



SLDS Newsletter

Summer 2026
Editor: Sandra Safo

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SLDS Officers

Jun Yan	2026 Chair
Jaime Speiser	Chair Elect
Jing Lei	Past Chair
Xiaoyue Maggie	Secretary/Treasurer
Jiwei Zhao	Program Chair
Jingyi Jessica Li	Program Chair Elect
David Choi	CoS Representative
Sandra Safo	CoS Representative
Mladen Kolar	CoS Representative
Xiaoke Zhang	Publication Officer
Boxiang Wang	Webinar Coordinator

[SLDS Website](#)

Published newsletters are archived under Newsletters under Helpful Documents.

[SLDS 2026 Conference Website](#)



Eventbrite

SLDS JSM Business Meeting and Mixer

The SLDS Business Meeting and Mixer at JSM 2026 is scheduled for Tuesday, August 4, from 5:00–7:00 PM in Room W-Grand Ballroom Section C at the Westin Boston Seaport District. We hope you will be able to attend, get updated on SLDS news, and connect with fellow officers and section members.

Message from the Chair

Dear SLDS Section Members and Friends,

I hope you are enjoying the summer. The next few months will be active for SLDS, with JSM in Boston, continuing preparations for the 2026 SLDS Conference, and several opportunities for members and students to participate.

JSM 2026 will be our next major opportunity to gather as a section. SLDS has a strong program, with session dates and times summarized in the report by Jiwei Zhao and Jingyi Jessica Li. SLDS will also share a community table with the Stats Up AI interest group during the JSM expo hours, with our officers staffing the table in shifts. We value the opportunity to work closely with Stats Up AI as our communities respond to the statistical and scientific challenges raised by modern AI. I encourage you to stop by to meet colleagues, learn about section activities, and network during the meeting.

The SLDS mixer will be our social and networking event at JSM. Join us on Tuesday, August 4, from 5:00-7:00 p.m. at the Westin Boston Seaport District, W-Grand Ballroom Section C. The mixer will include the presentation of the student awards and the ASA Section Service Award. This once-every-three-year SLDS award goes to Sophia Zhihua Su of nVerses Capital for outstanding leadership and sustained service as Webinar Coordinator of the ASA Section on Statistical Learning and Data Science from 2021-2025, which

fostered broad community engagement through dedication, responsiveness, and organizational excellence. Thanks to Springer for donating five books and Taylor & Francis for donating three book vouchers as raffle awards. I encourage members to attend, bring colleagues and trainees, stay for the raffle, and build new connections in the broader data science community.

I warmly congratulate Jelena Bradic, Cornell University, elected Chair-Elect 2027; Snigdha Panigrahi, University of Michigan, elected Council of Sections Representative 2027-2029; and Zhao Ren, University of Pittsburgh, elected Program Chair-Elect 2027. I also thank members for approving the section charter revision. Strong section leadership depends on members who are willing to contribute time, judgment, and continuity.

Looking beyond this year's JSM, members should note that the call for invited session proposals for JSM 2027 has an early September deadline, and the call for submissions to the SLDS student paper competition has a November 15 deadline. These calls are among the most direct ways members shape the scientific program and support students. I encourage students and trainees to submit their best work to the student paper competition, and I ask advisers to actively encourage eligible students to participate.

Preparations for the SLDS 2026 Conference are moving forward with strong momentum. Registration opened on June 1. The conference will be held November 1-3, 2026, in New York City under the theme "Inference and Intelligence." The program has grown into a major gathering for our field, with six half-day short courses planned, 107 invited sessions, a poster session, and five keynote presentations. Register early and share sponsorship opportunities with organizations that would like to support the SLDS community. Early hotel booking is strongly recommended because the 2026 NYC Marathon will take place on November 1.

The SLDS 2026 Student, Post-Doc, and Early Career Researcher Paper Awards received over 90 submissions. The review team, led by Nate O'Connell, is working diligently, and the awardees will be announced shortly. All non-award-winning submissions will be invited to present in the poster session. Thanks to the local organizing team led by Yang Feng and Wen Zhou, we have NSF travel support for these presenters. The student poster competition provides another accessible and lively venue for students to share their research, receive feedback, and become more visible within the section.

