

April 11-12, 2024 Council Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

Council Members (In-Person): David Armstrong, Courtney Bell, Jon Cawthorne, Susan Frazier-Kouassi, Sandra Marquart-Pyatt, Jeff Morenoff, Gisela Sin, Janet Stamatel, Michael Steeleworthy, and Esther Wilder

Council Members Remote: Michael Cafarella

Council Members Absent: Randall Akee and Claire Bowen

ICPSR Staff (In-Person): Trent Alexander, JD Alford, Ambyr Amen-Ra, Katherine Baisden, Megan Chenoweth, Alina Conn, Linda Detterman, Aalap Doshi, Robert Franzese, Robert Gessner, Jeannette Jackson, Joy Jang, Jeff Jones, John Kubale, Kathryn Lavender, John Lemmer, Maggie Levenstein, Jared Lyle, John Marcotte, Trisha Kunst Martinez, Michelle Overholser, Holly Neilson, Darleen Poisson, Fillippo Stargell, Sandra Tang, Rujuta Umarji, and Candice Wilson

ICPSR Staff Remote: Anna Beaubien, Zachary Bennett, David Bleckley, Jon Brode, Sara Burchart, Stephanie Carpenter, Rebekah Chu, Lara Cooper, Evan Cosby, Dale Couey, Dominic DiFranco, Kelly Doonan-Reed, Amanda Draft, Julie Eady, Greg Farris, Wendi Fornoff, Chelsea Goforth, Nishit Gopani, Bill Horvath, Hassan Hodges, Samuel Imbody, Meghan Jacobs, Matthew Johnston, Euijin Jung, Kevin Kapalla, Piotr Krzystek, Kathryn Lavender, Jenny Li, Scott Lienen, Andrew Mossaad, A.J. Million, Bianca Monzon, Erin Meyer, James McNally, Elizabeth Moss, Nehemiah Naidu, Amy Pienta, Katey Pillars, Dan Pritts, Shannon Reidy, Sarah Rush, Chelsea Sample-Steele, Joseph Saul, Michael Shallcross, Bing She, Elizabeth Shook, Kyrani Simon, Alison Sweet, Sharvetta Sylvester, Alex Toma, Lia Trapaidze, David Thomas, Wendy Umbriac, Melissa Wlodkowski, Jennifer Zeiger, Sandy Zalmout, and LingLing Zhang

Approval of Minutes

Gisela Sin, Chair, ICPSR Council, began with a welcome to attendees, with some participating in person and others online. The first order of business was to approve the minutes from the last meeting. Gisela motioned to have the minutes approved. Minutes were approved unanimously.

Director's Report

Margaret Levenstein delivered the Director's Report, acknowledging the presence of attendees and welcoming new council members. She reflected on the past six months at ISR, emphasizing a sense of continuous progress. Levenstein noted the ongoing engagement in existing projects

rather than the initiation of new ones. She highlighted efforts to ensure the effectiveness and value of these endeavors for users, encompassing data collection and organizational developments. Levenstein acknowledged the challenge of summarizing the extensive activities of ISR and expressed appreciation for the comprehensive reports detailing the organization's multifaceted work.

The Director highlighted a significant event at ICPSR and ISR, celebrating Trent Alexander's appointment as the Jerome M. Clubb Collegiate Research Professor. Alexander delivered an inspiring presentation aligning his work with ICPSR's mission and history, leaving attendees motivated. While the lecture recording isn't publicly available, access may be granted upon request. Additionally, Jerome Clubb's daughter attended the celebration, representing her father, who served as ICPSR director from 1975 to 1991. Clubb advocated for quantitative history, contributing to the organization's evolution, including the name change from ICPR to ICPSR, albeit with mixed sentiment towards the resulting acronym.

ICPSR has experienced significant growth in staff over the past five years, expanding from under 100 to about 180 employees. Currently, five new staff members have recently joined ICPSR, marking a continued period of growth and change though thankfully at a somewhat slower pace than in the last two years.

