NISS

The Statistics Community Serving the Nation

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NISS Fact Sheet
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Mission NISS is dedicated to strengthening and serving the national statistics community and the nation, most notably by catalyzing community members' participation in applied research driven by challenges facing government and industry.

Formation and Evolution NISS was created by and serves the US and international statistical sciences community. It was formed in 1991 with the initial vision to identify, catalyze and foster high-impact, cross-disciplinary research involving the statistical sciences. Since then, cross-sector research addressing critical interfaces between industry/government and academia has become increasingly central to the NISS portfolio.

Structure NISS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit North Carolina corporation, with ten owners.[1] Governance is vested in twenty-member Board of Trustees, currently chaired by Susan Ellenberg of the University of Pennsylvania.

Facilities NISS owns its headquarters building, which is located in Research Triangle Park (RTP), NC. The building is shared with NISS' sister institute, the Statistical and Applied Mathematical Sciences Institute (SAMSI). The original 16,000 square foot building, honored by a Design Award from the North Carolina Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, was constructed in 1997 with funds from the State of North Carolina, and the 12,000 square foot addition was occupied in October 2008. NISS also holds office space in Washington, DC.

Personnel NISS has approximately 16 full-time employees, including postdoctoral fellows, located in RTP and Washington, DC. More than thirty members of the national community currently participate in NISS projects and task forces. The senior scientific leadership consists of *Alan F. Karr, director*, who is also Professor of Statistics & Operations Research and Biostatistics at UNC, *Nell Sedransk, associate director*, who is also Research Professor of Statistics at NCSU, *Lawrence Cox, assistant director for official statistics*, and *Stanley Young, assistant director for bioinformatics*.

Research NISS performs high-impact, client-need-driven research on important national issues for government and industrial clients. These clients currently include the Carillon Clinic,

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[1]Five statistics societies—American Statistical Association (ASA), Committee of Presidents of Statistical Societies, Eastern and Western Regions (ENAR and WNAR) of the International Biometric Society, Institute of Mathematical Statistics and Section U of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and five North Carolina organizations—Duke University, North Carolina State University (NCSU), the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC), RTI International, and the Triangle Universities Center for Advanced Studies, Inc. (TUCASI).

Census Bureau, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, the Institute for Education Sciences of the US Department of Education, the National Agricultural Statistics Service, the National Center for Education Statistics, the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, the National Science Foundation, the Transportation Research Board and the US Department of Health and Human Services. NISS is a core member of the Education Statistics Support Institute Network (ESSIN), which supports the National Center for Education Statistics. In partnership with Duke University, NISS comprises one of the eight nodes in the NSF–Census Research Network (NCRN), and NISS and Cornell University operate the NSF–Census Research Network Coordination Office (NCRN-CO).

The products of the research include scientific innovations that inform future research and policy, software that implements methodological advances, and strong positive influence on the careers of those who participate in the research. Notable among these are methods adopted nationwide for calculation of high-school graduation rates; new organizational models for development of complex software; tools to reduce traffic congestion in urban areas; innovative methodology for producing crop forecasts by the US Department of Agriculture; tools and methods for educational assessment, and a panoply of techniques that allow government agencies to disseminate data but protect the confidentiality of the data subjects. Concern about the quality of data and its impact on decisions pervades NISS research.

Affiliates Approximately 60 government agencies, corporations and university departments belong to the NISS/SAMSI Affiliates Program, which conducts activities targeting research, information dissemination, human resources, and networking. The affiliates were honored with the 2005 Statistical Partnerships among Academia, Industry and Government (SPAIG) award of the ASA.

Career Development More than 200 senior researchers from the statistical sciences, as well as such other disciplines as agricultural science, applied mathematics, chemistry, civil engineering, computer science, environmental science, materials science, psychometrics, software engineering and transportation, have participated in NISS projects.

The NISS postdoctoral program, one of the oldest, largest and most successful in statistics, has provided strong impetus to more than 80 early career researchers.

SAMSI NISS, Duke, NCSU, and UNC, in partnership with the National Science Foundation (NSF), constitute the consortium that created and manages SAMSI. NISS shares scientific interests, staff and its RTP building with SAMSI. The NISS–SAMSI relationship is extraordinarily synergistic for both institutes.