

Discussion Meetings and Criteria for Discussion Papers to the Society

Introduction

The Society's discussion meetings (formerly 'Ordinary Meetings') span a very wide range of topics, and suitable papers may fall into any of the following categories:

- (a) Innovative and significant new methodology
- (b) Studies of applied statistical problems of sufficient general interest to warrant discussion and publication
- (c) Major advances in applied probability
- (d) Interesting and new applications of existing methodology
- (e) Work concerned with the interface between statistics and other fields
- (f) Work concerned with statistical education
- (g) Expository papers, state of the art reviews and critical summaries of statistical material
- (h) Critical studies of areas of economic, scientific or social interest in which statistical methods have an important role
- (i) Issues of general interest to statisticians, especially inviting a wide variety of views

In addition, papers which are intended for consideration by the Research Section Committee should fall into one or more of the following categories:

- (a) Descriptions of new methods of analysing data or of designing experiments, with theoretical bases of methods and an indication of the scope of application, preferably with examples;
- (b) Comparisons and critical evaluations of existing methods;
- (c) Discussion of the logical and/or philosophical bases of statistical theory;
- (d) Original contributions to probability theory which have a practical bearing.

Format of papers

Papers for reading should not exceed 12000 words. With figures, tables and references, this guideline translates to about 24 journal pages or around 30 manuscript pages in 12 pt Times and extra half-line spacing. Detailed guidelines on the preparation and submission of manuscripts are available from the 'Publications' section of the Society's Web site (<http://www.rss.org.uk>) or from the Journals Administrator (journal@rss.org.uk) in the Editorial Office.

Organization of Discussion Meetings

According to availability of suitable papers, meetings are held several times a year. Preprints are made available to download from the Society's Web site usually at least 4 weeks before each meeting.

The usual format of the meetings is that the authors summarize the main features of their papers in about 40 minutes, such that people attending the meeting who have not studied the paper in advance can follow its substance.

Following the authors, the discussion is opened by two or more invited speakers who have up to 10 minutes (or about 800 words in writing) each to comment on the paper. Traditionally, the two speakers are the proposer and seconder of the vote of thanks'. For some meetings, a small number of speakers are invited to comment on the paper instead.

Further shorter comments (up to 5 minutes or 400 words in writing) are then invited from the audience, starting from a list of people who have notified the Journals office in advance that they would like to speak. If the 2 hour meeting permits and before the authors are given the opportunity to respond very briefly, the secretary for the meeting will read out any contributions that have been sent in from people who cannot be present in person.

Occasionally the format of meetings may be rather different. They may be longer ('extended' or 'half-day' Discussion Meetings) and include several related papers or papers paired by subject-matter, or they may not include substantial papers at all but be focused on discussion of specific themes, introduced by two or three main speakers presenting differing points of view. Such discussion meetings will often be concerned with matters of public interest. The process for these types of meeting is similar to that for the single-paper meetings but the rules for the conduct of the meeting may depend on the individual circumstances and will be determined by the organizers of the meeting.

Location of Meetings

Most Discussion Meetings are held as hybrid events in London. Occasionally, 'out-of-London' Discussion Meetings are organized, e.g. as a keynote at the RSS annual conference, at a session of a major statistical conference outside the UK or to coincide with a particular statistical occasion somewhere.

Written contributions

We welcome contributions in writing for publication in the journal along with the paper up to four weeks after the Discussion Meeting. All contributions are published and there is no requirement to be e.g. an RSS member, a statistician or at a particular career stage. Contributions submitted prior to the meeting will be read out for discussion if the contributor is not present and time permits.

Contributions should not exceed 400 words in length (not including any tables, reference details and figures) and must be in editable format (Word doc or tex file). Please also provide a PDF copy for review, a separate file for each figure and add the following information at the beginning of your contribution:

[Discussant name]'s contribution to the Discussion of [Paper name] by [Author surname(s)]

Adding below this your name, title, affiliation and email address as the corresponding author.

Written contributions should be submitted to the ScholarOne manuscript submission system for the appropriate Series by the published deadline and select 'Discussion paper contribution' as the article type.

A condition of publication is that contributors assign copyright to the Society upon receipt of proofs for review.

Any queries can be directed to the Journals office via journal@rss.org.uk