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Join us for the NJ Acts Biostatistics and Epidemiology Workshop Series:

Designing Multi-Site Studies for External Validity: Site Selection via Synthetic Purposive Sampling

Thursday, April 9, 2026, 12:00pm – 1:30pm over Zoom

Multi-site experiments have become a popular strategy to address the most common and challenging external validity concerns – whether and how experimental results generalize across sites, e.g., states, schools, and hospitals. Under such studies, scholars conduct a randomized experiment in each site and evaluate whether findings generalize across sites. Despite the potential, there has been little guidance on the fundamental research design question—how should we select sites for external validity? In this workshop, we learn the challenges of existing approaches and then introduce a new, simple approach, called the synthetic purposive sampling (SPS). SPS combines ideas of purposive sampling and the synthetic control method—it selects diverse sites such that non-selected sites are well approximated by the weighted average of the selected sites. This workshop illustrates its general applicability using both experimental and observational studies.

Presenter:



Naoki Egami, PhD

Associate Professor, Department of Political Science
at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Target Audience:

Anyone interested in causal inference, randomized experiments, generalization, external validity, and multi-site experiments.



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For access to our Canvas page and all our workshop recordings,
contact natale.mazzaferro@rutgers.edu