



INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR BAYESIAN ANALYSIS

THE ISBA BULLETIN

OFFICIAL BULLETIN OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR BAYESIAN ANALYSIS

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Amy Herring

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As many ISBA members settle in for a new academic term, planning for the 2024 ISBA World Meeting in Venice is hitting its stride. Updated information to help with planning for accommodations and childcare will soon appear on the website. Program Council Chair Sinead Williamson later in this issue provides a link to a survey to help us bring the most useful childcare options to our members; please be sure to complete it if you are considering using the service. After reviewing options used by Venice conferences and meetings in summer 2023, which ranged from cost-effective babysitting and camps at a local pool to high end options like Vogacamp (honestly, I wanted to participate!), I am confident we will be able to point members towards multiple options at a variety of price points. Our Sponsorship Committee is making great progress, and we expect to provide options for childcare subsidies to our members, as we did in Montreal in 2022. Stay tuned for more details.

Contributed abstract submission is now open, and we expect again this year to be able to provide substantial travel support for junior researchers to attend our meeting, thanks again to the hard work of our committees and organizers. Please consider attending the meeting and exchanging ideas with us! As always, one high-

light of the meeting will be presentation of ISBA Awards; while this year our Savage Awards finalists presented at the JSM, next year the finalists will present their excellent doctoral work at our World Meeting. You can read more about our most recent Savage and Mitchell Prize winners later in this issue.

Our meetings calendar provides information about many other great meeting options between now and our world meeting, and I encourage you to check out those options. Note that jISBA's BAYSM meeting in November 2023 will be online and completely free for jISBA members. This will be a great forum for exchange of ideas that does not require any travel at all. In addition, jISBA is once again coordinating a session during the October 10 International Day for Women in Statistics and Data Science – see details at <https://www.idwsds.org> – another free, virtual event.

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ISBA ELECTIONS: CANDIDATES

This month we're excited to present the slate of officers for our November ISBA election. I would like to extend very special thanks to Past President and Chair Sudipto Banerjee and the Nominating Committee (Drs. Veronica Berrocal, Luis Gutierrez, Ioanna Manolopoulou, Bernardo Nipoti, Sonia Petrone, and Jason Xu) for their work, which has resulted in an outstanding set of volunteers who are willing to work on behalf of ISBA. I am quite grateful to these members, and indeed all of our ISBA volunteers, for their work on behalf of ISBA to date and their willingness to do even more to further Bayesian analysis. You'll find more information about this great group of candidates later in this issue.

Finally, I'd like to send a hearty congratulations to Drs. Andee Kaplan and Ben Shaby who did a fabulous job organizing the first EnviBayes meeting earlier this month. The science was just as amazing as the scenery, and in her plenary address, Dr. Amy Braverman praised the "extraordinarily interesting workshop," a sentiment shared by Dr. David Dunson, who earlier remarked, "This is a great meeting; I'm having so much fun." I heartily concur and hope this is just the first in a continuing series of intellectually stimulating events.



FROM THE EDITOR

Gregor Kastner

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I am excited to share yet another Bulletin with you. This quarter, we feature a section about the ISBA awards (Savage and Mitchell), an interview with the EnviBayes planners (Ben Shaby and Andee Kaplan), updates from the program council, news from j-ISBA, our regular communiqué from the Bayesian world, and a note about the possibility to publish "with ISBA". Last but not least, check out the list of candidates for the ISBA 2023 elections!

AWARDS

Sergios Agapiou and Xiaojing Wang

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This year, the ISBA Awards Ceremony was held in Toronto, Canada during the Joint Statistical Meeting (JSM) on August 8th, 2023, at the reception of the Section on Bayesian Statistical Science (SBSS) of the American Statistical Association (ASA). The ISBA Awards Ceremony was conjoined together with the announcement of ASA SBSS student paper awards. The event was attended by more than a hundred colleagues, who celebrated the different achievements of young and not so young statisticians in our Bayesian community. It was likely the first mask free award event of our Bayesian community since COVID, and it was great to meet so many colleagues face to face.

On behalf of ISBA prize committee, we want to acknowledge all the intense work for our Savage Award and Mitchell Prize Award sub-committee members. Without their hard work and dedication of their personal time, our committee work would have not been completed so smoothly. Thus, we want to thank them again for their great contribution to our community.

Regarding the 2022 awards bestowed during the Award Ceremony, we would like to congratulate the following awardees:

Savage Award 2022 in the Category Applied Methodology

Winner:

- Emily Wang for her thesis entitled “Bayesian State-Space Models with Variable Selection for Neural Count Data” (Supervisor: Marina Vanucci);

Honorable mention:

- Zhao Tang Luo for his thesis entitled “Bayesian spanning tree models for complex spatial data” (Supervisors: Huiyan Sang and Bani Mallick);
- Paul Parker for his thesis entitled “Bayesian unit-level modeling of non-Gaussian survey data under informative sampling with application to small area” (Supervisor: Scott H. Holan).

