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INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF COMMUNITY CURRENCY RESEARCH

VOLUME 9 EDITORIAL

Reflecting on the breadth and depth of activity that has been taking place in the community currency field in 2004, it is obvious to all concerned in this movement that there are no signs of any waning interest in this issue. When this journal started in 1997, neither Mark Jackson located in Australia nor myself located in the UK were sure whether the interest in community currencies was going to be some temporary phenomenon or whether it would display greater longevity. So many other community economic development initiatives that were of a similar ilk had seemed to come and go that we were unsure whether community currencies would go the same way as many of these previous initiatives.

Eight years on from that point and it is perhaps timely to reflect that we were probably being far too pessimistic about the ability of grassroots initiatives to maintain momentum. Community currencies, after all, are still going strong. Although interest in particular forms of community currency may have waned in some individual countries following the rapid initial surge of publicity and energy, there is little doubt that others forms of community currency and locations have emerged to more than compensate for any reduction in the initial enthusiasm displayed in these places where interest has reached a plateau. Indeed, if a global map of community currencies were to be created, one would witness over the past eight years the number of nodes where such currencies had been established steadily growing over the whole world and a continuing change in the points on that global map where the interest and endeavour was most intense at any time. Indeed, it is as though the nodes where enthusiasm is greatest at any point in time appear to pop up in different regions and places on the globe somewhat at random, although others might wish to put this down to the particular social, political, economic and/or environmental conditions prevailing in specific places.

Whatever the reasons for greater enthusiasm and more intense interest in some places than others at different moments in time, the important point is that there remains a widespread enthusiasm for developing community currencies on a global scale that appears to have slowly enveloped greater areas across the world.

Hopefully, IJCCR continues to reflect this and provide a representative picture of what is happening out there in the world of community currencies. Indeed, if the 'discussion forum' is taken as a marker of the interest in community currencies, then enthusiasm is alive and well. Originally, this was created so that those reading IJCCR could play a more active role in debating articles that were published and so that authors could receive instant feedback on their ideas. Since its inception, however, this discussion forum seems to have taken on a life of its own that is far from its original purpose. There is nothing wrong with that. Indeed, we hope that it will continue to thrive as the major discussion forum for community currencies and the place where people come to find cutting-edge ideas and debates on the subject.

When it comes to the journal itself, however, a rather different conclusion needs to be reached. In the 2004 editorial, I opened up the possibility of the submission of shorter articles from practitioners being introduced and invited potential authors to submit

such articles. In the year since I did so, however, submission rates still seem to be relatively low. As I noted in the 2004 editorial, this is probably because practitioners prefer simply to put their ideas out onto the discussion forum and to receive instant feedback rather than spend time attempting to craft these ideas into a fully-fledged article for the IJCCR journal. Again, there is nothing wrong with that. If this is what practitioners wish to do, and the discussion forum fulfils their needs, then that is fine by us as editors of IJCCR.

Those interested in community currencies who are academics, nevertheless, still seem to prefer for a manner of reasons to provide longer, perhaps more considered, interventions about community currencies. And for that reason, we have every intention of persisting with the publication of journal articles. As in previous years, we wish to once again extend the opportunity for authors to submit either shorter or longer articles to IJCCR for consideration so that their ideas can be more widely circulated than might otherwise be the case. If you have an idea for an article, then you should feel free to contact one of the editors if you have any doubts as to its suitability. We are always open to ideas and will try to help you positively whenever humanly possible.

So in this editorial to mark the ninth volume of IJCCR, I not only congratulate all of those who have made the IJCCR discussion forum such a lively, interesting and active exchange for ideas on community currencies but once again remind all those who may wish to report at greater length on community currencies to consider writing a paper for the IJCCR journal.

Professor Colin C Williams
Editor, IJCCR