

Opportunities for doing social-environmental research with little to no funding

SEPTEMBER 22, 2025, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM ET

Purpose

Graduate students, post-docs, and early-career faculty engaged in social-environmental research face an unprecedented research landscape. Decreased federal research funding will constrain their ability to continue their personal research programs, from dissertations to faculty research plans. Low-cost primary data collection, re-analysis of secondary data, creative use of available datasets, meta-analysis of existing studies, and localized field work can all be potential solutions. The [Societal Experts Action Network \(SEAN\)](#), the [Board on Environmental Change and Society \(BECS\)](#), and the [Committee on National Statistics \(CNSTAT\)](#) of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine will host a webinar that showcases practical, low-cost methods to sustain meaningful environmental and societal research during times of limited financial support. The webinar is aimed at supporting graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, and early-career faculty in environmental, social science, and associated disciplines.

9:00–9:15 am

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Gary Machlis, University Professor of Environmental Sustainability, Clemson University and Lisa Fazio, Psychology and Human Development, Vanderbilt University

9:15–9:45 am

SESSION 1: USE OF SECONDARY DATA

Cara Booker, Institute for Social and Economic Research, University of Essex

9:45–10:15 am

SESSION 2: DEVELOPING A RESEARCH QUESTION USING EXISTING DATA

Tarani Chandola, Faculty of the Social Sciences, University of Hong Kong

10:15–10:25 am

BREAK

10:25–10:55 am

SESSION 3: META-ANALYSIS

Larry Hedges, Department of Statistics and Data Science, Northwestern University

10:55–11:25 am

SESSION 4: DATA AVAILABILITY, ACCESS AND QUALITY

Bobray Bordelon, Princeton University Library

11:25–11:55 am

SESSION 5: LOCAL FIELD STUDIES, PARTNERSHIPS, AND ADJUSTED EXPECTATIONS

Rob Baldwin, Forestry and Environmental Conservation, Clemson University

11:55–12:00 pm

CONCLUSION AND CLOSE

Lisa Fazio and Gary Machlis

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Dr. Gary E. Machlis is University Professor of Environmental Sustainability at Clemson University. Prior to joining the faculty at Clemson, he served as Science Advisor to the Director, U.S. National Park Service (NPS) during both terms of the Obama administration. Dr. Machlis received his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Washington, and his Ph.D. in human ecology from Yale University. He has written numerous books and scientific papers on issues of conservation, sustainability, disaster response, and the politics of science, including *The Future of Conservation in America: A Chart for Rough Water* published by the University of Chicago Press. His newest book is *Sustainability for the Forgotten*, published in 2024, and has been nominated for the Rachel Carson Prize. At Clemson, he teaches courses on social ecology, scientific integrity, and the politics of science. Dr. Machlis has been active in international conservation and has worked in China on the giant panda, in the Galápagos Islands, and in Kenya, Cuba, and Eastern Europe. He serves on the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's Board on Environmental Change and Society, its Sustainability Science and Technology Roundtable, and is an Advisor to the Academies' Scientists and Engineers in Exile or Displaced Program. In 2010, Dr. Machlis was elected a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and is a member of *Ciencia Puerto Rico*.

Dr. Lisa Fazio is an Associate Professor of Psychology at Vanderbilt University. Her research focuses on how people learn true and false information from the world around them, and on how to correct errors in people's knowledge. Her work spans multiple disciplines including cognitive, developmental, educational, and social psychology and informs basic theories about psychological processes, while also having clear applications for practitioners, such as journalists and teachers. She received the Early Career Impact Award from the Federation of Associations in Behavioral & Brain Sciences in 2020 and the Frank Research Prize in Public Interest Communications in 2017. Dr. Fazio is a fellow of the Association for Psychological Science, the Psychonomic Society, and the Society for Personality and Social Psychology. Her research has been supported by major grants from both NSF and the Mercury Project focusing on why people believe false information and testing the effectiveness of interventions aimed at reducing the spread of and belief in misinformation.

