Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I am pleased to report that the business of ISBIS is proceeding without undue surprises or upsets. Our organization is financially strong, professionally active, and extremely visible. The credit for that success is entirely due to the energy and commitment of its membership.

First, a celebratory announcement. Vijay Nair has been selected to give the William Sealy Gosset Lecture at the World Statistics Congress in Marrakech, Morocco. This is our society's most distinguished recognition, and Vijay's long record of research achievement and professional leadership makes him a pre-eminent choice. Incidentally, Vijay has recently moved from academics back to industry, and he is now a statistical consultant in the Corporate Model Risk Group of Wells Fargo Bank.

Second, I encourage everyone to visit our new website, at http://www.isbis-isisi.org/. We owe a vote of thanks to our webmaster, Lindsay Berry, for freshening it up and adding new content. If people have suggestions for additional content or ISBIS relevant announcements, they should email her at lrb38@stat.duke.edu and cc me at banks@stat.duke.edu.

Third, I hope everyone received the email I sent on behalf of the nominating committee, soliciting nominations for new ISBIS officers. The committee is chaired by Nalini Ravishanker, the incoming ISBIS president. Their work is proceeding rapidly, and we should have a slate of candidates ready in time for election in the spring.

Fourth, the 2017 ISBIS conferences in Iran and at IBM are taking shape. The dates of the Iran conference have had to change (due to circumstances beyond our control). The dates are now set for September 3-5. The reports from Kristina Lurz and Julie Novak that appear in this newsletter provide more detail on both meetings.
Fifth, I am very pleased (and grateful) that Teresa Oliveira, Amilcar Oliveira, and Rahim Mahmoudvand have compiled the abstracts from the ISBIS 2016 meeting in Barcelona into an abstracts book, which is now posted on our website. They intend to publish a collection of the papers that were presented at that meeting as well, and presenters and posterers are warmly encouraged to submit their work for inclusion. Teresa’s email address is Teresa.Oliveira@uab.pt and she is the contact person for such submissions. (Warning: It is not absolutely certain that this conference proceedings will roll forward -- it depends in part on the number of people who are willing to submit papers. But it seems like a very good thing to try, and it would be a service to many of our members.)

Sixth, there are many other projects that are coming along. There will be special ISBIS sessions at ENBIS and other meetings, and ISBIS sponsored workshops in developing nations. We have applied for World Bank funds to support additional activities, and we are working closely with the ISI and other ISI associations.

In short, ISBIS is doing very well.

Sincerely,

David Banks, ISBIS President

The *ASMBI* Report

Are you aware that refereeing for ASMBI entitles the reviewers to a 30% discount on Wiley books? This is quite a saving (although you could get even more, 35%, just from becoming an ISBIS member). In any case, the discount is just a small gift for the contribution that referees give to ASMBI (and ISBIS). We are always looking for careful, knowledgeable and quick referees, able to provide thorough reviews. If interested in becoming a referee for ASMBI, please send me a message to fabrizio@mi.imati.cnr.it.

Wiley is also promoting the use of the ORCID identifier when submitting a paper to ASMBI. In this way it will be easier to identify all the publications by an author. Although not compulsory, authors are warmly invited to provide this identifier (and get one, if they do not have one yet). Talking about submissions, I strongly invite you to submit your best papers to ASMBI and also to read the journal (free to ISBIS members), get ideas from its papers and cite them in your works. All this would help ISBIS a lot in achieving one of its goals: the diffusion of sound methodologies in the B&I community, and move ASMBI forward in getting a more prominent role. The journal is available at http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1002/(ISSN)1526-4025.
The forthcoming issue (the last for 2016) will contain papers (mostly on financial math this time!) on:

- Pricing Asian options of discretely monitored geometric average in the regime-switching model
- Multi-period mean variance portfolio selection under incomplete information
- Optimal scheduling of inspection times in a production process with a finite planning horizon
- Wood property relationships and survival models in reliability
- The Heston model with stochastic elasticity of variance
- An ideal way of obtaining an optimal inspection permutation for a system with components connected in series
- Model selection of switching mechanisms for financial time series
- Security design and firm dynamics under long-term moral hazard
- The efficiency of CUSUM schemes for monitoring the coefficient of variation
- Nonparametric conditional autoregressive expectile model via neural network with applications to estimating financial risk

Three new special issues from conferences have been approved:

- **13th Workshop on Stochastic Models, Statistics and Their Applications** to be held on February 20-24, 2017, at the Humboldt University in Berlin, Germany (https://www2.hu-berlin.de/smsa2017/)
- **17th Conference of the Applied Stochastic Models and Data Analysis International Society**, to be held in London, UK, on June 6-9, 2017 (http://www.asmda.es/)
- **10th International Conference on Mathematical Methods in Reliability (MMR 2017)**, which will take place in Grenoble, France, on July 3-6, 2017 (http://mmr2017.imag.fr).

