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EDITORIAL - Volume 4

Welcome to Volume 4 of the *International Journal of Community Currency Research*. The journal has now been in existence for four years. That short time span has seen some significant progress in community currencies.

When this journal was instigated, knowledge of community currencies such as LETS and time dollars tended to be confined to a very narrow spectrum of the population. Four years later, however, recognition of their existence amongst the general public appears to have become much more widespread as has the depth of knowledge of how they work.

Indeed, it is not just the public who have started to recognise their existence. During the last four years, there has been a tremendous growth in interest from governments throughout the advanced economies. In many nations, the result is that community currencies have started to be included on government policy agendas. Of course, some in the community currency movement will doubtless have qualms about the objectives behind these policy initiatives as well as the precise ways in which community currencies are being introduced. However, a moment of reflection will reveal that to bring community currencies into government policy-making circles in such a short space of time is a remarkable feat for all involved.

Today, therefore, the need for the IJCCR has become more acute than ever before. Practitioners and academics are being asked by government, the media and public to provide guidance so that evidence-based policy-making can occur. In this emerging context, the function of IJCCR as the key forum for the presentation of new evidence, ideas and practices as well as their discussion, is becoming ever more necessary.

It is the intention of the Editors that IJCCR will retain this position as the principal international journal on community currencies and will endeavour to do all that it can to provide a forum for discussion of new evidence, ideas and practices. In that regard, we urge you to join the [IJCCR discussion group](#). The value of an electronic journal is that learning is not a one-way process whereby the writer informs the reader. Instead, it enables more democratic forms of discussion and debate about the ideas, evidence and practices being formulated and advocated.

In the first three volumes, this journal reported evidence, ideas and practices from numerous countries around the world. In Volume 4, the same trend continues. The first paper, by Caron Caldwell, examines the motivations of people for joining LETS in Britain, whilst the second paper, by Peter Liesch and Dawn Birch, considers community-based *LETS*ystems in the Australian context. Other papers will be added during the rest of the year.

I hope that you will enjoy this Volume and the resulting discussions. Finally, let me encourage all of you to write papers for this journal. The strength of a journal, after all, ultimately relies on the quality of its contributors. Without your submissions, IJCCR cannot succeed. If you have ideas for contributions or completed papers, then we would like you to consider IJCCR as the outlet for their publication. All publications are double-blind peer reviewed and we will endeavour to do all that we can to offer a prompt service.

[Colin C Williams](#)

As anticipated further articles have been added since we originally published Volume 4 - a very welcome four in number, making this our largest volume to date. We are pleased to welcome contributions from the Majority World to help counter the Minority World thinking which dominates much of the current debate on community currencies, a study of the effects on welfare benefits of community currency membership, as well as a potentially controversial analysis of community currencies from the viewpoint of mainstream economics. Perhaps we can look forward to some lively debate on our discussion group, which currently boasts 52 members and is still growing!

[Colin C Williams](#) and [Graham R Irwin](#)

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