

Nils Sturma

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<https://nilssturma.github.io/>

Academic Employment

- 09/2025 - today **Postdoctoral Researcher at EPFL**
Chair of Biostatistics (Mats Stensrud)
Also collaborating with the Chair of Mathematical Statistics (Victor Panaretos)
- 10/2024 - 08/2025 **Postdoctoral Researcher at Technical University of Munich**
Research group Mathematical Statistics (Mathias Drton)
Topics: Graphical Models, Causality, Algebraic Statistics, High-dim. Statistics

Education

- 04/2021 - 09/2024 **Ph.D. in Mathematical Statistics**
Technical University of Munich (TUM), Germany
Advisor: Mathias Drton
Thesis: Identifiability and Statistical Inference in Latent Variable Modeling
Grade: summa cum laude; date of defense: September 24, 2024.
- 09/2022 - 12/2022 **Research stay at MIT/ Broad Institute in Cambridge, USA**
Working with Caroline Uhler
Project: Unpaired Multi-Domain Causal Representation Learning
- 10/2018 - 01/2021 **Master in Mathematical Finance and Actuarial Science**
Technical University of Munich (TUM), Germany
Thesis: Testing Algebraic Constraints on Statistical Parameters
Final grade: 1.2, with distinction (scale: 1 best, 6 worst)
- 02/2020 - 07/2020 **Semester abroad at University of Melbourne, Australia**
- 10/2014 - 01/2018 **Bachelor in Mathematics**
Albert-Ludwigs-University of Freiburg, Germany
Thesis: Formal Group Laws
Minor: Management
Final grade: 1.1 (scale: 1 best, 6 worst)
- 09/2016 - 02/2017 **Semester abroad at Universidad de Sevilla, Spain**

Publications and Preprints

- 8 **Nils Sturma**, Mathias Drton. Trek-Based Parameter Identification for Linear Causal Models With Arbitrarily Structured Latent Variables. *Submitted*, <https://arxiv.org/abs/2507.18170>.
- 7 **Nils Sturma**, Miriam Kranzlmüller, Irem Portakal, Mathias Drton. Matching Criterion for Identifiability in Sparse Factor Analysis. *Submitted*, <http://arxiv.org/abs/2502.02986>.
- 6 Dennis Leung, **Nils Sturma**. Singularity-Agnostic Incomplete U-statistics for Testing Polynomial Constraints in Gaussian Covariance Matrices. *Submitted*, <https://arxiv.org/abs/2401.02112>.
- 5 Mathias Drton, Alexandros Grosdos, Irem Portakal, **Nils Sturma***. Algebraic Sparse Factor Analysis. *SIAM Journal on Applied Algebra and Geometry*, 2025, Vol. 9, No. 2, 279-309.
- 4 Yulia Alexandr, Jane Coons, **Nils Sturma***. Mixtures of Discrete Decomposable Graphical Models. *Algebraic Statistics*, 2024, Vol. 15, No. 2, 269-293.
- 3 **Nils Sturma**, Mathias Drton, Dennis Leung. Testing Many Constraints in Possibly Irregular Models Using Incomplete U-Statistics. *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society Series B: Statistical Methodology*, 2024, Vol. 86, No. 4, 987-1012.
- 2 **Nils Sturma**, Chandler Squires, Mathias Drton, Caroline Uhler. Unpaired Multi-Domain Causal Representation Learning. *Advances in Neural Information Processing Systems 36, NeurIPS 2023, Spotlight*.
- 1 Rina Foygel Barber, Mathias Drton, **Nils Sturma***, Luca Weihs. Half-Trek Criterion for Identifiability of Latent Variable Models. *Annals of Statistics*, 2022, Vol. 50, No. 6, 3174-3196.

* Shared first authorship/ alphabetical order of the authors.

Awards/ Fellowships

Award for Good Teaching	Third place for best exercise session (High-dimensional Statistics). Awarded by the Mathematics Student Council of the TUM.
SIAM Student Travel Award	Competitive travel award for the 2023 SIAM Conference on Applied Algebraic Geometry.
MDSI/Linde PhD Fellowship	Competitive grant awarded to PhD students at TUM working on topics related to data science. The grant consists of living expenses.
Alumni-prize 2018	Every year the prize is awarded by Alumni Freiburg e.V. to the two most outstanding theses (Bachelor or Master) at the Faculty of Mathematics at the University of Freiburg.