Dr. Booker received her PhD in Health Behaviour Research from the University of Southern California. She is a social epidemiologist whose research interests focus on the drivers of social inequalities in adolescent mental health, well-being and health related behaviours. She has published several papers on digital technology and adolescent mental health. A secondary avenue of research interest is the drivers of health inequalities of sexual minorities. Dr. Booker has extensive experience using and analysing large cross-sectional and longitudinal survey data including *Understanding Society*, the UK Household Longitudinal Study and its predecessor the British Household Panel Survey, both of which are housed and managed by researchers at ISER. She has co-written a book with Professor Tarani Chandola on Archival and Secondary Data for the Sage Quantitative Research Kit in 2021. Link to book: <https://methods.sagepub.com/book/mono/archival-and-secondary-data/toc>

Tarani Chandola is a Chair Professor of Medical Sociology at the University of Hong Kong. He obtained his DPhil in Sociology from Nuffield College, University of Oxford in 1998. He is the head of the department of Sociology and the former head of Social Statistics at the University of Manchester. He is the director of the [Methods Hub](#) and a co-director of the HKU Stone Centre on Socio-Economic Inequality at the University of Hong Kong. He is a fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences and an international advisory board member of the journal [Sociology of Health & Illness](#). His research is primarily on the social determinants of health, focusing on health inequalities and psychosocial factors, particularly on understanding the role of chronic stress biomarkers in relation to psychosocial stressors over the lifecourse.

Larry V. Hedges joined the Northwestern faculty in 2005, where he is one of eight Board of Trustees Professors, the university's most distinguished academic position. He holds appointments in statistics and

data science, psychology, education and social policy, and medical social sciences. Previously, he was the Stella M. Rowley Distinguished Service Professor at the University of Chicago. In 2018, he was selected to receive the [Yidan Prize in Education Research](#). In 2023, he was selected by the [World Cultural Council](#) to receive the José Vasconcelos World [Award](#) for Education. Hedges' research straddles many fields—in particular those of statistics, sociology, psychology, and educational policy. He is best known for his work to develop statistical methods for meta-analysis in the social, medical, and biological sciences. It is a key component of evidence-based social research. Widely published, he has authored or co-authored numerous journal articles and 16 books, including the seminal [Statistical Methods for Meta-Analysis](#) (with I. Olkin, Elsevier, 1985) and [The Handbook of Research Synthesis and Meta-Analysis](#) (with H. Cooper and J. Valentine, Russell Sage, 2019). He is an elected member of the National Academy of Education and is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Statistical Association, the American Psychological Association, the Association for Psychological Science, and the American Educational Research Association. He is also a member of the [Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness](#), which established an annual endowed lecture in his honor. Hedges was nominated by President Barack Obama to the Board of Directors of the [National Board for Education Sciences](#), was confirmed by the U.S. Senate in June 2012, and was elected Chair of the Board in 2016.

Bobray Bordelon is the Economics and Finance Librarian and the Head of Data and Statistical Services at Princeton University. He is currently President of IASSIST and is a former chair of the Business Reference and Services Section (BRASS) of the American Library Association. He has been honored with the William H. Flanigan Award for Distinguished Service as an ICPSR Official Representative and the ALA BRASS Award for Excellence in Business Librarianship. He has authored various articles and chapters on a wide variety of topics, edited journals, and serves on editorial boards. He is a frequent speaker at conferences and serves on various advisory boards and governing bodies.

Robert Baldwin is a conservation biologist and landscape ecologist and is the Lloyd Endowed Chair, Professor, and Executive Director of the Clemson Experimental Forest in the College of Agriculture, Forest, and Life Sciences at Clemson University. He is also the founding director of the Hardscrabble Preserve, a 752-acre research and environmental education facility in Camden, South Carolina. He conducts research at the landscape scale to understand multiscale influences on the distribution of wildlife species, conservation planning to prioritize locations for conservation action, and the role that advanced monitoring technology can play in conserving endangered species while protecting local communities. Before joining the faculty at Clemson, he held roles with the National Zoological Park in Washington, DC, the Audubon Expedition Institute, and Antioch University.