On behalf of the ISBA Prize Committee, we are very grateful to David Rossell, who chaired the 2022 Applied Methodology Savage Award sub-committee, and all colleagues who were a part of it: David Nott, Yanxun Xu, Clair Gormley, Jeffrey Miller and Sylvia Kaufmann.

Savage Award 2022 in the Category Theory and Methods

Winner:

- Edwin Fong for his thesis entitled “The predictive view of Bayesian inference” (Supervisor: Chris Holmes);

Honorable mention:

- Matteo Giordano for his thesis entitled “Asymptotic theory for Bayesian nonparametric inference in statistical models arising from partial differential equations” (Supervisor: Richard Nikl);

- Saifuddin Syed for his thesis entitled “Non-Reversible Parallel Tempering on Optimized Paths” (Supervisors: Alexandre Bouchard-Côté);
- Yixin Wang for her thesis “Multiple Causal Inference with Bayesian Factor Models” (Supervisor: David M. Blei).

On behalf of the ISBA Prize Committee, we are very grateful to Long Nguyen, who chaired the 2022 Theory and Methods Savage Award sub-committee, and all colleagues who were a part of it: Pierpaolo De Blasi, Víctor Elvira, Clara Grazian, Athanasios Kottas, Lizhen Lin, Jeff Miller, Vinayak Rao, Tommaso Rigon, Botond Tibor Szabo and Yun Yang.

Mitchell Prize 2022

Winner:

- Andrew Zammit-Mangion, Michael Bertolacci, Jenny Fisher, Ann Stavert, Matthew Rigby and Yi Cao for their paper “WOMBAT v1.0: A Fully Bayesian Global Flux-Inversion Framework” published in *Geoscientific Model Development* (2022), 15: 45-73.

Honorable mention:

- Andrew J. Holbrook, Xiang Ji and Marc A. Suchard for their paper “From viral evolution to spatial contagion: a biologically modulated Hawkes model” published in *Bioinformatics* (2022), 38 (7): 1846-1856.
- Gonzalo E. Mena, Pamela P. Martinez, Ayesha S. Mahmud, Pablo A. Marquet, Caroline O. Buckee, Mauricio Santillana for their paper “Socioeconomic status determines COVID-19 incidence and related mortality in Santiago, Chile” published in *Science* (2021), 372 (6545): eabg5298.

On behalf of the ISBA Prize Committee, we are very grateful to Howard Bondell for chairing the Mitchell Prize 2022 sub-committee and all members who were a part of it: Brian Reich, Jeff Morris, Gael Martin and Fan Li.

Finally, but not the least, we would like to thank Amy Herring (the ISBA President), Surya Tokdar (the ISBA representative in the program committee of JSM 2023), David van Dyk (SBSS session chair) and Huiyan Sang (SBSS program chair), who helped in arrangement of the ISBA Savage Award sessions within the JSM 2023 program and who coordinated the Award Ceremony in the ASA SBSS reception.

INTERVIEW WITH ENVIBAYES PLANNERS

Amy Herring

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I’m delighted to be able to share a short interview with the organizers of the first EnviBayes meeting, professors Ben Shaby and Andee Kaplan from Colorado State University, describing their experience planning this enriching scientific event and providing tips for future event organizers.



AMY: Can you share a bit about your planning process? How did EnviBayes go from an idea to an actual meeting?

BEN: The section had been building up to its first meeting for a number of years. It ramped up its level of activity gradually, across a few iterations of leadership teams. First there was a student paper competition, then a webinar series, and so forth, all, I think, with the eventual goal of growing our membership and visibility to where we could host a regular meeting. When it became my turn to be chair, I thought the time was right, but someone had to actually do the work of making it happen. So I pitched the idea to Andee.

ANDEE: When Ben pitched the idea to me, I did not have a clue what it would take to plan a workshop, but I knew Ben had a lot of experience organizing meetings so I thought we could figure it out together. Our planning process consisted of a lot of me asking questions and Ben finding answers. We held spontaneous meetings most weeks (sometimes multiple) and kept open communication throughout the process. This helped us to be agile when unexpected items popped up.

AMY: I know some other ISBA members have been contemplating planning new meetings. What tips do you have to share to help future planners?

BEN: My favorite conferences are the small ones, where participants are all in the same space. I think that encourages interaction, which is especially beneficial for students and early-career folks looking to become part of a research community. So I would definitely encourage folks who are considering planning meetings like this to go ahead and take the plunge. All it takes to create a meeting from nothing is for someone to be willing to take on the work and the responsibility.

