CAREER PROFILE

Janet van Niekerk

I am associate editor for *Bayesian Analysis* (IF 3.7, Q1) and *Statistics and Computing* (IF 2.0, Q1).

I have been a Research Scientist at KAUST since 2021.

I am a Bayesian statistician with a focus on computing and biostatistical applications.

Publications: 31
Citations: 420+

Google h-index : 12
Scopus h-index : 7
Web of Science h-index : 6

I am currently employed as a Research Scientist at King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST) in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. KAUST is the highest-ranking university in the Times Higher Education Arab University Rankings 2023. In 2016/2017 KAUST ranked #1 in the Citations per Faculty list of the QS World University Rankings, outshining institutions like Princeton and MIT.

I have been at KAUST since 2018; first as a post-doctoral fellow, then I was promoted to Research Scientist Level 3 and in 2024 I was promoted to the highest level of Research Scientist, Level 4. I was recently featured at KAUST as a voice of Women in STEM (https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=1170061738452763&id=100063468433448&__rdr).

I am the current International Statistical Institute's (ISI) and International Biometric Society's (IBS) Young Ambassador for 2024/2025, awarded at the IBC meeting in 2024. The ISI-IBS Young Ambassadors award is a joint initiative between the International Statistical Institute and the International Biometric Society to promote collaboration among young statisticians, (https://www.ibc2024.org/events/showcase). I serve on the ISI nominations committee as well as the ISI Committee on Women in Statistics for which I am the webmaster (https://www.isiweb.org/committee/committee-women-statistics).

I am an Associate Editor for the *Bayesian Analysis* journal (2022-2025), and for the *Statistics and Computing* journal (2025-2029). I have been selected as a reviewer for various esteemed top-ranked journals such as the Journal of the American Statistical Association (JASA). Bayesian Analysis (BA), Journal of the Royal Statistical Society (JRSSA, JRSSB and JRSSC), Statistics in Medicine, Statistical Methods in Medical Research, Biostatistics, and many more. I have applied for an NRF rating in 2025.

My journey however started many years ago, at the University of Pretoria.

I obtained a BSc (Actuarial and Financial Mathematics) in 2010, a BSc Hons (Mathematical Statistics) in 2011 and an MSc (Mathematical Statistics) in 2012, all Cum Laude from the University of Pretoria. For my Honours and Masters studies I received the Departmental prize for the best student in those programs, respectively. I graduated with a PhD (Mathematical Statistics) in 2017 at the University of Pretoria as the youngest PhD graduate in that program in the history of the University (https://www.netwerk24.com/Netwerk24/jy-hoef-nie-op-te-hou-lewe-om-jou-drome-te-bereik-nie20170411).

My PhD supervisors were Prof. Andriëtte Bekker and Prof. Mohammad Arashi. In 2015 I won the South African Statistical Association (SASA) prize for the best oral student presentation at the annual conference of SASA.
In 2013 and 2015 I won the World Bank Fund award from the International Statistical Institute, and in 2018 I won the International Society for Bayesian analysis travel award for ISBA 2018. In 2018 I was also awarded a research development grant (RDP) from the NRF.

I was appointed as a Lecturer at the Department of Statistics, University of Pretoria in 2013. Following my PhD graduation, I was promoted to a Senior Lecturer at the University of Pretoria where I also received the Teaching Award for the Department of Statistics in 2017,

and further nominated as the NAS faculty candidate for the Teaching Laureate Awards for Excellence in Teaching at the University of Pretoria.

In 2018 I joined KAUST as a postdoctoral fellow under the mentorship of Prof. Håvard Rue. Since 2021, I am a Research Scientist in the Bayesian Computational Statistics and Modeling (BayesComp) group at KAUST where I conduct research in computational approaches for Bayesian inference, with mainly biostatistical applications. I also support and supervise postgraduate and visiting students, and collaborate with peers on various projects. I am responsible for organizing short courses internationally as well as providing admin and logistical support to the BayesComp group. When necessary, I act as a substitute instructor for Masters and PhD courses at KAUST.
Since 2018, I have taught parts of various postgraduate modules at the Universities of Pretoria and Stellenbosch, as well as an undergraduate module at the University of Pretoria during the pandemic.

I was on maternity leave on four occasions, in 2013/2014, 2016/2017, 2019/2020 and 2022/2023.

Nonetheless, I have and am supervising postgraduate students of which four have graduated with PhD (one in South Africa and three international) and seven with a Masters (four in South Africa and three international). I have acted as an examiner for numerous PhD theses' and Master's dissertations, and have been selected as an NRF rating application reviewer on two occasions.

I was an invited speaker for ten international conferences during 2019-2025, a plenary speaker for an international survival analysis conference (WASA 2024 in Brasilia, Brazil) and a keynote speaker for the 2025 international INLA workshop at the University of Glasgow (https://dcastrocamilo.github.io/INLA-PastPresentFuture/keynotes.html). I have been invited as a discussant of an invited paper for the 2025 O'Bayes international conference in Athens, Greece (https://obayes25.aueb.gr/speakers.html). I have been on various international research visits, most notably the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, USA in 2024.

I was awarded a research development (RDP) grant and a teaching development grant (TDG) from the NRF in 2018. I am a co-investigator for a research grant amounting to funding of US$177500 funded by KAUST in 2023 for 2024-2025. Based on my current list of publications I have received 420+ citations. The majority of my publications are in Q1 (52%) and Q2 (17.4%) journals, while three works (13%) are published in one of the top 25 ranked journals in Statistics and Probability.