



INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR BAYESIAN ANALYSIS

# THE ISBA BULLETIN

OFFICIAL BULLETIN OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR BAYESIAN ANALYSIS

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Igor Prünster  
[president@bayesian.org](mailto:president@bayesian.org)

Also 2021 is coming to an end. It has been a year of ups and downs, alternating hardship and resumption, but foremost a year of uncertainty, which will accompany us also into 2022. As with all other change-points in history, our adaptation skills took over and we are slowly finding a new normalcy, even amidst setbacks and frustration. From a professional perspective it is undeniable that we all learned a lot: among many other things, organizing and giving talks at virtual conferences, entertaining scientific collaborations on Zoom and teaching remotely or in hybrid format. This allowed us to appreciate the inclusiveness of 'online life'. A striking example has been the ISBA World Meeting featuring 2,128 participants, an inconceivable number for in-person meetings. Still, as confirmed from many conversations I had with colleagues, most of all we are missing informal interactions. These have been pivotal to an incredible amount of scientific breakthroughs in the past – the inspiring interviews regularly published in *Statistical Science*, currently edited by former ISBA President Sonia Petrone, are a testimony to this. Unfortunately they have not found a satisfactory online surrogate. Personally I find the absence of informal interactions extremely worrisome, especially for the professional development of our junior colleagues. This has been a constant discussion topic within ISBA's Executive Committee, Program Council and Board of Directors during the

last two of years and led to two important decisions:

- **Membership fees for students and early career researchers:** In the best ISBA tradition of focusing on junior support, we approved a drastic reduction of membership fees for junior scholars from 2022 onwards. In particular, this concerns:
  - *Student membership:* Students [defined as individuals enrolled in a degree program] now pay a symbolic fee of 5 USD/year instead of 30 USD/year;
  - *Reduced membership:* in addition to individuals residing and working in countries with GNI not exceeding 6000 USD/person, now also early career researchers [defined as individuals who have graduated from a degree program in the last 5 years] can benefit from the reduced membership rates, which means a membership fee of 30 USD/year instead of 80 USD/year.

### IN THIS ISSUE

FROM THE EDITOR  
NEWS FROM THE WORLD  
FROM THE PROGRAM COUNCIL  
JUNIOR ISBA  
UPDATES FROM BA

Please help us spread the word and encourage students and junior colleagues to join. Let me also stress that the membership fees of all of us are vital to ISBA: we need a large membership base in order to continue supporting junior Bayesians, our genuinely open-access journal *Bayesian Analysis* and inclusive scientific meetings. **Please renew!**

- **2022 ISBA World Meeting:** Postponing our World Meeting, scheduled for June 25 – July 1, 2022 in Montreal, would have been the easiest option. However, the common sentiment among ISBA executives is that we should face the uncertainty and take some risk (within reason) on our way towards finding a new normalcy for our scientific lives. Therefore, the plan is to go full steam ahead with a much-needed in person meeting and celebrate ISBA's 30th anniversary all together. Enjoying our informal interactions would be fantastic: for most of us it would be 'once again', but for quite some students it would be a first and we owe it to them! We are obviously also considering contingency plans, but only as a last resort. Our attitude is best summarized by our Past President, Sylvia Frühwirth-Schnatter, who wrote that she "will travel to Montreal whatever it takes".

Let me thank Alexandra Schmidt, Chair of the Local Organizing Committee, for her tireless efforts in this adventure. Organizing a conference is hard work, under current circumstances it is a constant headache. Thank you, Alex!

After a successful virtual ISBA 2021 and a hopefully equally successful in-person meeting in 2022, going forward ISBA will have to find the right mix and rotation of in-person, hybrid and virtual meetings. As for all other scientific societies finding the balance between scientific impact, inclusiveness, outreach, human touch and complex budget considerations will not be an easy task.

Finally I would like to express my gratitude to Sylvia Frühwirth-Schnatter, the Past President, and Feng Liang, the Executive Secretary, who are completing their terms at the end of 2021. It has been a great pleasure to interact on an almost daily basis with them. I learned a lot from them. At the same time I would like to extend a warm welcome to Amy Herring, who will join the Executive Committee as President Elect, and to the new Executive Secretary Donatello Telesca.