ANDEE: My main piece of advice for future planners would be to not do it alone. Find a good partner to help you plan and it will be easier than you think.

AMY: What were your biggest worries and challenges?

BEN: We were worried that people wouldn't come! Andee did a great job putting together the roster of invited speakers and convincing all of you to make the trip. I think that once we were able to advertise the list of speakers, that probably generated some interest from the larger community.

ANDEE: My biggest worry was also that people wouldn't come. However, people were very excited to attend the meeting and almost everybody that we asked said yes. My next biggest worry was losing somebody on the hike outing, which I am thankful to report did not happen.

AMY: Can you talk a bit about finances? Did you seek sponsorship support, from the university or other sources? Did registration fees cover all the expenses, or did the section kick in some additional support? Any tips along these lines?

BEN: Andee got a conference grant from NSF to cover participation costs for a number of junior researchers. This did not cover operational costs directly, but it was incredibly helpful for allowing early-career folks to come. My advice to planners of future events is to definitely pursue this line of funding, and to discuss it if possible with the relevant program officers before submitting the proposal.

The CSU Department of Statistics and the College of Natural Sciences also generously pitched in. I wish we had been more successful in getting corporate sponsorship to defray some of the costs of facilities, catering, and so forth, because we ended up having to charge more for registration than we had hoped.

We did end up with some extra money from registration fees because attendance was much higher than anticipated (which is great!). This will go back to the section for future activities like student paper awards or travel awards or whatever the section decides.

AMY: Are there ways ISBA could facilitate some of the work for future meetings?

BEN: I think the ISBA communication network, between the ISBA email list and the nice plug we got in the Bulletin, is really helpful for getting the word out. We didn't avail ourselves of this resource, but trying to learn some best practices from other sections that manage to hold regular meetings (BNP, O'Bayes, BayesComp, etc.) would have been a good idea.

AMY: Any final thoughts on the planning process or meeting itself?

ANDEE: A meeting can only be successful if the attendees present interesting, novel research and are engaged with each others' work. Thanks to everyone who came and made ours a success. I look forward to attending the next EnviBayes meeting, wherever it may be!

FROM THE PROGRAM COUNCIL

Sinead Williamson

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ISBA 2024 World Meeting

The [2024 ISBA World Meeting](#) is getting closer. We are excited to see you in Venice, Italy from July 1-7 2024!

Logistical information is included on [the website](#). The local organizing committee are preparing a list of accommodation options both in Venice and in nearby Mestre, including low-cost options for junior researchers. Keep an eye out for updates!

Childcare Options We are working on arranging childcare options, and expect to have concrete details early in 2024. In the mean time, if you are interested in childcare, we encourage you to fill out [this non-binding survey](#) to gauge levels of interest.

Contributed Sessions We invite the submission of contributed talks and posters for the ISBA 2024 World Meeting. Contributed talks will be around 20 minutes long. Please note that the one-oral-presentation-per-speaker policy is in effect for all ISBA World Meetings: Each participant of ISBA World Meetings shall give at most one oral presentation. All talks, discussions, and panel discussions, etc count as an oral presentation, with the only exception being the discussant for Named Lectures. Please submit your proposed talk/poster using [this form](#), by November 17, 2023. The results will be announced by the end of December 2023.

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. Detailed information on how to submit requests for either sponsorship or endorsement can be found [here](#). In particular, all requests for (co-)sponsorship of events to occur in 2025 must be received by May 30, 2024.

Upcoming ISBA-Sponsored/Endorsed Events

- [BAYSM 2023](#), November 13–17, 2023, Virtual Meeting.
- [Monash ISBA-BNP Networking Workshop](#), December 4–8 2023, Melbourne, Australia.
- BAYESM 2024, June 29-30 2024, Venice, Italy
- [ISBA World Meeting](#), 1-7 July 2024, Venice, Italy
- BayesComp, National University of Singapore, 26-30 May, 2025

JUNIOR ISBA

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BaYSM:O 2023

The Bayesian Young Statisticians Meeting - Online (BaSYM:O 2023) will take place virtually on **November 13 - 17, 2023**. We have received a stellar collection of abstracts from early-career Bayesian statisticians around the world, and we cannot wait to hear more about these research works in oral presentations and short talks. We will also be joined with five plenary speakers: Catherine Forbes (Monash University), David Rossell (Universitat Pompeu Fabra), Alexandra Schmidt (McGill University), Marc Suchard (University of California - Los Angeles), and Giacomo Zanella (Bocconi University).

Registration for BaSYM:O 2023 will open soon at <https://events.stat.uconn.edu/BAYSM2023/>. **Participation is FREE for all j-ISBA members**, so don't forget to renew your membership!