The papers from conferences are subject to the usual tough ASMBI refereeing process since we would like to ensure uniformity in the quality of our papers. We are very interested in well established conferences where excellent contributions are expected. We cannot publish many special issues out of conferences but I would like to hear from you if you have ideas about special issues and discussed papers.

Keep an eye on the **ASMBI** webpage since the first issue of 2017 should be a very special one whereas the second one should contain a very promising paper with very stimulating discussions. I am using the conditional since I am in the hands of the referees and the authors who have to revise their papers!

Best regards.

Fabrizio Ruggeri, *ASMBI* Editor-in-Chief (fabrizio@mi.imati.cnr.it)
Dear colleagues and friends,

Our efforts over the recent months have been focused on the organization of our forthcoming conference y-BIS 2017 - Hamedan, Iran. We would like to bring to your attention a date change for the conference. Due to a presidential election in Iran scheduled recently for May 2017, our conference has been moved to September 3-7, 2017. The conference preparations are going very well (see the detailed conference announcement below). We are delighted to report that we have secured the participation of seven distinguished keynote speakers from Iran and abroad. We warmly invite both members and non-members of the ISBIS to consider participating or just attending the conference. Everyone is welcome! Hamedan is the capital city of the Iranian Hamedan province. It has many historical and natural sites to offer. Conference updates will be provided in forthcoming issues of the newsletter and in the conference website.

Kristina Lurz, Vice-President for y-BIS Members

y-BIS 2017 – Modern Methods in Insurance Pricing and Industrial Statistics
Bu Ali Sina University, Hamedan, Iran
3-5 September 2017

http://thiele.au.dk/events/conferences/2017/modernmethods/

Jointly organized by the Bu Ali Sina University, Hamedan; the Thiele Centre, Aarhus University; and y-BIS; the purpose of the conference is to bring together junior and senior academics and people working in insu-
rance and other areas of industrial statistics applications. We also aim to strengthen the links between the respective communities in Iran and abroad. The venue of the conference is Bu Ali Sina University in Hamedan, Iran. Registration as well as additional information is available through [http://thiele.au.dk/events/conferences/2017/modernmethods/](http://thiele.au.dk/events/conferences/2017/modernmethods/).

We are delighted to report that among the confirmed keynote speakers are

- **Hansjoerg Albrecher** (Université de Lausanne)
- **Jens Perch Nielsen** (University of London)
- **Søren Asmussen** (Aarhus University)
- **Jens Perch Nielsen** (Cass Business School)
- **Alireza Edalati** (Karlsruhe Institute of Technology)
- **Amin Hassanzadeh** (Shahid Beheshti University)
- **Amir Safari** (University of Stavanger)

Furthermore, we are exploring the possibility to offer short courses and workshops of approximately half a day during the conference on topics of interest within the field of industrial statistics. We will keep you updated on the topics.

Hamedan, the home city of our co-organizer and host **Rahim Mahmoudvand**, is located about 360 kilometres southwest of Tehran. With approximately 500,000 habitants, Hamedan is believed to be among the oldest Iranian cities and one of the oldest in the world. It is in a green mountainous area in the foothills of the 3,574 m height Alvand Mountain, in the Midwestern part of Iran. Among the attractions are the special nature of this old city, its historic sites and the Ali Sadr cave, the world's biggest water cave. Continuing a tradition of y-BIS conferences, we are planning a social event in the course of the conference to one of the above or similarly exciting places.

We are looking forward to your participation and contributions! Spread the word and we hope to see you next year in Hamedan.

[Head picture: *The Tomb of Avicenna*, Hamedan, Iran]

Best wishes,

Kristina Lurz, on behalf of the Organizing Committee
In this first ISBIS - Statistics in Business Analytics Conference, we explore how businesses increase efficiency, support decision-making under uncertainty, improve operations, and ultimately transform their business by using statistics.

There will be parallel sessions spanning three days tackling various topics presented by leading practitioners from industry and academia. Three highly influential statisticians will deliver the keynote addresses:

- **Brenda Dietrich**, IBM Fellow and VP
- **Merlise A. Clyde**, Professor of Statistical Science, Duke University
- **Moorea Brega**, Sr. Director, Data Science, Premise Data

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**Brenda Dietrich**

**Merlise A. Clyde**

**Moorea Brega**
Social

This will be an opportunity to **network** and learn about the statistical challenges that arise in different organizations. We will be hosting evening events (including a gala) after the sessions to give participants the opportunity to get to know each other.

Topics

Some key **topics** that will be presented at the conference are statistics for social good, statistics to improve marketing operations, statistics for finance, statistics in climate, statistics in medical industry, and many more.

Students

Students will have the opportunity to present a **poster** of their research related to business analytics. For further details and to apply, visit the website [http://www.isbis2017.com/posters](http://www.isbis2017.com/posters).

