

# Summary of ACTA-STInG Members' Survey

ACTA STInG was established in 2015 to bring together statisticians and clinicians working in clinical trials to increase the recognition of and collaboration between statisticians in trials across Australia. One of the objectives of the ACTA STInG is "To develop a structured support network for trial statisticians across Australia, within which different centres provide specialist support for particular trial designs or clinical areas." In order for us to develop a better understanding of the landscape of statistical input and experience in trials across the country, we conducted a short survey of ACTA STInG members. We also asked members how ACTA STInG can be used to improve recognition of and collaboration between statisticians. This survey was completed by 68 members of the group.

## Summary of respondents (n=68)

Initially members were asked about their background and experience in statistics and trials:

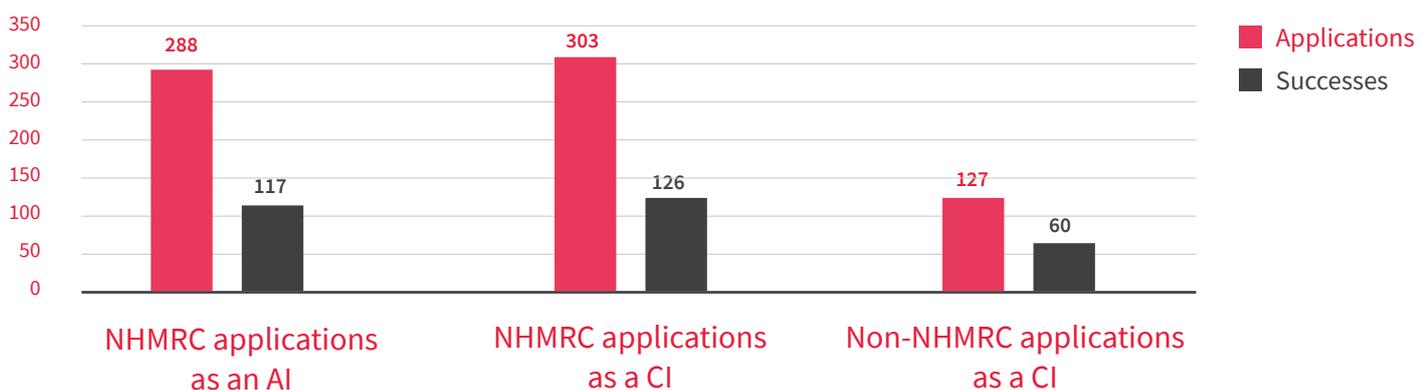


\*Of the biostatisticians, 69% have over 10 years' experience and 49% are doing methodological research either supported by grants (42%), PhD scholarships (25%), by universities (8%) or unfunded (25%).

## Grant Applications

Next, members were asked about their experience in applying for funding for trials:

### Research grants since 2010



Note the number of successes is not a subset of the number of applications due to missing data.  
NHMRC = National Health and Medical Research Council, CI=chief investigator and AI=associate investigator.

## Challenges to being a Chief Investigator on a grant application



Being recognised/  
accepted as an integral  
part of the research  
team



Importance  
of statistics is  
undervalued



Statistical funding  
deemed acceptable by  
NHMRC is not enough to  
do the project