Over the past five years, the Summer Program at ICPSR has undergone multiple reinventions as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath, transitioning first to fully remote and for the last two years to a hybrid format. The hybrid format allows us to maintain the benefits of both remote and in-person options. This year, the program remains hybrid, offering on-campus housing for participants to foster community and ease short stays. The schedule has evolved from a traditional four-week format to a "3 + 1" structure, with new additions like a data science short course co-sponsored with the Michigan Institute for Data Science. Despite innovations, the focus remains on core offerings. With approximately 500 registrations to date, scholarships play a crucial role, including those funded by the membership, ISR, Rackham, and the University of Michigan. These support scholars from various regions such as the Middle East, North Africa, Ukraine, and beyond. Increased support from organizations like ISR and the Weiser Center enhances accessibility, while additional scholarship programs further aid participation. Overall, the emphasis is on facilitating access and encouraging participation in the program's diverse offerings.

There have not been any major additions recently to ICPSR's sponsored topical archives. The National Addiction & HIV Data Archive Program (NAHDAP) just secured renewed funding in a narrow timeframe between the passage of the NIH budget by Congress and the expiration of needed funding. This renewal underscores the significance of NAHDAP's work and the support it receives. The Social Media Archive (SOMAR) continues to expand. Notably, its impact extends globally by providing platform data from Facebook and other major platforms, aiding compliance with regulations like the European Union's Digital Services Act and facilitating research for academic and non-academic entities worldwide. ICPSR's aging archive, NACDA, is

utilizing the DDI Lifecycle metadata standard. DDI's home is here at ICPSR and Jared Lyle serves as its executive director. DDI Lifecycle supports longitudinal and geospatially-linked data.

NACDA has been advocating for its use, collaborating with others, and working with Colectica to use Colectica's software tools. These efforts exemplify ICPSR's work in advancing archival practices and standards.

ICPSR has reorganized the membership archive, establishing the Consortium Archive Team (CAT), led by Trent Alexander, Linda Detterman, and Amy Pienta. This team aims to streamline data acquisition, curation, and sharing processes for the membership archive. Distinct collections for social science, education, health, and minority data are being developed, with leaders assigned to each. CAT is also responsible for Open ICPSR, focusing on self-published data for replication and transparency, with high-value datasets curated and incorporated into subject matter collections. This reorganization process involves collaboration across various teams and informs technological advancements, including the implementation of single stream input for data integration.

Data Jeff has recently adopted a cat, prompting an inclusive process to name this valued pet. The finalists for the cat's name are "Byte," "Catalog," "Data Byte," and "Tabby." Council members will have the opportunity to vote on the final name; absentee ballots may be necessary for those unable to attend. While there are also dog lovers within ICPSR, this decision pertains specifically to Data Jeff's cat.

Over the past six months, ICPSR has made significant advancements in technology, launching three major initiatives in January and early February. These include Researcher Passport version two, Turbocurator, and Research Data.Gov version three. Researcher Passport, a digital credential for data users, aims to be interoperable with other platforms. We have already issued around 45,000 passports since its launch. This credential is now used to authenticate users for most ICPSR applications, replacing the previous MyData accounts. The high number of passport issuances, though unexpected, reflects its adoption and ease of use. Additionally, further technological developments are planned to utilize Researcher Passport for authorizing access to restricted data and various resources beyond ICPSR.

Turbo Curator, developed for use by DataVerse, has seen active use with over 1000 views thus far. Although not yet utilized at ICPSR, the decision to debut it at DataVerse stems from DataVerse's need for metadata enhancement, a service ICPSR already provides. This move aligns with ICPSR's goal of aiding global research data efforts. Furthermore, by ensuring compatibility with other platforms, ICPSR aims for broader interoperability. Turbocurator's integration into ICPSR's single stream ingest process is envisioned for the future. It leverages AI, including ChatGPT, and ICPSR Thesaurus for metadata improvement recommendations, demonstrating a judicious application of AI technology.