A special note of thanks goes also to Michele Guindani for his exemplary Editorship of *Bayesian Analysis*. It is comforting to know that our journal is in equally good hands with the incoming Editor in Chief, Mark Steel. Also Athanasios Kottas has completed his term in the Program Council after doing a wonderful job earning him ISBA's Certificate of Appreciation. Moreover, I would like to thank the outgoing Board Members Eduardo Gutierrez Pena, Beatrix Jones, Ioanna Manolopoulou and Nancy Reid for their dedicated service and welcome the newly elected Board Members Julyan Arbel, Thais Fonseca, Li Ma and Sara Wade. Our sections are also in great shape with a large number of new officers taking over in 2022 to continue the excellent work done by their outgoing predecessors.

My term is also coming to a end. A sincere thanks to the ISBA membership for having given me the opportunity to serve this community, which I consider home since my PhD days. It has been a great privilege. There are still some pending initiatives regarding ISBA's junior support, which I plan to complete in 2022 as Past President. Stay tuned!

I look forward to seeing all of you in Montreal for the World Meeting.

Stay safe!  
igor

## FROM THE EDITOR

Gregor Kastner

[gregor.kastner@aau.at](mailto:gregor.kastner@aau.at)

My first year as the editor of the Bulletin ceasing, and it is time for a shout-out. First off, to my team. Associate Editor Francesco Denti did a wonderful job compiling reports about past meetings as well as announcements about upcoming ones. For those who would like their conference covered in the Bulletin, please contact Francesco directly, and he will be happy to include it in his column. Associate editor Anton Westveld, in charge of the *Features* section, is always on the hunt for insights into various areas of Bayesian use-cases. His next feature is planned for the March issue, so stay tuned!

But what would the Bulletin be without the officers reporting about their respective areas? The ISBA president traditionally has the honorable duty of opening the Bulletin in their *Message from the President*. This year, it was Igor Prünster who was in charge, taking over from Sylvia Frühwirth-Schnatter, and handing over to Sudipto Banerjee. Then there is the program council with news about ISBA-sponsored and ISBA-endorsed events. This year, it was Botond Szabo's turn to keep us in the loop. Also, it has become a welcomed tradition to regularly hear from j-ISBA, and Sally Paganin was never late to report! Last not least, thanks go to Michele Guindani who updated regularly about *Bayesian Analysis*, our flagship journal.

Special features this year included an extensive report about JASP and an obituary for Donald Fraser by Christian Genest in the March issue, alongside various announcements of awards and prizes, too numerous to detail here.

To conclude, let me emphasize that the *ISBA Bulletin* is *your* outlet. So please do not hesitate to contribute in whatever way you think suitable; be it sketches of ideas or whole pieces. For those considering taking on a regular column as an associate editor, please simply drop me a note. Variatio delectat!

## NEWS FROM THE WORLD

Francesco Denti

[fdenti@uci.edu](mailto:fdenti@uci.edu)

### Reports from Important Events and Conferences

#### **BIRS-CMO Workshop on Foundations of Objective Bayesian Methodology**

*by the members of the Organizing Committee*

The BIRS-CMO Workshop on Foundations of Objective Bayesian Methodology took place in a hybrid format from November 28 to December 3, 2021, in the city of Oaxaca, Mexico.

The aim of this workshop was to bring together researchers working on objective Bayesian methodology, Bayesian non-parametric methods, and machine learning. The program (available [here](#)) included 30 talks, with 12 delivered in-person and the remaining 18 online. Each talk was scheduled for 45 minutes, including the discussion. All of the talks were live-streamed via Zoom, and most of them can be watched or downloaded from [this link](#).

The meeting had a good mix of junior (Ph.D. students, postdoctoral trainees, and junior faculty) and senior presenters. An effort was made to maintain gender and geographical diversity even though the latter was somewhat limited by pandemic-related travel restrictions, the participants being in different time zones.

While this meeting was not sponsored by ISBA, we believe this information can be of interest to ISBA members who might want to organize a similar one in the future. Information for prospective applicants is available at [this link](#).