Teaching Experience

Substitute Instructor	In total four lectures of the master course Graphical Models at TUM (summer terms 2023 and 2025). One lecture of the master course High-dimensional Statistics at TUM (summer term 2024).
Teaching Assistant	Graphical Models at TUM, summer term 2025. High-dimensional Statistics at TUM, summer term 2024. Linear Algebra 2 at University of Freiburg, summer terms 2016 and 2017.
Master Seminars	Advances in Statistical Inference at TUM, winter term 2024/2025.
Mentorship	Jannis Friebe, Master thesis, 2025. Daniels Birmans, Bachelor thesis, 2025. Mingyi Guo, Master thesis, 2025. Carolina Kornitzer, Bachelor thesis, 2025. Miriam Kranzlmüller, Interdisciplinary Project, 2024. Javier Yraola Meins, Bachelor thesis, 2023. Moritz Ebert, Master thesis, 2023. Julian Rittmaier, Bachelor thesis, 2022.
Upskilling	“ProLehre” Onboarding Course offered by TUM: Designed to prepare instructors for their teaching task. Elective Module: Supervising Students’ Theses.

Professional Activities

- Reviewer for Annals of Statistics, Biometrika, Electronic Journal of Statistics, Journal of Machine Learning Research, Bernoulli, Algebraic Statistics, La Matematica, CLear conference.
- Part of the organizing committee for the 2025 *CLear conference*.
- Co-organizer of the Workshop *Causal Inference for Time Series Data* at UAI 2024.
- Co-organizer of the *European Workshop on Algebraic Statistics and Graphical Models* 2024.
- Co-organizer of the minisymposium *Algebraic Methods in Graphical Models* at the SIAM Conference on Applied Algebraic Geometry 2023.

Talks & Presentations

02/2025	Statistics Seminar at University College Dublin, Ireland. Invited talk on <i>Identifiability in Sparse Factor Analysis</i> .
08/2024	Bernoulli-IMS World Congress in Probability and Statistics, Bochum, Germany. Invited talk on <i>Identifiability in Sparse Factor Analysis</i> .
03/2024	Statistics Seminar at University of Melbourne, Australia.

Invited talk on *Identifiability in Sparse Factor Analysis*.

12/2023 NeurIPS, New Orleans, USA.

Poster presentation on *Unpaired Multi-Domain Causal Representation Learning*.

07/2023 SIAM Conference on Applied Algebraic Geometry, Eindhoven, Netherlands.

Contributed talk on *Introduction to Algebraic Methods in Graphical Models*.

04/2023 Workshop on Causal Representation Learning, Tübingen, Germany.

Contributed talk on *Unpaired Multi-Domain Causal Representation Learning*.

03/2023 YES Causal Inference Workshop, Eindhoven, Netherlands.

Poster presentation on *Parameter Identifiability in Latent Variable Models*.

03/2023 German Probability and Statistics Days, Essen, Germany.

Contributed talk on *Testing Many and Possibly Singular Polynomial Constraints*.

08/2022 17. Doktorand:innentreffen der Stochastik, Klagenfurt, Austria.

Contributed talk on *Half-Trek Criterion for Identifiability of Latent Variable Models*.

06/2022 IMS Annual Meeting in Probability and Statistics, London, UK.

Contributed talk on *Half-Trek Criterion for Identifiability of Latent Variable Models*.

Industry Experience

09/2018 - 02/2021 **Part-time internship in the Data Analytics department at Zeppelin**

Development of machine learning applications for the construction industry.

Focus on predictive maintenance, demand forecasting and process optimization.

04/2019 - 08/2019 **BMW & TUM Data Innovation Lab (project)**

Deep learning approach to predict lane changes using vehicle sensor data.

01/2017 - 03/2021 **Freelancer at Ernst-Klett-Verlag**

Proofreading of mathematical school books.

02/2018 - 07/2018 **Internship at BMW**

Controlling; inner-year targets of entire BMW Group.