I thank all officers, conference organizers, judges, contributors, and volunteers for helping keep the section informed and active. As we move through

the second half of the year, I invite members to stay engaged through our JSM activities, the SLDS 2026 Conference, the webinar series, and this newsletter, and to share member news, professional opportunities, publication updates, and ideas for future newsletter items. SLDS is at its best when members contribute their energy not only through research, but also through mentoring, organizing, sponsoring, and creating forums where statistical thinking can shape the rapidly evolving data science landscape.



Jun Yan
Chair 2026

Professor
Department of Statistics
University of Connecticut

2026 Election Results

Congratulations to Dr. Jelena Bradic, Dr. Ren Zhao, and Dr. Snigdha Panigrahi for their elections as SLDS Officers.



Dr. Jelena Bradic will serve a three-year leadership sequence as Chair-Elect in 2027, Chair in 2028, and Past Chair in 2029. Dr. Jelena Bradic is a professor of statistics and data science at Cornell University whose research lies at the intersection of causal inference, machine

learning, and high-dimensional robust statistics. Her work develops reliable methods for drawing conclusions from complex data, with applications in areas such as public health and policy learning. Before joining Cornell, she was a faculty member in mathematics and data science at the University of California, San Diego. Bradic earned bachelor's and master's degrees in mathematics from the University of Belgrade and a Ph.D. from Princeton University. In 2025, she was elected a Fellow of the Institute of Mathematical Statistics in recognition of her research contributions and professional service.



Dr. Zhao Ren will serve as Program Chair-Elect of the ASA Section on Statistical Learning and Data Science in 2027. He is an Associate Professor in the Department of Statistics at the

University of Pittsburgh and will be promoted to Professor of Statistics in September 2026. His research interests include high-dimensional inference, graphical models, robust statistics, statistical machine learning, and biomedical data science. He has been an active member of the ASA community, previously serving as Secretary/Treasurer of the SLDS Section and President of the ASA Pittsburgh Chapter, and he has also served as an Associate Editor for the Journal of Business & Economic Statistics. He looks forward to contributing to the continued growth of the SLDS community by supporting high-quality programming, strengthening engagement across career stages, and fostering broader connections across academia, industry, government, and related ASA sections.



Dr. Snigdha Panigrahi will serve as a Council of Sections (COS) Representative for the next three years. Dr. Snigdha Panigrahi is an Associate Professor of Statistics at the University of Michigan (UM). She received her Ph.D. in Statistics from Stanford University in 2018 and has

been a faculty member at UM since then. Her research develops honest inferential methods that lend trust and transparency to findings produced by purely predictive and exploratory algorithms, with a particular focus on post-selection inference, explainable artificial intelligence, and the stability and replicability of data-driven conclusions. She is an elected member of the International Statistical Institute, and her work has been recognized with an NSF CAREER Award and the Bernoulli New Researcher Award. We are excited to have you join the executive team and we look forward to your leadership.

JSM 2026 Program

The 2026 Joint Statistical Meetings (JSM) will be held in Boston, Massachusetts, August 1-6, 2026, with the theme “Communities in Action: Advancing Society”. SLDS is excited to be the primary sponsor for five invited sessions, 11 topic-contributed sessions, and 24 contributed sessions. In addition, we have a number of co-sponsored invited, topic-contributed, and contributed sessions.

The five invited sessions for which are the primary sponsor are:

1. Statistical Frontiers in Large Language Models, Organizer: Will Wei Sun.

2. High-dimensional Statistics meet Deep learning, Organizer: Soufiane Hayou.

3. Generative AI in Modern Statistical Learning, Organizer: Kaizheng Wang.

4. Statistical Innovations for Heterogeneous and High-Dimensional Data, Organizer: Xuan Bi.

5. Integrating data from external sources: new methods for observational studies and randomized trials, Organizer: Peisong Han.

