



Breaking barriers to embrace the unknown

Jayamini Liyanage, La Trobe University, Australia

Beginning a PhD often means stepping into the unknown: unfamiliar methods, complex data, new research expectations, and an uncertain path ahead. For me, this journey also involved moving countries to pursue research in a new academic environment, which brought its own challenges of adaptation, confidence-building, and finding a sense of belonging. In this talk, I reflect on my journey as a PhD student working on multivariate meta-analysis methods for high-dimensional biological data. I share how curiosity has helped me navigate uncertainty, from learning new statistical ideas to developing tools that support researchers in evidence synthesis. Along the way, I have come to see the unknown not simply as a barrier, but as a space where growth begins. This talk is about embracing uncertainty as part of the journey. It is about how curiosity can turn uncertainty into possibility, how unfamiliar environments can become places of growth, and how early-career statisticians can begin contributing meaningfully while still learning, growing, and discovering the path ahead.

Breaking barriers to find your voice

Melissa Middleton, Murdoch Children's Research Institute, Australia

What does it mean to "find your voice" as an early-career biostatistician? In a field grounded in collaboration, this question is both personal and professional. While curiosity may draw us into statistics, developing identity and confidence in our role, perspective, and expertise is what enables meaningful contribution. In interdisciplinary settings, early-career statisticians often face barriers to finding their voice, including imposter syndrome, uncertainty about our place in the research process, and being positioned as purely technical support. In this talk, I reflect on my experiences navigating these challenges and how developing a sense of identity has been central to overcoming them. Finding my voice has meant learning to ask questions, challenge assumptions, and contribute not just analyses, but ideas.

Breaking barriers to leave a trail

Alysha De Livera, La Trobe University, Australia

Every statistical project leaves a trail: of questions asked, methods developed, collaborations built, and stories told. Yet we don't often stop to think about what it means to leave a meaningful trail for others to follow. In this talk, I reflect on the barriers and opportunities that have shaped my journey as an academic statistician and a woman of colour, working across research, consulting, and teaching, and how these experiences continue to shape the way I move through and contribute to the field. I also consider what it means to leave a trail: not just doing the work, but making the path clearer, more visible, and more supportive for those who come next!

Breaking barriers to reach goals!

Ayşe Aysin Bilgin, Macquarie University, Australia

It is very exciting to be at the beginning of one's career in Statistics. There are a lot of possibilities, and a lot of opportunities to excel. Finding the dream job, setting the right goals, adjusting the goals for changed circumstances and achieving them is easy with good mentors and right attitude. Interconnectedness, collaboration and working together helps a lot. Would you like to hear from an academic in Statistics who were able to find ways to get help whenever she needed? Would you like to learn from my experiences so that your journey towards the success is much faster? If so, come along to learn and benefit from my experiences of how to achieve your best despite the barriers on your way to top!

