The Washington Statistical Society
cordially invites you to the
Herriot Memorial Lecture
John L. Eltinge, U.S. Census Bureau
Positive-Sum Innovation
June 5, 2018, 1:30-3:00 pm, Reception to Follow
Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center, Rooms 1 and 2
2 Massachusetts Ave NE, Washington DC
Metro Stop: Union Station on the Red Line

John L. Eltinge, the recipient of the 2017 Herriot Award, is the Assistant Director for Research and Methodology at the US Census Bureau. He previously served as the Senior Mathematical Statistician at the Bureau of Labor Statistics and on the faculty of Texas A&M University. John is chair of the Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology, and he serves as associate editor for the *Journal of Official Statistics* and for the *Survey Methodology Journal*. He is a past president of the Washington Statistical Society, served as the overall program chair for the 2003 Joint Statistical Meetings, and is a Fellow of the American Statistical Association.

Abstract: Large-scale statistical organizations often make substantial investments to produce innovations in methodology, technology and management. In recent years, prominent examples have included efforts to capture and integrate multiple data sources (including those described as "non-designed," "organic" or "big" data); to reduce aggregate costs of production; and to expand production of estimates for small geographical areas or other small domains.

These innovations generally are intended to increase the long-term value of the statistical information products and services delivered to stakeholders. In many cases, however, progress toward that admirable goal has been hampered by limitations on available technical and managerial information, and by operational constraints.

This paper explores the extent to which practical approaches to these challenges may follow from treating innovation work as a set of positive-sum decisions. Seven topics receive principal attention:

(1) Realistic assessment of the prospective value of innovations intended for, respectively, (1.a) improvement in the profile of quality, risk and cost for current statistical information products and services; and (1.b) development and production of qualitatively new forms of statistical information.

(2) Schematic models for quality, risk and cost structures attributable to: (2.a) current production processes; (2.b) prospective future production processes (including both incremental changes and disruptive innovations); and (2.c) transitions from (2.a) to (2.b).

(3) Development and use of transparent empirical results that may inform discussion of (1) and (2); and realistic evaluation of limitations on that empirical information.

(4) Management structures that provide concrete mechanisms and incentives for carefully focused collaboration on the development and implementation of innovations; and that support the practical recognition and re-investment of the value produced through innovations.

(5) Special challenges and opportunities that arise from the fact that statistical information products and services, and related methodology, are often viewed as public goods.

(6) Communication of concepts and results from (1)-(5) in ways that will resonate with internal and external stakeholders; and that will help those stakeholders focus on improvements in value, and not on formal novelty as such.

(7) Practical ways to gauge the impact of changing societal and economic conditions on some aspects of (1)-(6).

These topics are illustrated with two running examples.

The discussion closes with a summary of open questions in related areas of methodology and management. These questions highlight a wide range of opportunities for research and for improvement of stakeholder value.

Location Information: Bureau of Labor Statistics Janet Norwood Conference Center, Rooms 1 & 2

To be placed on the seminar attendance list at the Bureau of Labor Statistics, you need to e-mail your name, affiliation, and seminar name to wss_seminar@bls.gov (underscore after 'wss') by noon at least two days in advance of the seminar. Please bring a photo ID to the seminar. BLS is located at 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE. Use the Red Line to Union Station. Parking in the area

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