The eleven topic-contributed sessions for which we are the primary sponsor are:

1. Extending Inference from Fixed Samples to Anytime Valid Guarantees, Organizer: Margaret Gamalo.

2. Recent Advances in Causal Discovery and Graphical Structure Learning, Organizer: Wei Jin.

3. Leveraging Diverse Data Sources: Transfer Learning, Data Integration, and Distributed Approaches, Organizer: Di Wang.

4. Statistical Innovations in Harnessing Large Language Models and EHR Data for Rare Disease Research, Organizer: Kimberly Greco and Cathy Shyr.

5. Integrating Large Language Models into Statistical Methodology: Opportunities and Challenges, Organizer: Edgar Dobriban.

6. Graph-Driven Statistical Learning for Complex-Structured Data, Organizer: Yinqiu He.

7. AI, Machine Learning, and Modern Statistical Methods for Complex Biomedical Data, Organizer: Gang Li.

8. Adaptive treatment designs for optimal medical care, Organizer: Justin Weltz.

9. Advances in Reinforcement Learning and Adaptive Experimentation, Organizer: Yongyi Guo.

10. Do you *really* know what's important? Organizer: Cynthia Rudin.

11. SLDS Student Paper Awards, Organizer: Yang Ning and Runze Li.

The breadth and depth of these sessions reflect the continued growth of statistical learning and data science within the ASA and the strong engagement of the SLDS community. We look forward to an active and well-attended program in Boston.



Jiwei Zhao
Program Chair 2026

Associate Professor
Department of Biostatistics &
Medical Informatics
Department of Statistics
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Call for Proposals for JSM 2027

JSM 2027 will take place in Chicago, Illinois, from August 7 to August 12, 2027. Details on theme, dates for submitting invited proposals, topic-contributed proposals, and many more will be communicated when they become available. Formats for invited sessions are likely to follow previous formats: 110 minutes in length and must have a session chair. The sessions typically include 2–6 participants, including the chair, with two of the most popular and successful formats being 2-3 speakers with a discussant or a panel discussion of 3–5 panelists.

In order to submit a proposal, you will need the following:

1. Session Type (Invited Paper or Invited Panel)
2. Sponsor (Select Statistical Learning and Data Science; the organizer can select up to 3 sponsors from a pre-approved list.)
3. Session Title
4. Session Description (provide a short description, including focus, content, timeliness, appeal, and format)
5. Session organizer, including affiliation and email address
6. Session chair, including affiliation and email address
7. Session speakers and any discussants, including affiliations and email addresses (all should have agreed to participate in the session).

Please contact potential participants before submitting a proposal, as they may have already committed to participating in another session at JSM 2027. There are participation guidelines and restrictions regarding the number of times and in what capacity one can participate in the program.

We'd like to encourage those whose invited session proposals are not accepted to consider converting to topic-contributed session proposals.



Jingyi Jessica Li
Program Chair 2027

*Professor and Program Head
Biostatistics Program
Public Health Sciences Division
Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center
Affiliate Professor of Statistics,
Biostatistics, and Genome Sciences
University of Washington*

SLDS 2026 Conference Program Update

The [SLDS 2026 Conference](#) will take place November 1–3, 2026 at the New York Marriott Hotel at the Brooklyn Bridge in Brooklyn, NY (SLDS 2026 Website). As the section's flagship meeting, SLDS brings together researchers and practitioners from academia, industry, and government to exchange ideas at the forefront of statistical learning and artificial intelligence.

The conference theme, "Inference and Intelligence," highlights the dynamic interplay between principled statistical reasoning and modern algorithmic developments. The program will span a wide range of topics, including artificial intelligence, big data analytics, causal inference, deep learning, graphical models, high-dimensional statistics, learning theory, machine learning, model selection, network analysis, spatiotemporal modeling, and text and image analytics. Applications will reflect ongoing work across the health, social, and engineering sciences, as well as data-driven challenges arising in the technology, finance, and pharmaceutical, and sports.

