

James LeSage
2021 NARSC Walter Isard Award

Dr. James LeSage is Professor Emeritus at Texas State University where he was the Fields Endowed Chair in Urban and Regional Economics. Prior to that he held academic appointments at University of Toledo and Bowling Green State University. Dr. LeSage received his Ph.D. in Economics from Boston College. Dr. LeSage is a Fellow of the Spatial Econometrics Association, the Southern Regional Science Association, and the Regional Science Association International. In 2019, Dr. LeSage was given the Jean Paelinck Award for Distinguished Sustained Scholarship in Regional Science Methods by the Regional Science Association International. Dr. LeSage currently serves as co-editor of *Journal of Spatial Econometrics* and a member of numerous editorial boards. He has previously served as co-editor of *Papers in Regional Science* and editor of several handbook chapters or special issues and has been an active member in each of the regional science associations across the U.S.

Dr. LeSage's path-breaking work in spatial and Bayesian econometrics has resulted in nearly 150 journal articles and published book chapters. He has also co-edited books for *Advances in Econometrics*. Professor LeSage's work has been cited 17,762 times and he is listed among top published authors in Regional Science and Applied Econometrics. Much of Dr. LeSage's work has focused on Bayesian estimation of linear and non-linear spatial process models as well as their interpretation in cross-sectional and panel settings. Dr. LeSage applied his work across a wide range of topics including trade, knowledge spillovers, natural disasters, transportation networks, and many more. Beyond his theoretical contributions to spatial economics, Dr. LeSage's lasting contributions were synthesized in the instant classic *Introduction to Spatial Econometrics* co-authored with Kelley Pace. This classic has become the "go to" reference for students and scholars of spatial econometrics and is reflective of the 6,412 citations to the book.

In the spirit of Walter Isard, Dr. LeSage has a reputation of being accessible and making his work accessible to those around him. As one nominee noted, "I first met Jim at SRSA when I was a grad student. Jim always took the time to answer my questions, engage in conversation, and answer follow-up questions over e-mail." Throughout his career he has also posted his original code in his "Spatial Econometrics Toolbox" listed on his [website](#) and in doing so making his work accessible to the public. This toolbox has enabled hundreds of regional science scholars to apply state-of-the-art spatial econometric methods across a range of research questions. Without this toolbox the wide-spread use of spatial econometrics now so common in the applied regional science would have been greatly hindered. Through this toolbox and his willingness to spend countless hours with students and colleague Jim has become a mentor to many of us.

the North American Regional Science Council is therefore pleased to present the 2021 Walter Isard Award for distinguished contributions to regional science to Dr. James LeSage.