Organizers

The organizing committee consists of Beatriz Etchegaray Garcia (IBM Research), Marian Farah (the Climate Corporation), Julie Novak (IBM Research), Angela Schoergendorfer (Google), Hongxia Yang (Alibaba Group), and Tahir Ekin (Texas State University).

Contact

For further information or questions on **ISBIS 2017 - Statistics in Business Analytics**, please do not hesitate to contact the organizers at isbis2017@gmail.com.

Julie Novak and Beatriz Etchegaray Garcia, on behalf of the Organizing Committee
Lunch Roundtable Discussion Sessions for the ISI WSC 2017
July 16-21, 2017
Call for Proposals

After the successful introduction at the 2015 ISI World Statistics Congress (WSC) in Rio de Janeiro, the 2017 ISI WSC in Marrakech will offer again Lunch Roundtable Discussions (LRTDs).

A lunch roundtable discussion is an opportunity to enjoy fellowship and conversation with colleagues about a statistical concept, method, or practice while also having lunch. These discussions provide a great chance to interact and to network with fellow participants.

We invite you and your colleagues to submit any ideas that you feel would make for a good lunch roundtable discussion for the 2017 WSC. Here are the LRTDs presented at 2015 WSC:

- Statistical Sciences in the Era of Big Data
- What Statistics says about how the peoples in rural areas in the middle of Amazonia's heart live
- Urban/rural classifications - can we do better?
- How young statisticians associations help in raising statistical awareness, empowering and qualifying young statisticians to lead the statistical work in the future
- Assessment Methodology for Rare and Endangered Plant/Animal Species and its Improvement
- Statistics, Machine Learning & Big Data
- Statistics from gender perspective for overall development and wellbeing
- What do we do about the 'literacy' in statistical literacy, at the college level?
- Bayes and Big Data
- Communication strategies for statistical information: A common interest of national and international producers of statistics
We would love to receive proposals from any ISI member, from each Association and Special Interest Group and from partnerships. This would be a great opportunity to highlight common interests and collaboration between associations and special interest groups. Ideally, each ISI Association and Special Interest Group should organize and host or co-host one or more lunch roundtables.

Logistical details for the lunch roundtable:

1) Roundtables will take place from Monday to Friday during the WSC. They will be organized by general theme/topic.
2) Each table will accommodate a maximum of 10 registered participants plus a discussion leader. Note that preregistration of at least 6 participants is required for a lunch roundtable to be offered.
3) Lunches will be available for all attendees at a cost of €15. Tickets will be available for purchase when you register for the WSC. Any remaining seats will be sold onsite until 2 p.m. the day before the lunch. Regular and vegetarian meals will be available. The discussion leader will receive their lunch for free.
4) During the registration process, participants will be prompted to select a specific discussion table of interest, where they will then be served their lunch.

To propose a lunch roundtable, please submit the following information using the online submission system at www.isi2017.org:

a) Name and contact information for the person who will lead the discussion;
b) Title for the lunch roundtable;
c) Short description/abstract for the roundtable discussion topic;
d) One-two key questions that would be shared with participants to prepare for a productive discussion.

Please note that those who agree to be discussion leaders at an LRTD are making a commitment to attend the WSC, and thus must follow the same registration rules as valid for speakers, namely to register by May 22, 2017.

Submissions will be possible from 15 November 2016 to 24 January 2017. Final decisions will be made by February 7, 2017.

For queries, please contact the Chair of the LRTD Committee, Fabrizio Ruggeri, at fabrizio@mi.imati.cnr.it.
ENBIS SPRING MEETING 2017: CALL FOR PAPERS

Predictive Maintenance and Reliability with Big and Complex Data

Schlägl, Upper Austria

May 28-30, 2017

http://www.enbis.org/activities/events/current/533_ENBIS_Spring_Meeting_2017/

The 2017 ENBIS Spring Meeting will focus on predictive maintenance and reliability with big and complex data. It will take place from Sunday, May 28th (arrival late afternoon) to Tuesday, May 30th (departure in the afternoon) in the monastery of Schlägl in Upper Austria.

Industrial statistics and in particular reliability engineering is a strongly growing field of interest as technical products determine more and more our daily life (communication, mobility, logistics, energy, nutrition, etc.). This dependence motivates the importance of high reliability of processes and devices.

The 2017 ENBIS Spring Meeting will contribute to the discussion of current problems and challenges in reliability and maintenance and to the exchange of knowledge among experts from industry, consultancy and academia. The meeting will focus on the application of statistical methods in the contemporary big data and internet of things context, where the sustained flow of failure and maintenance data can be of great value for forecasting and decision making if properly integrated with data analytic methods. Targeting a mixed audience from industry, academia and consulting business the meeting will provide excellent opportunities for discussion and networking between different disciplines and professional groups.
Highlights of the ENBIS 2017 Spring Meeting include:

- A keynote address by Christopher Gray (Uptime Engineering GmbH) on the role of statistics in data-driven predictive maintenance systems.
- A keynote address by Jan Post (Philips and University of Groningen) on data driven process control based on a combination of real time data and integrated modelling.
- An interactive problem-solving session.
- A software session showcasing resources and demonstrating solutions offered by well-known computing environments of JMP and MATLAB.
- A number of contributed sessions featuring presentations from both industry (on successful applications, including railway maintenance, electronics for photovoltaic power plants, automotive, smart industry and more) and academia (on new aspects in the areas of reliability and predictive maintenance).