The conference will feature keynote presentations from

- David Banks (Duke University)
- Dean Foster (Amazon)
- David Rosenberg (Bloomberg)
- Bin Yu (University of California, Berkeley)
- Tian Zheng (Columbia University)

Their participation highlights the conference's commitment to fostering cross-sector collaboration and connecting methodological developments with real-world implementation.

Preparations for the SLDS 2026 Conference are advancing steadily through the coordinated efforts of multiple committees. The Program Committee, chaired by Jiwei Zhao and Wen Zhou, has received over 100 invited session proposals and is working closely with the Local Committee to accommodate this strong response. The Local Committee, chaired by Yang Feng and Wen Zhou, is actively engaging with the conference hotel to secure additional space to support the expanded program. The Short Course Committee, chaired by Giles Hooker, has lined up short courses described in the following section. The Student/Early Career Paper Awards are being organized under the leadership of Nathaniel Sean O'Connell. The conference website, maintained by Yan Li, continues to provide timely updates and essential information. We also acknowledge Zhao Ren, for maintaining excellent records that support the planning process. These collective efforts reflect the strong commitment of SLDS volunteers to delivering a high-quality conference. The

conference offers short courses, parallel invited sessions, a poster session, and a banquet.

A special issue associated with SLDS 2026 is being planned in the Journal of Statistical Planning and Inference (JSPI). Further details will be announced on the conference website as they become available.

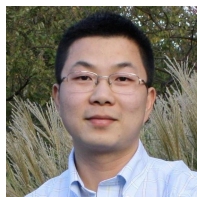
The Fundraising Committee is seeking sponsors for this conference. Sponsoring SLDS 2026 offers a unique opportunity for your organization to engage with talented professionals and students passionate about statistics and data science. Your sponsorship will provide direct access to emerging leaders in the field while supporting efforts to increase diversity and inclusion. By aligning with SLDS, you can:

- Enhance your brand visibility among the statistical learning and data science community.
- Connect with professionals and students from a wide array of academic programs and industries.
- Promote your commitment to education, diversity, and the future of data science.
- Recruit top-tier talent through exclusive access to participants during networking events.

SLDS is offering different tiers of sponsorship to meet your organization's goals and budget. If you are interested in sponsoring or learning more, please reach out to Jaime Speiser at jaime.speiser@wfusm.edu.

Building on strong program development and broad community interest, SLDS 2026 is positioned to be a highly engaging and well-attended meeting. Registration will open on June 1. The combination of a rigorous scientific program, active participation across sectors, and the continued growth of the SLDS community reflects the central role of statistical learning and data science in modern research and practice. Hosted in New York City—one of the world's leading centers for academia, industry, and innovation—the conference also offers a dynamic setting for professional exchange and collaboration. We look forward to welcoming the community to SLDS 2026.

 **Call for submissions:** [Student, Postdoc, and Early Career Researcher Paper Awards](#)



Jing Lei
Co-Chair, SLDS 2026 Conference
Past Chair 2026

Professor
Department of Statistics &
Data Science
Carnegie Mellon University

SLDS 2026 Conference Local Arrangement Update

The SLDS 2026 Local Organizing Committee, chaired by Yang Feng and Wen Zhou, is pleased to announce that the [conference hotel booking link](#) is now available. Special conference rates are available through October 12, 2026. Because the conference will take place during a particularly busy marathon weekend, attendees are strongly encouraged to reserve their accommodations as early as possible.

The committee is also pleased to announce that SLDS 2026 will receive support from the National Science Foundation's Division of Mathematical Sciences. This funding will help support conference participation by students, junior researchers, and early-career scholars. Application details will be announced soon. Please stay tuned and contact the local organizing committee with any questions.



