

EDITORIAL

Welcome to Volume 11 of the *International Journal of Community Currency Research*. When the two founding Editors, Mark Jackson from Australia and Colin Williams from the United Kingdom, decided in 1996 to collaborate in order to establish this journal, they both knew that they were part of something important but what they did not envisage was quite how important and long-lasting the community currency movement would prove to be.

Indeed, for the sake of those only recently arriving at community currencies, it is perhaps worthwhile taking a few moments using this editorial to reflect on those early days when things were rather different from today. Firstly, when IJCCR was first established in 1997, there was no readily available common language that could be instantly drawn upon to talk about what was happening throughout the world. Indeed, Mark Jackson and I agonised in countless e-mail inter-changes what the journal should be called. At the time, the multiple and diverse experiments in local and community currencies in fact had no widespread and common overarching name and many of the texts written in earlier eras were only just starting to be uncovered and re-discussed in the light of the contemporary experiments. Today, such problems no longer exist. Not only are there common terms in everyday parlance that allow one to name this multitude of experiments but also a variety of ways of thinking about such currencies that can be drawn upon along with many examples of 'good' and 'bad' practice from which those venturing into this field can learn. We now share a common language which we use to discuss together what we widely recognise to be community currencies.

Secondly, when this journal was established, there was no real 'home' where those interested in community currencies could congregate to voice and discuss their issues and concerns. In part for that reason, we decided to establish the IJCCR discussion group so as to facilitate such exchanges. Today, however, there is again an increasingly diverse array of places in which such activists can come together and discuss community currencies with each other.

Thirdly, when this journal commenced, nobody had much of a clue about either the magnitude or character of the community currency movement. Indeed, it sometimes felt in those early days like we were all 'explorers' as we each slowly realised that we were everywhere even if not then known to each other. Today, of course, knowledge and understanding about the extent and nature of community currencies is much greater, as displayed for example in the article on the Worldwide Database of Complementary Currency Systems reported in this Volume.

Fourth and finally, at the time when this journal was established, there was no real sense of the objectives of community currencies and their participants. Today, of course, and having gone through a multitude of heated debates and arguments about their major contribution to sustainable development, green consumption, community cohesion,

economic development, small businesses, local markets, and so forth, we now recognise that the intentions and values underpinning community currencies are not only diverse rather than singular but also fluid rather than static.

Using the year of 1997 as our base-period, in sum, there is little doubt that ‘progress’ (however defined) has been considerable in understanding community currencies and deepening our knowledge about them. That much is for sure. Of course, what the next ten years holds in store for the community currency movement nobody can know. What is for certain, however, is that community currencies will not remain as they are. Changes will occur. What these changes will be is not a matter of fate. It is in our hands. I invite you all to make your contributions to shaping the movement. Whether you choose to contribute via the IJCCR discussion group or the written-article format of the journal, your contributions are welcome.

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