Cultural Spot: a guided tour through the monastery.

Dinner revolving around the topic “Statistics & Beer” including the practical testing of participants' taste buds reliability.

Contributions are welcome on the illustration of particularly challenging reliability and maintenance problems, as well as on methodologies such as stochastic modelling, association modelling and data analysis methods designed for big data.

You are cordially invited to submit your abstract no later than February 26th, 2017. Please go to www.enbis.org, log in and search for ENBIS Spring Meeting 2017 under Upcoming Events. If you are not already a member of ENBIS, please join first (note there is no membership fee for individual members of ENBIS).

Practical details on travel and accommodation will be available on the ENBIS Web soon. The early-bird registration fee (up until March 19th, 2017) is EUR 200; afterwards it will be EUR 250.

Queries can be addressed to the ENBIS Permanent Office (office@enbis.org) or directly to Co-Chairs of the Programme Committee Nikolaus Haselgruber (nh@cis-on.com) and Antonio Pievatolo (antonio.pievatolo@mi.imati.cnr.it).

ENBIS Permanent Office
ENBIS – the European Network for Business and Industrial Statistics – is a platform where statistical practitioners and academic statisticians from Europe and beyond meet, exchange ideas and design new projects. Individual membership of ENBIS is free.

Many ENBIS network activities are web-based, but some take place face-to-face. Spring meetings are always dedicated to a special topic (e.g. data mining, reliability, DOE, etc.), whereas the annual conference (which traditionally takes place every September) hosts presentations from a wide variety of sectors, ranging from manufacturing to service, from private to public sector. Conference contributions can consist of introductions and overviews (presenting an area of expertise to the uninitiated), reviews (presenting state of the art advances in scientific research), and best practice communications (sharing experiences of practitioners). In short: the annual conference features both theoretical and practical papers. In addition, people from industry and business are invited to present their problems and current solutions and pick the brains of other conference participants to find better solutions than their current ones.

The annual conference session topics include, but are not limited to, the special areas of interest that exist within ENBIS (formalized in the so-called Special Interest Groups). The non-exhaustive list includes:

- Design of Experiments.
- Measurement Uncertainty.
- Process Modelling and Control.
- Reliability and Safety.
- Statistics in the Pharmaceutical Industry.
- Statistical Computing.
- Operational Risk Management.
• Statistics in Practice.
• Stochastic Modelling.
• Quality Improvement and Six Sigma.
• Data Mining and Warehousing.
• Machine Learning.
• Predictive Analytics.
• Statistics in the Shipping Industry.
• Statistics for Ergonomics.
• Customer Satisfaction.
• Categorical Data Analysis for Quality Improvement.

Additionally, the annual conference also features distinguished keynote speakers (George Box, Blanton Godfrey, Stu Hunter, Doug Montgomery and David Hand are just a few well-known names from a long list of recent speakers), invited and contributed sessions, workshops and panel discussions, as well as pre- and post-conference courses.

The 17th Annual Conference of the European Network for Business and Industrial Statistics (ENBIS: www.enbis.org) will be hosted by the University of Naples Federico II in Naples (Italy). It will take place at the university’s Conference Center from 10th to 14th September, 2017.

To register as a member of ENBIS, please visit www.enbis.org.

Please also visit www.enbis.org for up-to-date information on ENBIS-17 - or contact the ENBIS Permanent Office (office@enbis.org), Chair of the ENBIS-17 Programme Committee Jean-Michel Poggi (Jean-Michel.Poggi@math.u-psud.fr) or the Co-Chairs of the ENBIS-17 Organizing Committee Biagio Palumbo (biagio.palumbo@unina.it) and Amalia Vanacore (amalia.vanacore@unina.it).

ENBIS Permanent Office
2017 SMSA workshop:
13th Workshop on Stochastic Models, Statistics and Their Applications
Humboldt University of Berlin, Berlin, Germany
February 20-24, 2017
https://www2.hu-berlin.de/smsa2017/

Organized by the Society of Reliability, Quality and Safety, this workshop will be at the Humboldt University of Berlin, 20-24th February 2017. Continuing the successful previous workshops, the conference will put together a program on recent advances and trends in areas related to stochastic modeling, statistical inference and their applications. Contributions motivated by or addressing issues in engineering, reliability analysis, industry and natural sciences are particularly welcomed, as several focused sessions are devoted to such topics. The workshop aims at facilitating the exchange of research ideas, stimulating collaboration and promoting young researchers.

Contributed Talks are highly welcomed and can be submitted until December 15th, 2016.