Yang Feng
Local Co-Chair, SLDS 2026
Conference

Professor
Department of Biostatistics
School of Global Public Health
New York University



Wen Zhou
Local Co-Chair, SLDS 2026
Conference

Associate Professor
Department of Biostatistics
School of Global Public Health
New York University

SLDS Member News

The SLDS is pleased to congratulate our members who have been recognized as Fellows of the American Statistical Association (ASA) and the Institute of Mathematical Statistics (IMS) in 2026, for sustained and outstanding contributions to research, education, practice, and service in the statistical sciences:

2026 ASA Fellows:

- Jingyi Jessica Li (Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center)
- Rebecca Nugent (Carnegie Mellon University)
- Sandra Safo (University of Minnesota)
- Weijie Su (University of Pennsylvania)
- Loni Tabb (Drexel University)

- Gongjun Xu (University of Michigan)
- Anru Zhang (Duke University)
- Jiwei Zhao (University of Wisconsin–Madison)
- Yingqi Zhao (Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center)

2026 IMS Fellows:

- Yong Chen (University of Pennsylvania)
- Yuxin Chen (University of Pennsylvania)
- Jian Kang (University of Michigan)
- Mladen Kolar (University of Southern California)
- Yi Li (University of Michigan)
- Bharath Sriperumbudur (Pennsylvania State University)
- Junhui Wang (The Chinese University of Hong Kong)
- Shuheng Zhou (University of California, Riverside)

Please join us in congratulating these colleagues on this well-deserved recognition!

SLDS Webinar Series

The SLDS Webinar Series continues to provide a consistent and well-attended platform for sharing advances in statistical learning and data science. The series maintains a regular schedule and features speakers from academia, industry, and government, with topics spanning methodology, computation, and impactful applications.

During the first seven months of 2026, the SLDS Webinar Series featured the following speakers and presentations:

- January 26, 2026 — Glen Wright Colopy, Polaris Data Labs: “The AI Train Has Not Left the Station. But You Do Need to Step on Board”
- February 26, 2026 — Zhuoran Yang, Yale University: “How Do Transformers Learn to Implement Algorithms”
- March 26, 2026 — Lihua Lei, Stanford University Graduate School of Business: “Compound Selection Decisions: An Almost SURE Approach”
- April 23, 2026 — Anru Zhang, Duke University: “When Does Synthetic Data Help Imbalanced Learning?”
- May 28, 2026 — Hadley Wickham, Posit: “y code when ai?”
- June 25, 2026 — Rahul Satija, New York Genome Center: “Integrated Analysis of Single-Cell Data across Technologies, Patients, and Perturbations”

- July 23, 2026 — Alex Luedtke, Harvard University: “DoubleGen: Debiased Generative Modeling of Counterfactuals”

Our next webinar speaker will be [Dr. Annie Qu](#), who will present on Tuesday, August 25, 2026, at 12:00 PM CST. The talk is titled “*Representation Retrieval Learning for Heterogeneous Data Integration*”. Dr. Annie Qu is Professor of Statistics and Applied Probability at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and Founding Director of the Center for Statistical Foundations of AI (CSFAI). Her research develops statistical foundations for artificial intelligence, with interests spanning statistical learning, heterogeneous data integration, reinforcement learning, causal inference, trustworthy AI, uncertainty quantification, precision health, and multimodal data analysis.

Looking ahead to the second half of 2026, our speaker lineup will include two outstanding researchers from industry:

- Tim Hesterberg of Instacart will present at 1 PM on September 30
- Lester Mackey of Microsoft will present at 1PM on November 27

Last but certainly not least, our very own Section Chair, Professor Jun Yan of the University of Connecticut, will present our “Christmas webinar”, titled “Academic Writing in Statistics and Data Science.” An October webinar is also being planned, and further details will be announced soon.

🌟 Links for future registrations can be found on [our EventBrite](#), and links for past recordings can also be found on [our Section's YouTube Channel](#). You may also search for “Eventbrite ASA SLDS” or “YouTube ASA SLDS” to find them directly. Thank you for subscribing to our YouTube channel.

I welcome suggestions for future speakers and topics. We encourage contributions that represent the breadth of our field, including methodological developments, interdisciplinary work, and applications in practice. If you are interested in presenting or would like to nominate a speaker, please contact me at boxiang-wang@uiowa.edu.



Boxiang Wang
Webinar Chair

*Associate Professor
Director of Graduate Studies
Department of Statistics and
Actuarial Science
University of Iowa*