The Casa Matemática Oaxaca (CMO) in Mexico, and the Banff International Research Station for Mathematical Innovation and Discovery (BIRS) in Banff, Canada, are collaborative Canada-US-Mexico ventures that provide an environment for creative interaction as well as the exchange of ideas, knowledge, and methods within the mathematical sciences, with related disciplines and with industry. Other BIRS partners include the Institute for Advanced Study in Mathematics (Hangzhou, China) and the Institute of Mathematics at the University of Granada (Spain). Further details can be found [here](#).

## Upcoming Meetings, Conferences, and Workshops

- The **13th International Conference on Bayesian Nonparametrics (BNP13)** will be held in Puerto Varas, Chile, from October 24 to October 28, 2022. Important information about the conference is available at [this link](#). More information will be added as it becomes available.

BNP13 will feature individual contributed oral presentations and posters. The deadline for contributed talk and poster proposal submission is February 1, 2022. The results will be announced by March 15, 2022.

- The next **ISBA world meeting** will take place in Montreal between June 25 and July 1, 2022.

The meeting aims to bring together the diverse international community of investigators in statistics who develop and use Bayesian methods to share recent findings and present new and challenging problems. Submissions for contributed talks and posters proposals are open until January 15, 2022. One can find more info at [this link](#).

- The **Joint Statistical Meetings (JSM)** is the largest gathering of statisticians and data scientists held in North America. The 2022 JSM will be held in Washington, DC. The conference is scheduled for August 6-11, 2022.

Presentations may be given on any topic of statistical interest; however, authors are encouraged to submit papers on the theme set by 2022 ASA President Kathy Ensor, "Statistics: A Foundation for Innovation." Additionally, abstracts with a primary focus on statistical applications are encouraged. The abstract submission is open and closes on February 1, 2022. More info at [this link](#).

- The **CBMS Regional Conference in the Mathematical Sciences** is tentatively scheduled for Summer 2022 and will take place at the University of California Santa Cruz.

The topic of the conference is *Bayesian Forecasting and Dynamic Models*. This conference will facilitate the introduction to the area by providing a comprehensive review of Bayesian modeling and forecasting tools. The conference will feature three principal lecturers that will deliver ten main lectures. More details can be found at [this link](#).

- The **12th European Seminar on Bayesian Econometrics (ESOB 2022)** is scheduled for September 8 and September 9, 2022 in Salzburg, Austria. Keynote and invited speakers are already confirmed, and a Call for Submissions will be going out soon. More and always up-to-date information can be found at the [conference homepage](#), and general information about ESOBE can be found [here](#).

## And don't forget:

- Don't miss the **series of monthly webinars** organized by the Bayesian nonparametric section of ISBA (**BNP-ISBA**). The next webinar will be on January 12, 2021. Check [this link](#) for more details.

## FROM THE PROGRAM COUNCIL

Botond Szabo

[program-council@bayesian.org](mailto:program-council@bayesian.org)

## ISBA World Meeting 2022

Although there are still many uncertainties regarding the covid pandemic, the Executive Committee, Local Organizing Committee and Program Council are in accordance to organize an in-person meeting. We all very much look forward to meeting in person again, and we find it especially important to give the opportunity to junior researchers to meet in person with the whole community, for many of them for the first time in their academic career. At the same time, we closely monitor the pandemic situation and we will turn to contingency plans if needed. Nevertheless, we are optimistic about organizing the meeting as planned, in Montreal. We would like to thank Alexandra Schmidt, Chair of the Local Organizing Committee for her enormous efforts under such uncertain and therefore stressful circumstances.

The Program Council is working with the Scientific Committee on the Scientific Program of the conference. We already have an excellent line-up of Foundational, Keynote and Named lecturers, as well as the entire invited sessions program; please refer to the [website](#) for details.

There are currently three ongoing calls. The deadline for submitting a contributed talk or poster presentation is January 15, 2022 and we aim to complete the review by the end of February. The deadline for applying for junior travel support is January 31, 2022 and we plan to notify the applicants within one month after the deadline. Finally, we have also asked the community to submit short course proposals and prospective participants to suggest topics of interest. The deadline for submission is January 15, 2022 and we will communicate the decisions of the Scientific Committee by mid February. All online application/submission forms are available at the [conference webpage](#) under the "News" section.

