

## The value of getting involved with ACTA STInG



The ACTA Statistics in Trials Interest Group (STInG) is a group that promotes the practice and recognition of the importance of statistics within clinical trials and provides a forum to improve the statistical quality of investigator-initiated clinical trials within Australia through enhanced collaboration and networking among trial statisticians.

Mark Chatfield is a Statistician at the University of Queensland Clinical Trials Centre and shares his experience being a member of ACTA STInG, the ACTA STInG Executive Committee, and a judge on the ACTA STInG Excellence in Trial Statistics award.



### Tell us about your current role and career to date

I have worked in health research for over 20 years and am currently a Statistician at the University of Queensland Clinical Trials Centre (UQ CTC). My role primarily focuses on applied statistics across various projects, including numerous clinical trials and other studies, rather than on methodological statistical research. Throughout my career, I have worked at multiple universities and research institutes.

### How did you first get involved with ACTA STInG, and what motivated you to join?

I have been a member of STInG since inception. For some years now, I have felt physically isolated as a trial statistician, and I joined in order to connect with other trial statisticians. My engagement deepened when I joined the STInG Executive Committee at the beginning of last year. I have also been involved in judging the STInG Excellence in Trial Statistics award on several occasions and have attended various workshops and seminars organised by STInG.

I share the group chairs' vision of harmonising attitudes, sharing knowledge, and elevating professional standards in trial statistics, and I appreciate STInG's efforts to encourage best practices.

### How has being part of the ACTA STInG influenced your work?

I frequently utilise the online resources, such as the grant advice document and the DSMB directory, which has helped me identify DSMB statisticians for several trials. The email forum has also helped me connect with others and receive helpful responses with a quick turnaround time.

### How has ACTA STInG helped you stay current with the latest statistical methodologies and best practices in research?

ACTA STInG has been instrumental in keeping statisticians updated with the latest statistical methodologies and best practices. The group has promoted important concepts like estimands and provided resources to help us navigate these complex new ideas. There's also been a significant focus on adaptive trial designs, with supporting materials available.

### Can you describe a particular experience or partnership with ACTA STInG that has been especially impactful for you?

My experience judging the ACTA STInG Excellence in Trial Statistics award has been rewarding. I learned a great deal regarding the standards to aim for in my own work. It was interesting to hear from other judges, as we followed the scoring criteria.

I saw various ways different statisticians and institutions write Statistical Analysis Plans, and the overall experience influenced how I drafted the statistical Standard Operating Procedures for the UQ CTC. The award itself serves as an impetus for high-quality standards of statistics in trials in Australia.

### **How, in your opinion, is ACTA STInG contributing to increasing professional standards and more trials with higher quality statistical design and analysis?**

ACTA STInG is certainly making a splash in that space. This focus has certainly benefited my work and improved my own standards. The UQ CTC places a strong emphasis on quality, and I believe that future accreditation of coordinating centres would be a game changer for Australia. I also see a strong opportunity for creating deeper connections, which can lead to higher quality of statistical work in trials.

### **What advice would you give to other statisticians or researchers looking to leverage organisations like ACTA to advance their careers?**

Get involved. The more you engage with organisations like ACTA and groups like ACTA STInG, the more you will benefit. Networking with other statisticians outside your workplace is invaluable.



*Get involved. The more you engage with organisations like ACTA and groups like ACTA STInG, the more you will benefit.*

– Mark Chatfield



## FIND OUT MORE

About ACTA STInG and how it can help statisticians in clinical trials and registries



To find out more about STInG, including how to join, [click here.](#)



To view STInG's published resources, [click here.](#)



To stay on top of STInG webinars and events, join the [ACTA mailing list.](#)