Vote: Data Jeff's cat's name is Catalog

Action Items/Next Steps: None at this time

Director's Report Slides

Council Minutes April 2024

Budget and Finance Committee Report

Jon Cawthorne, chair of the budget committee, presented the budget committee report. He thanked the council and highlighted the extensive efforts put into this year's budget. He emphasized the committee's admiration for the work done by ICPSR but stated that they recommend not supporting the current budget. This recommendation is not an indication of financial trouble but a step in a necessary process. He then handed the meeting over to Gisela for further discussion.

Concerns were raised about the lack of oversight, accountability, and detailed information on the portion of the budget that goes to ISR. There was mention of a new tax included in ISR's budget, which lacked clarity regarding its necessity and benefit to ICPSR members. Council members expressed uncertainty about whether this tax was a one-time or recurring expense. The council decided that without further clarification and assurance from ISR, approving the budget would be irresponsible.

Vote: Gisela Sin requested a motion to vote on the 2025 budget. Esther Wilder made the motion and Mike Steeleworthy seconded the motion to put the budget vote. No further discussion was requested. Council members unanimously voted against the 2025 budget.

Action Items/Next Steps: Seek clarification of what the purpose is of the ISR Director's Tax that was included in ISR's calculation of the Provost tax and what it entails in future years. A revised budget should be submitted to Council before the start of the new fiscal year on July 1, 2024.

Slides: None

Membership, Acquisitions, and User Support

Esther Wilder presented the Membership, Acquisitions, and User Support Committee report highlighting ICPSR's efforts to increase data deposits to the new Consortium Archive. They have engaged in outreach activities such as posters, professional meetings, social media, and webinars to encourage data deposits and support ICPSR users. Esther discussed the Consortium Archives Teams (CAT) and their relevance to the acquisitions process. CAT replaces the former general archive to enhance acquisition activities. The senior leadership includes Trent Alexander, Allyson Flaster, Lynette Hoelter, and Amy Pienta with specific leaders for social science, education, and health activities. CAT staff, including project managers, curate data from various sources, including minimally processed ICPSR studies, making them more suitable for ICPSR. Lynette was also given an opportunity to provide additional insights from CAT members.

Lynette elaborated on the additional efforts of the Consortium Archives Teams (CAT), emphasizing activities not previously focused on by the general archive.

Esther highlighted key points about Acquisitions, focusing on new NIH guidelines for data sharing. A workshop related to these new policies will be held this summer, aimed at University of Michigan faculty. There was a discussion about extending this to faculty from other institutions who may have NIH grants. Additionally, a developer guide for sharing qualitative data was released after the last Council meeting in October 2023, and it has already seen significant downloads and engagement.

The Acquisitions staff has been active in engaging with research communities, including negotiating data transfers. Notable efforts include the transfer of the COVID-19 Trends and Impact Surveys (CTIS) and activities related to the [Detroit Metropolitan Area Community Studies](#). Overall, there has been significant activity to acquire diverse data sets for ICPSR.

Updates on user support have highlighted historical efforts in addressing formatting issues and handling user inquiries through email triage. Recently, they added a one-third FTE position focused on restricted data users. An important user support person is planning to retire, prompting planning for their replacement. Since the last council meeting in October 2022, they resolved 3,493 user support tickets by February 2023, indicating significant ongoing support efforts.

Goals for user support include updating user support manager roles and responsibilities, improving existing documentation, and creating new documentation. The researcher passport process, an important development, had a major update on January 29, 2024.

A video explains that the researcher passport acts like a regular password for seamless data access and control, integrating with Gmail and other applications. While there were initial issues with proxy servers blocking some users, these problems have been resolved, bringing support tickets back to regular levels.