On the occasion of the workshop, a special issue of Applied Stochastic Models in Business and Industry (ASMBI) will be published. (see Call for Submissions on page 16 of this issue)

Plenary Talks will be given by:
- Holger Dette (Ruhr University Bochum, Germany)
- Allan Gut (Uppsala University, Sweden)
- Jana Jurečková (Charles University Prague, Czech Republic)

Two invited sessions with partnering organizations have been organized: A "Session on Stochastic Models in Technology, Quality and Reliability" with the German Statistical Society and a session on "Business and Industrial Statistics" with ENBIS.
Further invited sessions will cover the following topics:

- Analysis, Testing and Change Detection in High Dimensions
- Bootstrap and Nonparametric Curve Estimation
- Cluster Analysis
- Discrete-Valued Time Series
- Distance-Based Statistical Methods
- Energy Statistics
- Errors-in-Variables Models
- Functional Data Analysis
- Graphical Models and Networks
- High-dimensional Problems in Engineering
- Machine Learning
- Multivariate Distributions and Copulas
- Nonparametric Methods
- Nonparametric Regression and Density Estimation
- Optimal Decisions in Change Point Models
- Panel Data
- Sequential Experimental Design
- Simultaneous Statistical Inference
- Statistics for Stochastic Processes
- Statistical Process Control for Time Dependent Data
- Survival Analysis and Reliability
- Time Series Analysis and Forecasting

For more information about the workshop visit [https://www2.hu-berlin.de/smsa2017/](https://www2.hu-berlin.de/smsa2017/).
Call for Papers – *ASMBI* Special Issue

**Recent Trends in Stochastic Models, Statistics and Their Applications**

We are delighted to announce that *Applied Stochastic Models in Business and Industry (ASMBI)*, the research journal of the International Society for Business and Industrial Statistics (ISBIS), will publish a special Issue containing a selection of high-quality papers presented at the 13th Workshop on “Recent Trends in Stochastic Models, Statistics and Their Applications”.

The topics of interest include:

- Big data and data science
- High-dimensional problems and modelling
- Statistical machine learning
- Nonparametric models
- Statistics in industry and technology
- Statistics in natural science
- Reliability and quality
- Process control
- Change detection
- Survival analysis
- Copulas

**Guest Editors:**

**Adam Krzyzak** (Concordia University, Canada)

**Ansgar Steland** (RWTH Aachen University, Germany)

Paper submission: All papers must be prepared in accordance with the standards and guidelines of *ASMBI*, submitted via the journal's online system and will be peer reviewed.

*Ansgar Steland, on behalf of the Workshop Organizing Committee*
The 5th International Symposium on Statistical Process Monitoring (ISSPM)
Chung-Ang University, Seoul, South Korea
July 3-7, 2017
http://isspm2017.cau.ac.kr

Following the success of the first four symposia, the 5th ISSPM (2017) is being organized by the Department of Applied Statistics of Chung-Ang University. The main conference objectives are: (i) to discuss original and high-quality research and (ii) to bring together a number of statistical process monitoring (SPM) researchers and foster new collaborations. All SPM related topics are of interest.

Among the research fields of interest are:

- univariate and multivariate control charts
- parametric and nonparametric SPM
- Bayesian procedures
- adaptive control techniques
- design and optimization of control procedures
- SPM for special types of applications (profile monitoring, multi-stage processes, high-dimensional data, services, health, etc.)

ISSPM 2017 will keep the successful format of the four first meetings, with personal invitations as well as pre-conference (on July 3) and post-conference (on July 7) tours.

Scientific Committee:
Sotiris Bersimis (University of Piraeus, Piraeus, Greece), Giovanna Capizzi (Padua University, Padua, Italy), Philippe Castagliola (Université de Nantes, Nantes, France), Eugenio K. Epprecht (PUC-Rio, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), Ross Sparks (CSIRO, Sydney, Australia), Kwok Leung Tsui (City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong), William H. Woodall (Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, USA), and Changsoon Park (Chung-Ang University, Seoul, South Korea),

Local Organizing Committee:
Jaeheon Lee, You-Jin Park, Changwon Lim and Beom Seuk Hwang, all from Chung-Ang University, Seoul, South Korea.
Anyone interested in participating in the conference, please contact Professor Changsoon Park by e-mail: cspark@cau.ac.kr by the end of January, 2017.

With warm regards,

Changsoon Park, on behalf of the Organizing Committee

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One-day Workshop on Survival Analysis 2017 (WSA2017)
Centro de Estatística e Aplicações da Universidade de Lisboa
Lisbon, Portugal
January 27th, 2017
http://survivalanalysis.weebly.com/

The One-day Workshop on Survival Analysis (WSA2017) will take place in Lisbon on January 27th, 2017, being organized by the Research Centre CEAUL (Centro de Estatística e Aplicações da Universidade de Lisboa), and also integrated in the activities of the Biometry Section of SPE (Sociedade Portuguesa de Estatística).