Difficult to develop  
a competitive track  
record



Statisticians do  
not commit to the  
study the way other  
researchers do



Own research  
gets sidelined



Restriction on  
the number of CI  
positions



Lack of clinical  
knowledge

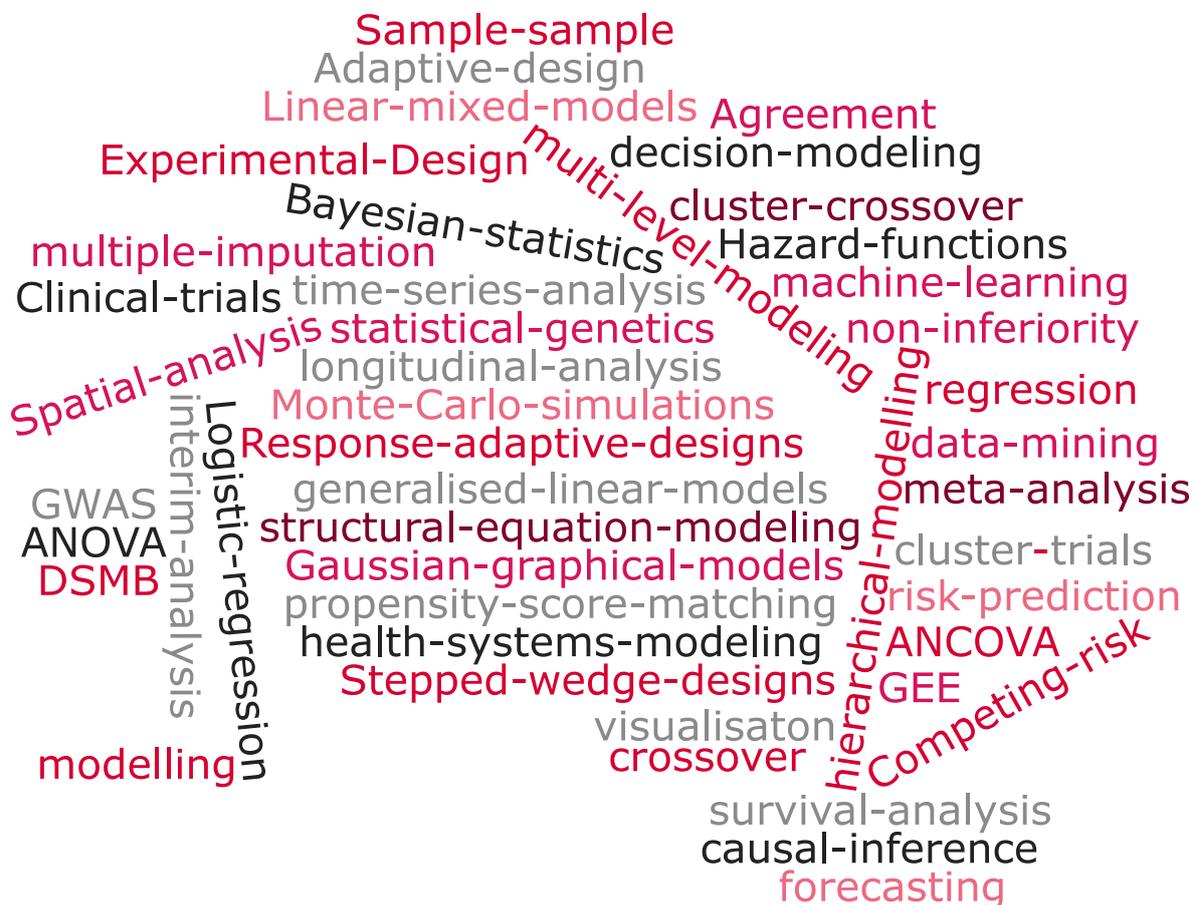


Too many other CIs



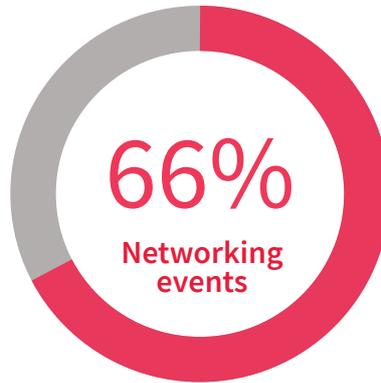
Statistical research is  
too specific/not real  
world

## Areas of statistical expertise



## How ACTA STInG can help

Finally, members were asked what initiatives would be useful for ACTA STInG to undertake to achieve the aims of the group:



### Other:

Lobby government funding agencies

Collaborate with other statistical groups

Advocate to build research infrastructure in research and teaching hospitals

Advocate to add relevant biostatistics education into medical schools

Provide networking, mentoring and career advice for early/mid-career researchers

Educate clinical investigators

Lobby the National Health and Medical Research Council  
to recognise the importance of biostatistical methodological development  
through dedicated funds

Provide online workshops