During the meeting, proposed changes to membership fees for FY2026 beginning July 1, 2025 were discussed. At the time of membership fee analysis, the Employment Cost Index was running at 4.2% and the CPI at 3.1%. ICPSR staff recommended an increase closer to the CPI for smaller institutions and to the Employment Cost Index for R1s. ICPSR staff analyzed various fee increase options, and combined with ongoing feedback from member institutions, recommended a fee increase of 4.6% across Research Extensive Highest academic institutions and a 3.5% increase for all other institutions. The proposed structure aims to ensure the fee structure is equitable and manageable for all member institutions based on their usage of on-demand data, restricted-use data services, and quantitative methods training.

Vote: Gisela Sin requested the Council to vote on the FY 2026 Membership Rate Card. Esther Wilder so moved; Susan Kouassi-Frazier seconded. Council unanimously voted to approve the FY 2026 Membership Rate Card.

Action Items/Next Steps: None

Membership, Acquisitions, and User Support Slides

Summer Program Committee Report

The Summer Program Committee Report was presented by Gisela Sin. The ICPSR Summer Program aims to provide training and instruction on research methods and data management to the research community. The program is organized by a group led by Robert Franzese, with key roles filled by Stephanie Carpenter (Program Manager), Sandy Zalmout (Support Team), Laura Zimmerman (Administrative Assistant), and a new staff member, Lia Trapaidze (Administrative Assistant).

For the 2023 Summer Program, there were two 3-week general sessions and one 1-week interim session, with 96 offerings. The days were long due to the condensed format, which was challenging for both staff and participants. Housing was offered through the University of Michigan for the first time, although it was less utilized than anticipated. Adjustments were made for 2024 based on this experience. Registration returned to pre-pandemic levels, with a 50% increase in in-person attendance during the general sessions, marking a successful transition back from the pandemic's online-only format. The return to in-person sessions facilitated valuable connections and networking among students and faculty, contributing to the program's overall success.

For 2024, the ICPSR Summer Program will revert to four-week general sessions and continue with a hybrid format. The first week will consist of four hours of math and computing classes in the morning and afternoon. Weeks two to four will feature methods courses for three hours each in the morning and afternoon, allowing time for homework and socializing. A round-robin session will be held on the first Monday of the second week to introduce all classes, helping students select classes and adjust their schedules.

The program will offer over 100 classes, including 32 methods classes, 11 math and computing classes, and 50 topical workshops. Most of the topical workshops will be online only. A new partnership with the Michigan Institute for Data Science will introduce the Social Data Science Summer Academy, a one-week program in August. The workshop will be heavily subsidized (by MIDAS) for University of Michigan faculty and graduate students.

Improvements include an upgraded registration portal that consolidates all information and searches for workshops and classes. Approximately 170 scholarships will be available, with

around 40% dedicated to diversity fellowships. The Ukrainian fellowships have increased by 20% for 2024. The application window for fellowships has been extended by three weeks post-registration opening.

As of now, 2024 registration levels are similar to 2023. The program aims to increase in-person attendance and continue improving its financial balance. Overall, the program is on track for a successful year with a few challenges to address, particularly increasing in-person participation and maintaining financial stability.

Robert Franzese discussed the relocation of the Summer Program headquarters from Helen Newberry to the ISR Thompson building. Previously, the program staff used Helen Newberry during the summer, costing \$100,000 annually. However, due to minimal actual usage, they decided to exit the contract. The new headquarters at ISR Thompson will be more cost-effective and will feature flags and decorations to enhance the atmosphere. Franzese noted that the new location should meet the needs of faculty and staff better than Helen Newberry.

Franzese provided context for the Summer Program's financial details: while the revenue figure was reported as \$1.8 million, the actual figure is \$1.9 million when accounting for scholarships, including \$100,000 from ICPSR and another \$60,000 for diversity scholarships.

Lastly, Franzese mentioned potential changes to registration fees, suggesting that the current pricing structure may not be optimal. He highlighted the disparity between the costs for 20-hour and 40-hour workshops and indicated that adjustments might be needed in the future.