The workshop will include presentations by invited speakers and posters (up to three submitted posters will be selected for oral presentation).

The invited speakers are:

Fabrizio Ruggeri (CNR-IMATI Milano, Italy)

Antonio Carlos Pedroso de Lima (Universidade de São Paulo, Brazil)

Bernard Rachet (London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, United Kingdom)

Jacobo de Uña-Álvarez (Universidad de Vigo, Spain)

The main goal of this workshop is to bring together national and international researchers and practitioners, who are working in the field of survival analysis, as well as reliability, duration analysis and event history analysis, including their applications in Medicine, Biology, Engineering, Economics, Sociology, Environment, Public Health, etc.
Important dates:

- **24 October 2016**  Registration and abstract submission beginning
- **21 December 2016**  Abstract submission deadline
- **6 January 2017**  Notification of abstract results
- **18 January 2017**  Registration deadline

The Workshop has a maximum number of 50 participants. The official language of the Workshop is English. Students (Bachelor/Master/PhD) may apply to a full reduction of the workshop registration fee.

For the Portuguese speaking community, there is also a short course, reviewing theory and some applications in survival analysis, by the professors Cristina Rocha and Ana Luísa Papoila at the same location on January 26th, 2017.

Further details can be found at [http://survivalanalysis.weebly.com/](http://survivalanalysis.weebly.com/), including the pdf workshop flyer.

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10th International Conference on Mathematical Methods in Reliability (MMR 2017)

July 3-6, 2017

Grenoble, France


The **10th International Conference on Mathematical Methods in Reliability (MMR 2017)** will be held in Grenoble, France, on July 3-6, 2017. The MMR conferences serve as a forum for presenting the latest advances of research in the mathematical theory of reliability and risk management (stochastic modeling, statistical inference, optimization, decision support,...), as well as their applications (aging, maintenance, degradation, prognostic and health management, monitoring, warranty, lifetime data analysis,...). Its objective is to bring together the best international experts in the field, both from academy and various industrial sectors such as energy, aeronautics, automobile, telecommunication, etc. As a major international forum on reliability, it attracts increasing number of researchers from all countries around the world.
MMR 2017 is organized by the Grenoble Institute of Technology and Université Grenoble Alpes. It will be held at the brand new building of GreEN-ER, at Grenoble Institute of Technology, which is located in the center of Grenoble. Grenoble is the capital of the French Alps and is France’s second most important centre of scientific research and high-tech industry after Paris. Grenoble is known for its great museums, excellent dining, outstanding quality of life and superb public transport system. Host of the 1968 Winter Olympics, the city center is the focal point for a metropolitan area of over 650,000 inhabitants, 60,000 of them students. Surrounded by the mountain ranges of Chartreuse, Vercors and Belledonne, the city lies on the bank of the river Isère. In Grenoble, you can enjoy city life and wildlife at the same time, enjoy winter and summer altogether, mountain hikes and contemporary art exhibitions on a same day, you may strongly support sustainable development and be keen on archaeology, too.


Olivier Gaudoin, Chair of the MMR 2017’s Organizing Committee
Highlighting Interesting Articles that are NOT in the Statistics Literature

- “50 Years of Data Science,” David Donoho,
  http://courses.csail.mit.edu/18.337/2015/docs/50YearsDataScience.pdf

Data Science has become a rallying cry for universities, research organizations, and many commercial and industrial companies. We are surrounded by ever increasing amounts of data and by myriad methods and algorithms to take advantage of them. Rallying cry aside, no one seems to be very clear about just what IS data science. With the not surprising consequence that everyone with a vested interest claims it as their native turf, from business analysts to IT specialists to computer scientists. Statisticians are also in the fray, though (as too often in the past) we seem to be a bit late on the scene. David Donoho’s essay is a wonderful journey into the statistical underpinnings of data science and to the fundamental roles that statistical thinking and concepts must play in any sophisticated view of data science. The essay was originally written for presentation at a meeting celebrating the 100th anniversary of John Tukey’s birth; Tukey was one of Donoho’s teachers as an undergraduate at Princeton. Many themes in the essay were inspired by Tukey’s classic 1962 article on *The Future of Data Analysis*. He builds on those themes, bringing in many other developments in statistics and in deriving meaning from data. Donoho goes beyond a mere recounting of our accomplishments to set out his own ideas about just what is the science in data science, and he finds that statistical principles are fundamental to making the field into a true science. Here again he harkens back to Tukey – one of the basic tenets in his article was his declaration that data analysis is indeed a science. Donoho’s essay is at once deep and broad. And yet there is so much to cover that I am sure all of you will find additional topics that you would have liked to see included. With all the current hype about data science, this essay is a valuable and instructive read for any statistician who wants to make the case for statistics in data science in her or his organization. Put it on your reading list.