## Changes in the Program Council

First, I would like to thank Thanasis Kottas, who is completing his three years long term in the Program Council, for his dedicated work and for serving in the Scientific Committee in two consecutive ISBA world meetings. It has been a great pleasure to interact with you, I have learned a lot from you in the past two years. My term as Program Chair is also coming to an end, from January onwards Matthias Katzfuss will take over this position.

## (Co-)Sponsorship/Endorsement Requests

If you are planning a meeting and would like to request financial sponsorship (or co-sponsorship) or non-financial endorsement from ISBA, please submit your request to the program council at

[program-council@bayesian.org](mailto:program-council@bayesian.org). Detailed information on how to submit a request for either sponsorship or endorsement can be found at <https://bayesian.org/events/request-sponsorshipendorsement/>.

## Upcoming ISBA-sponsored/endorsed events

1. 1st BNP Networking event, April 25-29, 2022, Nicosia, Cyprus
2. ISBA 2022 World Meeting, June 25-July 1, 2022, Montreal, Canada
3. NSF-CBMS Conference on “Bayesian Forecasting and Dynamic Models”, University of California, Santa Cruz, CA, USA (Postponed to Summer 2022)
4. O’Bayes 2022, September 7-10, 2022, University of California, Santa Cruz, CA, USA
5. BNP 13, October 24-28, 2022, Puerto Varas, Chile

## JUNIOR ISBA

Sally Paganin

[spaganin@hsph.harvard.edu](mailto:spaganin@hsph.harvard.edu)

## Blackwell-Rosenbluth Award

The past months have been exciting for the j-ISBA community, with the first edition of the **Blackwell-Rosenbluth Award** taking place! The award selects 3 outstanding junior Bayesians from the UTC+ and UTC- regions, consisting of the time zones UTC+0 to UTC+13 (e.g. Africa + Asia + Europe + Oceania) and the time zones UTC-12 to UTC-1 (e.g. North America + South America). The nominees from one region are evaluated by the scientific committee consisting of researchers from the other region. We are happy to announce and congratulate the winners:

### UTC+ winners

- **Marta Catalano**, Warwick University
- **Samuel Livingstone**, University College London
- **Dootika Vats**, Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur

### UTC- winners

- **Trevor Campbell**, University of British Columbia
- **Daniel Kowal**, Rice University
- **Yixin Wang**, University of Michigan

All the winners received a 3-year free ISBA and j-ISBA memberships and presented their research at two special events of the Junior Bayes Beyond the Borders (JB<sup>3</sup>). The events took place on November 10 and November 12, hosted by Bocconi University and Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM), respectively. The winners delivered exciting and interesting talks, and abstracts are still



available [here](#). Finally, we wish to thank all the members of Scientific Committees, who provided timely and thoughtful evaluations, working side-by-side with the j-ISBA liasons (Willem van den Boom and Aki Nishimura).

**UTC+ Scientific Committee:** Kerrie Mengersen (Chair), Daniele Durante (vice-Chair), Willem van den Boom (j-ISBA Liaison), Julyan Arbel, Clara Grazian, Peter Green, Gregor Kastner, Yongdai Kim, David Nott, Yasuhiro Omori, Lucia Paci, David Rossell, Stéphanie van der Pas, Sara Wade.

**UTC- Scientific Committee:** Steve MacEachern (Chair), Lorin Crawford (Vice-Chair), Akihiko (Aki) Nishimura (j-ISBA Liaison), Yves Atchade, Andres Christen, David Dahl, Ernest Fokoue, Hedibert Lopes, Luis Nieto-Barajas, Alexandra Schmidt, Surya Tokdar, Sinead Williamson, Yanxun Xu.

We are already looking forward to the second edition of the Blackwell-Rosenbluth award!

## j-ISBA Elections

Elections have been held between late October and mid-November, and winners have been chosen by the j-ISBA community. We are grateful to all the candidates for their willingness to serve in the board!