Action Items/Next Steps: None
Summer Program Slides

Technology and Standards Committee Report

Mike Steeleworthy presented the ICPSR Technology and Standards Committee Report to the Council, which includes four units: Curation, Metadata & Preservation, Computing and Network Services (CNS), and Product Management/UX. The report covered each unit's achievements, challenges, and goals, focusing on themes of communication, change resilience, and achievement.

The **Curation Unit** is responsible for the preparation of social science data collections from sponsored and member-funded projects for permanent archiving and dissemination. Their achievements have been the development of revised curation workflows and roles, reducing effort and time for all levels of curation since 2022. Curation activities include disclosure risk reviews, organizing study documents, composing robust metadata, and preparing data for analysis. Internally, the unit has addressed improved retention and morale initiatives, including revised role descriptions for two positions. The Curation Unit's challenges are balancing non-

standard workflows with standardization while maintaining data quality. Retention has been an issue, with two departures since October 2023. Another challenge is implementing curation standard process changes without technology upgrades. The Curation Unit's goals are to improve retention and morale, develop new career paths and promotions, integrate career training and development, and document non-standard workflows with other units to understand and operationalize them.

The **Metadata and Preservation** unit develops and maintains standards for consistent metadata, policies for preserving digital assets, and extending a bibliography linking ICPSR data to over 112,000 analytical works. Their achievements are that they submitted an application for recertification by [Core Trust Seal](#); development of [ICPSR Metadata Portal](#) (public metadata resource); ongoing development work, such as the RDE Metadata Schema and the new metadata export API daily operations, including: Bibliography: 3800+ new citations discovered and Metadata for new studies: 200+ final metadata approval for new/updated studies. One challenge the unit has faced is identifying when Metadata and Preservation input is required for product development., e.g., for bulk editing tools to facilitate editing and revising legacy metadata. The Metadata and Preservation unit's goals are to complete development of Metadata Export API for Discovery & Access; enhance documentation for the Metadata Documentation Portal; finalize and implement the DDI Alliance 2024-27 Strategic Plan; approve and implement the ICPSR Policy on Harmful Language; and support metadata requirements within the Research Data Ecosystem (RDE).

The **Computing and Network Services (CNS)** supports computer software development and system security needs. Their achievements have been that several new releases including the Researcher Passport (authentication and identity management), Turbocurator for the Harvard Dataverse, and new features to ResearchDataGov. Collaboration and background work that facilitates data curation, security and access, and discovery. Other projects big and small that do not get the spotlight - Quality Assurance/Quality Check improvements, project management. CNS is standardizing product release cycles. Balancing technical debt with desire for new projects. Reinforcing communication lines that connect technical decisions with business goals and outcomes. CNS's goals are meaningful 12-week release cycles, Quality Assurance/Quality Check and Project Management commitments.

The **Product Management and User Experience (UX)** Unit is a new ICPSR unit focusing on product management and user experience. It is a reorganization of existing teams that had been in CNS and Membership & Communication. This unit aims to provide a user-centered design, ensuring privacy, and developing modern, accessible front-end interfaces. Their achievements include Product Releases (e.g., Turbocurator, ResearcherPassport, RDG enhancements). New unit, leadership team, and roles. Product Lead role and MARs established, onboarded. Design Lead role and MARs established, onboarded. Product team reorganization (i.e., coalescing 4 teams, resourcing, and prioritization). The Product Management and User Experience (UX) unit's challenges include that it is a new unit on "Development and Maturation." Design velocity

(i.e., “we take longer than we think” [with good reasons]). Their goals are piloting new study homepages by early summer; implementing improved development velocity with 6-week cycles and enhanced scope management; continuing development of resource management systems and practices; and balancing UX and Tech Sustainability. They aim to improve user experience without creating unsustainable technical debt, which can lead to long-term capital and operating costs for ICPSR. Improve development velocity with six-week cycles and enhanced scope management. Enhance scope management to improve target setting and threshold management. Support continued development on resource management systems.

Action Items/Next Steps: None
Technology and Standards Slides

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned April 12, 2024 at 1:00 p.m.
Next Council meeting will be October 3-4, 2024.