

The National Academies of
SCIENCES • ENGINEERING • MEDICINE

Workshop Agenda

Challenges and New Approaches for Protecting Privacy in Federal Statistical Programs

June 6, 7 2019

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, Lecture Room
2101 Constitution Ave. NW, Washington DC

For decades, federal statistical agencies have striven to balance the legal and ethical obligations to protect the confidentiality of data subjects with the need to provide informative statistics and access to data for secondary analysis. In recent years, balancing these objectives has become increasingly difficult. The digital revolution has seen an explosion in the growth of available data, both from public and private sources, which ill-intentioned actors could use to compromise confidentiality protections.

This workshop, organized by the Committee on National Statistics with the support of the federal statistical agencies will discuss new approaches to protecting data confidentiality, with a particular focus on methods that offer formal guarantees of privacy protection, like differential privacy. Discussions will cover the policy and implementation issues from both provider and user perspectives, including the promises and limitations of using formal privacy methods.

DAY ONE

Welcome and Preliminaries

8:45 – 8:50 am Jerry Reiter, Committee Chair, Duke University

8:50 – 9:00 Brian Harris-Kojetin, Director, Committee on National Statistics, National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine

Session 1 **9:00 – 10:15** Risks of existing statistical disclosure limitation methods
Dan Kifer, Pennsylvania State University, organizer and moderator

9:00 – 9:25 Reconstruction of person level data from data presented in multiple tables
Philip Leclerc, U.S. Bureau of the Census

9:25 – 9:50 De-Anonymizing the Australian Medicare Data Release
Ben Rubinstein, University of Melbourne, Australia

9:50 – 10:15 Discussion

Session 2 **10:15 – 11:15** Insights from federal agencies about privacy protection needs
Michael Hawes, U.S. Bureau of the Census, organizer

10:15 – 10:25 Mary Theofanos, National Institute of Standards and Technology,
moderator

10:25 – 10:40 Overview of the needs for federal statistics

Michael Hawes, U.S. Bureau of the Census

10:40 – 10:50 Darius Singpurwalla, National Center for Science and Engineering
Statistics

10:50 – 11:00 Donna Miller, National Center for Health Statistics

11:00 – 11:15 Discussion

Break 11:15 – 11:30

Session 3 11:30 – 12:30 PM Tutorial on differential privacy: a basic understanding of formal privacy methods; privacy budgets; methods to implement formal privacy. Alexandra Wood, Harvard University, organizer. Aleksandra Korolova, Moderator.

11:30 – 12:10 Kobbi Nissim, Georgetown University; Alexandra Wood, Harvard
University

12:10 – 12:30 Discussion

Lunch 12:30 – 1:30

Session 4 1:30 – 2:45 Panel discussion: Current technical capabilities in formal privacy. What can we release via existing methods to satisfy formal privacy and still have high data usefulness? What can we not do yet? Applications from statistical agencies and elsewhere. Aleksandra Korolova, University of Southern California, organizer and moderator

1:30 – 2:15 Panelists: Ashwin Machanavajjhala, Duke University; Kamalika
Chaudhuri, University of California San Diego; Ilya Mironov, Google,
Salil Vadhan, Harvard University.

2:15 – 2:45 Discussion

Break 2:45 – 3:00

Session 5 3:00 – 4:00 Panel discussion: Policy issues and practical experiences with formal privacy. What do agencies need to consider when implementing and evaluating formal privacy solutions? Jerry Reiter, Duke University, organizer and moderator

3:00 – 3:40 Panelists: Nancy Potok, U.S. Office of Management and Budget; John
Abowd, U.S. Bureau of the Census; Barry Johnson, Statistics of Income
Division of the Internal Revenue Service

3:40 – 4:00 Discussion

4:00 – 5:00 Close of formal session and reception

DAY TWO

9:00 – 9:15 AM Welcome and summary of Day 1, Jerry Reiter, Duke University

Session 6 **9:15 – 10:30** Panel discussion: Implications of formal privacy for data users. What are users of data products concerned about if agencies move to formal privacy? Jerry Reiter, Duke University, organizer and moderator

9:15 – 10:00 Panelists: Julia Lane, New York University; Joe Salvo, New York City Department of City Planning; Mike Davern, NORC; John Friedman, Brown University, NBER

10:00 – 10:30 Discussion

Break **10:30 – 10:45**

Session 7 **10:45 – 12:00** Panel discussion: Looking forward to the near future: What can agencies do right now that achieve improved privacy protection? What do they need to investigate in the short and long term? What are intermediate solutions? Michael Hawes, organizer and moderator

10:45 – 11:25 Panelists: Tom Krenzke, Westat; Lars Vilhuber, Cornell University

11:25 – 11:45 Workshop summary – Jerry Reiter, Duke University

11:45 – 12:00 Discussion

Lunch **12:00 – 1:00**

Session 8 **1:00 – 2:00** Speed session with flash presentations: 5 minutes and 2-3 slides each for people to summarize their privacy research, problems, experiences, and solutions. Moderator: TBD

1:00 -2:00 Speakers TBD – applications accepted through May 8, 2019.

Adjourn **2:00**