Congratulations to the new j-ISBA officers, Alejandra Avalos-Pacheco (Harvard University), Cecilia Balocchi (University of Torino), and Fan Bu (UCLA), who will join the j-ISBA board from January 2022 as Chair-elect, Secretary and Program Chair. Big thanks to the departing officers, Roberta De Vito, Aki Nishimura and Willem van de Boom for having invested their time and energy in strengthening the j-ISBA section during the past two years.

## j-ISBA Community

Finally, we wanted to share that the j-ISBA community is growing. Earlier this year we had about 120 members and we currently reached 170, thank you all! You can join our section with only 5\$ with your ISBA membership. Now is the perfect time to become an ISBA member as membership fees has been reduced: 5\$ for students and 30\$ early career researchers (i.e. within 5 years of having completed a PhD). As j-ISBA section, we are enthusiastic about the ISBA attention toward junior researchers. We look forward to a new year full of exciting activities!

We are happy to hear from the community, so get in contact with us via [Facebook](#), via [Twitter](#), or via email at [jisba.section@gmail.com](mailto:jisba.section@gmail.com)!

## UPDATES FROM BA

Michele Guindani  
[micheleguindani@gmail.com](mailto:micheleguindani@gmail.com)

## December 2021 issue

The December issue of *Bayesian Analysis* is dedicated to the Lindley Prize, which is awarded every two years to a manuscripts that is judged important, timely and notably original in Bayesian statistics. The Prize is named for Dennis V. Lindley, and recognizes the impact and importance of his work in the foundations, theory and application of Bayesian Statistics, and his marked influence on the evolution and spread of the discipline, over many decades. To compete, a manuscript has to be

presented at an ISBA World Meeting and accepted for publication in the journal *Bayesian Analysis*. The December issue contains eleven papers (including two Discussion papers). The winner of the 2020 Lindley Prize will be announced at the 2022 ISBA World Meeting in Montreal. According to tradition, a call for submissions of manuscripts competing for the forthcoming 2022 Lindley Prize will be issued later in the Summer.

## Call for Open Discussion

The manuscript *Bayesian Nonstationary and Nonparametric Covariance Estimation for Large Spatial Data* by Brian Kidd and Matthias Katzfuss has been selected for publication as a Discussion paper in a future issue of BA. You can find the manuscript clicking on this [link](#) in the Advance publication section of the journal website. We welcome public contributions to the Discussion of the manuscript. The contributions should be no more than two pages in length, using the [BA latex style](#). They should be submitted to the journal using the [EJMS submission system](#) before February 9th, 2022.

## Change of the guard

Starting December 15th, 2021, all new submissions to *Bayesian Analysis* are handled by Prof. Mark Steel and the new editorial team, who will be in charge of the journal for a three-year term, till December 2024. I would like to thank all the members of the editorial team who have helped me over the past three years. They have done an outstanding job in maintaining the quality of the manuscripts accepted in the journal, and increasing the standing of the journal in our community (now ranked 14th out of 125 journals in the *Science Citation Index Expanded category of Statistics & Probability* with a 2020 JIF of 3.728). I send Prof. Steel and the new editorial team my best wishes in their new endeavor!



### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**President:** Igor Prünster  
**Past President:** Sylvia Frühwirth-Schnatter  
**President Elect:** Sudipto Banerjee  
**Treasurer:** Marian Farah  
**Executive Secretary:** Feng Liang

### PROGRAM COUNCIL

**Chair:** Botond Szabo  
**Vice Chair:** Matthias Katzfuss  
**Past Chair:** Athanasios Kottas

### BOARD MEMBERS

**2021–2023:**  
Veronica Berrocal, Cathy W.S. Chen, David Dahl, Mario Peruggia

**2020–2022:**  
Francois Caron, Miguel de Carvalho, Nial Friel, Laura Ventura

**2019–2021:**  
Beatrix Jones, Ioanna Manolopoulou, Nancy Reid, Eduardo Gutiérrez-Peña

### EDITORIAL BOARD

#### Editor

Gregor Kastner  
[gregor.kastner@aau.at](mailto:gregor.kastner@aau.at)

#### Associate Editors

*Features*  
Anton Westveld  
[anton.westveld@anu.edu.au](mailto:anton.westveld@anu.edu.au)

*News of the World*  
Francesco Denti  
[fdenti@uci.edu](mailto:fdenti@uci.edu)