A 2008 (November 11) New York Times article trumpeted the success of Google Flu Trends (GFT) in tracking the progress of annual influenza outbreaks in the United States. The GFT assessments used data on search words to estimate the number of individuals affected with influenza like illness (ILI). By comparison to the official tracking results of the US Center for Disease Control (CDC), GFT appeared to be just as accurate and
much more rapidly available – after all, search word counts can be collated on line by Google whereas the CDC estimate required more laborious data collection from sentinel clinics throughout the US. However, subsequent years began to show serious discrepancies between GFT and official data, leading to skepticism about the value of such immediate, but indirect, data for real time tracking tasks. Researchers began to take a more careful look at the data and the methodology and identified a number of statistical flaws in the GFT approach. In turn, their work stimulated a number of major improvements. This article by Yang, Santillana and Kou presents a statistical model that very effectively uses Google search data to track influenza outbreaks. The model is named ARGO – for AutoRegression with Google search data. The model does not use only the search counts; it is much more sophisticated, while still keeping to some simple principles. The main features are that it also incorporates the CDC data as they become available (at a time lag behind the search counts), it reflects seasonality as estimated from past years and it exploits changes in users’ search behavior over time. Failure to adjust for such trends was one of the reasons for a substantial overestimate by GFT of the 2012 influenza outbreak. This is a fascinating example showing how clear statistical thinking and understanding can be an essential component in exploiting “big data” opportunities.


MIS Quarterly is a management and information science journal that publishes many articles that make interesting and unusual use of data. A good example is the forthcoming article by Geva et al., which exploits internet data for sales prediction. Their work builds on many previous articles that use data from social media websites to predict offline economic outcomes such as sales. However, they also point to many limitations in social media value: it may be unrepresentative, inducing biases, and even intentionally manipulated. An alternative option is to use data from search engine logs for prediction. Although free from the above weaknesses, these data also have limitations, for example that it is impossible to know if a search has resulted from a positive or negative sentiment toward the product. This article is the first to combine these sources of data for the purpose of prediction. Specifically, the authors look at the prediction of automobile sales in the US. The social media data are extracted from Google’s comprehensive index of Internet discussion forums; the search engine log data come from Google search trend data. The authors find that significantly better predictions result when combining the two types of data than when using either one or the other alone. An interesting finding is that the improvement in predictive power is especially strong for “value” care brands, but for “premium” brands, the improvement is less pronounced.
Dr. Julie E. Novak is a Research Staff Member at the IBM T.J. Watson Research Lab in Yorktown Heights, New York, USA.

Julie was born in Staten Island, New York. She attended high school at the Poly Prep Country Day School in Brooklyn, NY. To pursue her undergraduate studies, Julie left the United States and moved to Montreal, in the neighboring Canadian province of Quebec. There she earned a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics from McGill University.

As is often the case with many young minds with diverse interests and abilities, Julie went to college not quite sure of what she wanted to be. By then she had graduated from the prep division of Mannes College of Music. She dreamed of becoming a concert pianist, but that was not realistic at that time.

Out of all her subjects in school, Julie had a preference for French and Math. So she decided on two majors: French and Math. At McGill in Montreal these subjects are offered in two separate schools: School of Arts and School of Sciences. She applied to both schools and was accepted. After her freshmen year, Julie originally planned to do a standard mathematics undergraduate program. However she was challenged by her math friends to go into the most advanced math program, “Math Honors”. She is one of those who love challenges so she could not resist! The summer before graduation, she did a biostatistics research internship under the guidance of Prof. Robert Platt, building a model for predicting gestational age based on a mother’s characteristics. This internship led Julie to start thinking about graduate education in Statistics or Biostatistics.

After her Canadian foray, Julie returned to the USA for her graduate studies. She obtained a Ph.D. in Statistics in 2015 from the Wharton School at University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. The Wharton School has one of the top graduate statistics departments in the world. Julie studied under the supervision of Prof. Shane Jensen from the Statistics department and Prof. Eric Bradlow from the Marketing department. Her thesis work focused on Bayesian hierarchical modeling to handle missing data in marketing.
Since finishing her Ph.D., Julie has been working on building models for business process improvement. She is focusing on Marketing and Finance related questions. At IBM Research, Research Staff Members split their time between academic research and industry problems.

The industry problems can be either internal business problems or work for clients. Julie is currently working on two internal (non-client) projects. In the first one, she appraises current and next quarter revenue for IBM. These assessments are provided on a weekly basis as they obtain updated internal financial and sales data. This is done for the entire IBM business – all their geographies across the world and all their divisions. Since the time series patterns are very different for these combinations and they need a weekly process that is as accurate as possible for all of them, they use an ensemble of time series and regression models that are weighted differently for each Geo/Division combination.

The second internal project is a marketing analytics project. She is analyzing what makes IBM Marketing Campaigns most “effective” — specifically when it comes to creating new leads with potential clients. IBM has a variety of different strategies to sell their products: they host events, send emails, make phone calls, etc. IBM has a rich time series dataset of campaigns they held. There is information such as where and when they were held, what sorts of strategies were involved in each of these campaigns, and what “marketing actions” they took on their potential clients.

