



Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology

Data Science for Federal Statistics (DSFS) Interest Group Charter

(Updated 4/10/2024)

1. Objective

The purpose of this interest group is to share information on data science methods, such as machine learning and natural language processing, and uses across federal agencies. These applications are broad ranging, including the use of data science methods and insights for the production of statistics and data products, for internal administrative activities of agencies, and for research purposes. The interest group is open to federal employees engaged with or interested in issues and methods relating to data science regardless of their level of expertise. The interest group provides opportunities to identify areas of common research, practice, and challenges, to coordinate collaborative research projects in those areas, and to disseminate relevant information. The group can organize events such as information sharing sessions, workshops, and conferences. This interest group does not produce Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology (FCSM) or other official government products.

2. Background

While computing is nothing new to federal agencies, the growth of big data and advancing of statistical methods has shifted the way agencies use and produce data. This interest group is designed to provide a forum for collaboration and learning from each other in the use of data science methods at federal agencies. Examples of topics germane to this group are:

- New and emerging computational methods in statistics such as machine learning methods and natural language processing
- Training statistical and information technology staff on open-source programming languages such as R and Python
- Sharing best practices for implementation and maintenance of statistical software
- Identifying and exploring opportunities for collaboration on statistical computing projects

This interest group was originally chartered as the Computational Statistics and the Production of Official Statistics interest group. The need for such a group was identified by the Interagency R-User's Group in 2016 and 2017. As the needs for the federal statistical community changed, along with the advancement of data science methods used throughout the statistical community, the group has evolved to become the Data Science for Federal Statistics Interest Group.

3. Scope and Approach

The main focus of this group will be on data science methods and usages in federal statistics. Examples of relevant topics are included in the Background section, but are not limited to those. Any topics related to data science in federal statistics are in scope.

This group will hold virtual meetings at least once a quarter.

4. Proposed Deliverables and Dates

The Co-Chairs shall provide FCSM with regular updates on proposed activities of the interest group. They shall submit an annual summary of the interest group's activities and discussion that is suitable for inclusion in the FCSM annual report.

The interest group will host the Government Advances in Statistical Programming (GASP) conference at least once every other year.

5. Sponsor

The Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology (FCSM)

6. Communication

1. The team will provide regular informal status reports to the sponsor.
2. The team will use a Wiki or other means (e.g., collaboration site through FCSM).
3. As needed, the group will plan presentations to other FCSM or federal groups.

7. Group members

The members of this group must be federal civil servants. However, contractors and others who work with federal statistical data can provide briefings and participate in specific meetings and workshops as appropriate. The group will have two co-chairs, one of whom is a member of FCSM and will act as a liaison to FCSM. The co-chairs will arrange schedules for the group and ensure logistics are in place for meetings.

Members will be familiar with data science methods and uses or interested in learning about them. The group will facilitate conversation with experts in data science.

Agencies can have more than one member in the group. Members do not represent their agency.

FCSM CHAIR SIGNATURES

NAME	SIGNATURE	DATE
Bob Sivinski	<i>Bob Sivinski</i>	6/28/2024
Mark Prell	<i>Mark Prell</i>	6/28/2024