

Editorial

JCOM — Five Years into the Future

ABSTRACT: In the next few months, JCOM will undergo relevant changes. A new owner will take charge of its editorial management and define new development strategies. This important transition is a good opportunity to take stock of the past few years and to devise a new type of science communication research journal.

«Ideas are worthy not merely because they “solve our problems” — but because they challenge us with problems.» This is what Umair Haque, Director of Havas Media Labs and one of the world’s most influential management thinkers, wrote at the end of a recent post appeared on the Harvard Business Review.¹ I could not find a better quotation for this JCOM editorial.

After more than three years it is time for me to step down as the editor-in-chief of this journal. I will continue to collaborate, yet in a different role. It is a transition I cannot be but happy about, because the end of my tenure as the editor-in-chief coincides with the launch of a project to renovate and improve JCOM.

It is my belief that the new management, to be led by Sissa Medialab² for the next five years, will allow the journal to ultimately overcome the growth crisis that has been reported lately.

In practical terms, the changes will be communicated starting from the next issue, but for now the end of this phase is a good opportunity to reflect on what JCOM has been in the past few years and to wonder what it is set to become in the future.

We have asked the current members of the Editorial Board. Not everyone could answer, but the feedback we received has highlighted — in my opinion — a common thread that expresses the JCOM spirit in the best possible way: a space to generate new ideas on science communication.

I can hardly say that we have accomplished that goal with every issue, but the members of the Editorial Board, whose contributions can be read in the commentary section, have understood this aspect and want it to be reinforced in the future.

But new ideas, or even Great Ideas — quoting Haque’s article again —, are not useful because they “solve our problems”, but because they present us with new problems. The challenge of new ideas does not only require the head, but also — and most of all — the heart; it does not only require reason, linearity and ecstatic approval, but above all dedication, frustration, suffering, passion; in other words, the work of generating new ideas implies extremely human qualities.

I can guarantee that the work of JCOM’s editorial office in the past few years has compensated its academic naivety through those qualities because we believe — and will continue to do so — that there is a great need to question science communication to renovate it and to make it step beyond a debate that too often goes round in circles.

I have to give credit where credit is due and that is to anyone who have given their contribution to this critical approach by devoting their time, resources and energies to JCOM, often only in exchange of the benefit of taking part in such an adventurous and exciting initiative of intellectual production.

I would like to thank most warmly the editorial office, the IT staff, the referees, the translators, the Editorial Board and, last but not least, the scientific staff, specifically Yuri Castelfranchi, Alessandro Delfanti, Daniele Gouthier, Pietro Greco, Paola Rodari and Donato Ramani, who have always believed in this journal no matter what.

Finally, I would like to thank our readers, who have supported JCOM not only through a constant increase in visits and quotations, but also expressing a strong desire to participate in its editorial life. And certainly, one of the targets of the new management will be to amplify the instruments and the methods to interact. We have drawn up a questionnaire to help us in this task and to get to know you better. If you submit your answers, let us also know if you want to stay in touch with us. In such a case, please leave your email address. I hope there are many of you willing to be involved in JCOM's next future.

Translated by Massimo Caregnato

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Notes and references

¹ U. Haque (2013), *Let's Save Great Ideas from the Ideas Industry*, *HBR Blog Network*, http://blogs.hbr.org/haque/2013/03/lets_save_great_ideas_from_the.html, retrieved 11/03/2013.

² <http://medialab.sissa.it>.

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