For academic research, Research Staff Members work on writing papers to be published in academic journals and present their work at conferences. For Julie, this work often stems from the problems that she solves for IBM. For example, her work on Forecasting for Hierarchically Structured Organizations was driven by the revenue projection project that she was involved in. Part of this work was the basis for her talk “Bayesian Time Series Forecasting for Hierarchically Structured Organizations” presented at the ISBIS 2016 conference held in Barcelona, Spain in June. This year, Julie also attended the International Symposium on Forecasting (ISF), the International Society for Bayesian Analysis world meeting (ISBA), and the Joint Statistical Meeting (JSM). In addition to internal IBM reports, Julie’s articles have appeared in The American Statistician and Trials.

It is worth mentioning that IBM produces IBM Watson Analytics, a data analysis and visualization program that guides data discovery and predictive analytics with automatic visualizations. The program is publicly available for purchasing.
Q. What attracted you to statistics?

A. I always enjoyed problem solving. I knew that I wanted to pursue something applied after my undergraduate training. I wanted to use my mathematics abilities to answer real world problems and I wanted my work to have an impact. After taking a couple of statistics courses at the end of my undergraduate degree and working on summer research in the McGill Biostatistics Department, I realized that statistics was a field in which you can be creative, solve real world problems, and make an impact. I also liked that I can work in many different application areas – by choosing statistics, I can solve medical, finance, or business questions. I don’t have to limit myself to one field.

Q. In addition to statistics, what other interests do you have?

A. In addition to statistics, I enjoy playing the piano and attending classical concerts. I am fortunate to live in New York, as there are so many wonderful venues for classical and jazz music, like Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center. I also love to travel – I think we are very lucky as researchers to be able to attend conferences all over the world. It gives us a chance to find collaborators and learn what new research is being developed in our field. Then afterwards, we can explore a new city or country that we may not have the chance to visit otherwise. This past summer, I spent a month in Europe traveling and attending three conferences – ISBIS in Barcelona, ISBA in Sardinia, and ISF in Santander. After Santander, I traveled the North of Spain (Bilbao, San Sebastian) and spent a few days in Madrid.

Q. You have fresh experience in finding a job. What advice can you give to a young person in the field of business and industrial statistics in search of a job?

A. I have two main pieces of advice. The first would be, as my Ph.D. supervisor Shane Jensen told me, not to take your first job offer. Apply to many different places and weigh your options once you have multiple responses. Many people I knew were very nervous about finding a job, and took the first one they got, without discovering other potentially better suited options for them. My second piece of advice would be to strongly take into consideration whether you like the people you will be working with. When I came for my interview at IBM Research, I really admired the people I spoke to, and wanted to be part of this community. I greatly respect my manager, Yasuo Amemiya. He spends a lot of time with his team and I am always learning from him.
NEWS AND OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

International Statistical Institute

In the recent International Statistical Institute (ISI) election, the following ISBIS members were elected to high-level posts in the ISI:

- **Fabrizio Ruggeri** (Italy), Vice-President, 2017-2021
- **Kwok Tsui** (Hong Kong), Council Member, 2017-2021
- **Martina Vanderbroek** (Belgium), Council Member, 2017-2021

They have previously or currently served in the ISBIS Executive and Council. Prof. Ruggeri has been a long-standing Editor-in-Chief of ISBIS journal *Applied Stochastic Methods in Business and Industry*. They take their posts in **August 2017**.

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Editor’s Notes

Dear ISBIS members,

The dominant feature in this issue is the large number of announcements of conferences and workshops on business and industrial statistics methods to take place within a year around the world. Two of them are organized by our Society, and two others will provide publication material for two special issues of *ASMBI*. A very active time indeed! We are pleased to make *ISBIS News* the vehicle to spread the word on activities related to business and industrial statistics. Please send us word of anything being organized in this arena at local, regional, national or international levels.

I am very grateful to Dr. **Julie Novak** from the IBM Thomas J. Watson Research Center in the USA for accepting to be profiled in this issue of *ISBIS News*. As a researcher, Julie works on interesting business analytics problems at IBM. Julie is also a young and active member of ISBIS, who participated in the Barcelona conference this year, and a leading organizer of ISBIS 2017 (see announcement on pages 6-7 of this issue).

The section on **Highlighting Interesting Articles** features three very interesting entries in this issue. We are very grateful to **David Steinberg** for his work in searching for, selecting the articles and putting together the summaries. David is always in the look for new interesting articles, please forward him any leads at dms@post.tau.ac.il.

Thanks to **Yili Hong** and **David Steinberg** for their constant great help with *ISBIS News*. Also to everyone who contributed to this issue.

Happy and safe holidays to everyone!

Román Viveros-Aguilera, Editor of *ISBIS News*

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