Professional Development Workshop Series

We are excited to share that we have successfully held the first two sessions of our new “*Navigating the Academic Job Market*” professional development workshop series! This series is part of j-ISBA's

“Updating Your (Prior) Beliefs” workshop series established last year. The first session (focusing on EU / UK) took place on September 15, while the second (focusing on North America) was held on September 27. We will soon share recordings of both sessions for those who couldn't join us live on Zoom.

We want to give special acknowledgments to the panelists who graciously shared their valuable perspectives and experiences with us: Ruth King, Judith Rousseau, Francesco Stingo, Sudipto Banerjee, Steve MacEachern, Alexandra Schimdt, and Marina Vannucci.

We are planning to host another workshop session of a conversation with recent job seekers who will share first-hand experiences in their job hunts. Please stay tuned!

j-ISBA Events and Activities

- We recently organized a special topic-contributed session at the ISI World Congress meeting in Ottawa, Canada in July, 2023. This session highlighted three recent winners of the Blackwell-Rosenbluth Award: Sharmistha Guha, Trevor Campbell and Daniel R. Kowal.
- The 2023 edition of the Blackwell-Rosenbluth Award is well underway. We look forward to announcing the winners in October, and we will hold special sessions at BaYSM:O 2023 with presentations from the winners.
- The ISBA Elections are coming and we would greatly appreciate your vote! Please make sure to cast your ballot for the three opening positions on the j-ISBA board: **Chair-Elect**, **Program Chair**, and **Secretary**.
- We would like to share that BaYSM 2024 will take place in Venice, Italy on June 29-30, 2024. It will be an in-person conference, but please stay tuned for updates on virtual and more inclusive activities to engage the entire j-ISBA community! The new BaYSM homepage can be found at <https://baysmjisba.github.io/>.

NEWS FROM THE WORLD

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Upcoming Meetings, Conferences, and Workshops

- The **Bayesian Biostatistics Conference** will take place between October 25 and October 27, 2023, at the Hotel Mitland in Utrecht.
The conference will cover a wide range of topics, including the future of Bayesian Biostatistics in the regulatory world, Bayesian inference in complex models, and Causal inference.
The abstract submission is now closed, but you can still register. The closing date for registration is October 10, 2023. More information can be found at [this link](#).
- The **International Society for Bayesian Analysis World Meeting (ISBA 2024)** will be held in Venice, Italy, July 1-7, 2024, at the Department of Economics - Ca' Foscari University of Venice, in San Giobbe Economics Campus.
The scope of the ISBA world meetings is to bring together the international statistical community of researchers and professionals who develop Bayesian methods and apply them to challenging problems in different fields, ranging from economics and finance to business, industry, biostatistics, pharmaceutical statistics, environmental statistics, etc.

Monitor the official ISBA 2024 website at [this link](#).

- The **27th International Conference on Information Fusion 2024**, dedicated to Machine Learning methods and their applications, will occur on July 7-11, 2024, in Venice, Italy.

The conference is promoted by the International Society of Information Fusion (ISIF), a scientific society founded in 1998. As the conference will take place right after ISBA 2024, given the interdisciplinarity of the two initiatives and to strengthen the scientific collaboration between the two communities, the opportunity was taken to promote a [joint ISBA-Fusion 2024 Joint Workshop](#) between the two events. Check [this webpage](#) for more information.

And Don't Forget:

- Don't miss the **series of monthly webinars** organized by the Bayesian nonparametric section of ISBA (**BNP-ISBA**). Check [this link](#) for more details.
- The **Bayesian autumn school** will be held at CIRM, Marseille, France, from October 30 to November 3, 2023. This school aims to provide a comprehensive overview of Bayesian methods for complex settings. Details are available on the [conference website](#).
- The **second Bayesian Nonparametrics Networking workshop** will take place on 4-8 December 2023 at Monash University in Melbourne, Australia. For more information, please visit the [workshop event page](#).

PUBLISHING WITH ISBA

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This note is to remind members about an agreement with Cambridge University Press (CUP) and IMS, to publish some books as “with ISBA” in the [IMS Monograph series](#) and the [IMS Textbook series](#). The main benefits for ISBA members are a 40% discount on all books in the series (for many textbooks this becomes as low as \$25); and as authors, an opportunity to publish manuscripts at an affordable price with a prestigious publisher.

As an author, if you are interested to publish a text in either of the two series please contact the CUP Commissioning Editor, [Natalie Tomlinson](#) or the new ISBA Editorial Representative [Arnaud Doucet](#). As a reader, if you wish to take advantage of the member discount, please order [directly from CUP](#), or stop by the CUP desk at many ISBA sponsored conferences.

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