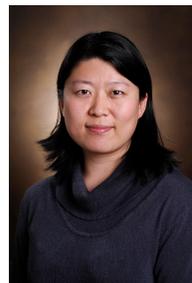
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ICSA Mentor-Mentee Program: Introduction and Progress Update

Yushi Liu, Hanfei Xu, Jun Zhao, Xun Chen, Wei Shen, Hongzhe Li, Hongyu Zhao and Hongtu Zhu

The International Chinese Statistical Association (ICSA) Mentor-Mentee Program (IM²) is a pioneering initiative aimed at empowering the next generation of statisticians. Recognizing the unique challenges faced by junior statisticians particularly those transitioning from academia to industry. Our IM² Program provides a structured and supportive platform for professional growth. The transition from academic environments to industry roles often involves adapting to new collaborative settings, evolving communication expectations, and navigating both internal and external influences. To address these challenges, the IM² Program was established to facilitate experience sharing and mentorship, thereby easing this critical career shift.

The mission of the IM² Program is to better prepare junior statisticians for industry careers by leveraging the expertise of seasoned professionals. The program's primary goal is to foster interactive discussions between experienced mentors and junior statisticians, offering guidance, career development, and practical insights. In addition to supporting individual growth, the program seeks to enhance ICSA's visibility, strengthen industry-academia collaboration, and cultivate a vibrant, supportive community within the statistical profession.

The IM² Program is structured as "Mentoring Lounge," a Zoom-based session where selected mentors who have at least three years of industry experience, engage in open, interactive dialogue with mentees. Each session focuses on a specific industry sector, such as pharmaceuticals, finance, or data science, and encourages mentees to ask questions. Registration for mentees is open to ICSA members and membership is free for students. Only registered participants receive the meeting link, ensuring a safe and focused environment for mentorship.

The inaugural session of the ICSA Mentoring Lounge took place on October 1, 2025, marking a significant milestone for the IM² Program. This highly interactive Zoom session lasted just over an hour and featured a distinguished panel of mentors from leading pharmaceutical companies: Margaret Gamalo (Pfizer), Wei Shen (Eli Lilly and Company), and Xun Chen (Abbvie). The session was moderated by Yushi Liu and Hanfei Xu, who facilitated the dynamic exchange between mentors and mentees.

Around 30 participants joined live out of a total of 72 registrants. Mentees actively participated by raising questions both beforehand and during the meeting, contributing to a lively and engaging discussion. Topics addressed during the session included the role of artificial intelligence in the industry, internship opportunities, geographic differences in the statistician's role, personal branding, and other relevant issues facing statisticians as they transition to industry roles.

Feedback collected through a post-session survey was extremely positive, with participants highlighting the value of direct access to industry experts and the opportunity to ask questions directly from the audience. Many attendees appreciated the practical insights and career guidance provided by the mentors. Suggestions for improvement included offering opportunities for in-person mentor-mentee meetings, reflecting a desire for even deeper engagement and networking within the community.

The first Mentoring Lounge not only offered valuable insights and advice but also helped build a sense of community among participants. Guided by an ad hoc committee and supported by the ICSA Webinar and IT teams, the IM² Program is designed to promote the value of mentorship within the statistical community.

In summary, the ICSA Mentor-Mentee Program represents a significant step forward in supporting statisticians to address critical gaps in their careers. Through its structured mentorship model and commitment to industry-academia collaboration, the program is poised to make a lasting impact on both individual participants and the broader statistical community.

Upcoming Events

Please find below a list of upcoming ICSA meetings. This list also appears on the ICSA website. Meetings not included in this list are not official ICSA meetings. If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Jun Zhao, the ICSA Executive Director (`executive.director@icsa.org`).

The 11th Workshop on Biostatistics and Bioinformatics

Biostatistics and Bioinformatics have been playing key and important roles in statistics and other scientific research fields in recent years. The goal of the 11th workshop is to stimulate research and to foster the interaction of researchers in Biostatistics & Bioinformatics research areas. The workshop will provide the opportunity for faculty and graduate students to meet the top researchers, identify important directions for future research, and facilitate research collaborations. The workshop will be held at Atlanta, GA.

A keynote speaker is Dr. Ming Yuan, Professor of Statistics, Department of Statistics at Columbia University.

For detailed information including registration, please refer to `https://math.gsu.edu/yichuan/2026Workshop/`

Please contact Dr.Yichuan Zhao (yichuan@gsu.edu) for more information.

Student paper awards competition in 2026 ICSA Applied Statistics Symposium

We are delighted to invite you to participate in the 2026 Applied Statistics Symposium (Chair: Lily Wang, lwang41@gmu.edu), to be held June 14–17, 2026, at George Mason University, Arlington, Virginia. The International Chinese Statistical Association (ICSA) warmly encourages you to apply for the Student Paper Awards and showcase your research at the symposium. Detailed information about this award is available at `https://symposium2026.icsa.org/awards-grants/`. The submission deadline is April 15, 2026.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Student Paper Competition Committee chairs, Professors John Stufken (jstufken@gmu.edu) and Guoqing Diao (gdiao@gwu.edu).

Report from ICSA Webinar Sub-Committee

Qing Yang

Over the past two years, the ICSA Webinar Sub-Committee has built a robust platform and successfully delivered 14 high-quality webinars and panel discussions. These sessions have attracted a total of over 2300 registrants and 1190 attendees. Beyond knowledge sharing, the series has fostered a strong sense of community among professionals, providing a valuable space for learning, connection, and growth. The recordings of all webinars are available on: https://www.youtube.com/@ICSA-Webinar. The webinar subscriber list has over 800 members and it is growing.

In addition, we have also supported the Mentor-Mentee Committee in launching its mentor–mentee lounge, further advancing ICSA's mission to promote collaboration and professional development. Looking ahead, we are excited to introduce a new webinar series highlighting trending topics published in ICSA-sponsored journals, including Statistica Sinica and Statistics in Biosciences. Stay tuned for upcoming sessions and opportunities to engage with cutting-edge research.

Table 1. Attendance Summary for ICSA Webinars in 2024 and 2025

Time	# of registrants	# of attendants
Feb 2024	213	122
Mar 2024	125	90
Apr 2024	123	67
May 2024	166	95
Oct 2024	123	97
Nov 2024	123	50
Feb 2025	100	50
Mar 2025 (1)	122	54
Mar 2025 (2)	268	93
Apr 2025	113	63
May 2025	117	48
Sept 2025	223	124
Oct 2025	281	133
Nov 2025	210	104
Total	**2307**	**1190**

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