CALL FOR PAPERS

Annual Conference
International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR)
Leicester, UK
July 27-31, 2016

The 2015 IAMCR conference will be held under the general theme

"Memory, Commemoration and Communication: Looking Forward, Looking Back"

Community Communication Section

The IAMCR Community Communication Section invites submissions of abstracts for papers and panel proposals for the 2016 IAMCR conference to be held 27-31 July 2016 in Leicester.

The deadline for submissions is **February 15, 2016**.

The **Community Communication (ComCom) Section** brings together research on community, alternative and citizens' media, media activism, and other forms of civil society-based communication. It considers a range of non-governmental and non-commercial communication practices such as do-it-yourself media, media for and by communities of locality or interest, social movement communication, social media protests, counter-cultural expressions, and media that form a 'third sector' distinct from public service and commercial media. Such communication practices may use a variety of communication technologies, from print newsletters to mobile phones, from community radio to online social networks.

The section asks questions such as: How do marginalized groups develop, adapt and appropriate communication technologies? What makes citizen media effective and sustainable? What are innovative forms of media activism? What is the social, economic, legal and political environment of community and alternative media? What are appropriate theories and research methods for these media? What forms of journalism do they practice? Do they point us to new forms of networked publics, participatory democracy, and active citizenship (and/or are these concepts problematic)?

The work of the section is concerned with current developments and upcoming trends as well as historical trajectories, and it therefore relates closely to the overall theme of the upcoming conference. The section connects media practices across different technologies, from community radio to digital storytelling, and from participatory theatre to online activism. Cultural memory plays a key role in community and alternative communication, particularly the memory of counter-cultural and non-mainstream ideas and knowledges. The politics of memory therefore become crucial as we ask how memories are archived, modified, or erased. The current use of both commercial social media and grassroots activist platforms by citizen journalists, alternative information providers and social movements offers visibility but also provides challenges regarding the sustainability of communication.

Community Communication focus areas, Leicester 2016

The Community Communication Section welcomes contributions from all scholars who research and work in this field and is encouraging submissions particularly on the following themes:

1. Memory, Commemoration and Communication

Alternative, community and activist media have offered important spaces for mediated memory, particularly of counter-cultural and non-mainstream ideas and knowledges. Radical media have kept memories of alternative concepts and historical social change alive. In which instances have they been particularly relevant? What have been the challenges? How can social movements preserve the historical record of their communication on ephemeral digital platforms? How do these media change our understanding of memory?

2. Continuities and Ruptures: Community Communication Technology from Old to New

The Community Communication sector combines a variety of different platforms and technologies, from music and theatre to radio and video, and to social media and web streams. Amateurs and activists have often been at the forefront of innovation and experimentation. How have alternative media practices transitioned across technologies? What are the continuities in technology uses for alternative purposes? Where are the ruptures and moments of change?

3. Social Media, Activism and Social Change

Major protests of the past decade have been accompanied by claims that communication technology was at the heart of their success (or failure). Academia has seen debates on 'Twitter Revolutions', 'liberation technology', cyber-optimism and cyber-pessimism, and the values and limitations of commercial media platforms. What have we learnt from these debates? Is there a new quality of protest communication? How do digital practices intersect with social movements?

4. Community and Alternative Journalism: Contexts and Characteristics

What structures and cultures exist within alternative media organisations to facilitate a unique brand of journalism, both in its process and content? What are the connections (and differences) between 'alternative', 'regional', 'community' and 'hyper-local' journalism? What is the role of these media in the changing news ecology and the emerging 'networked 4th estate'? What new forms of grassroots media (and collaborations) are emerging in the wake of Wikileaks and other whistleblower projects?

5. Challenges and Opportunities for Free Expression and Communication Rights

The policy environment for community, alternative and citizen media offers a diverse picture. Community media are increasingly being legalized, but media freedoms are threatened by the 'war on terror', mass surveillance and content restrictions (such as internet blocking/filtering). What are the predominant trends? What implications do Snowden's revelations have for citizen media? How are community, alternative and citizen media impacted by global governance processes?

6. Theorizing Alternative, Community and Citizen Media

The Community Communication Section is interested in investigating, continuing and challenging the theoretical directions laid out by leading thinkers in the field, and developing understandings of relevant emerging concepts. How do we update critical concepts in light of technological and social change? How can classic works in our field help us understand new practices and technologies? How do we explore connects and disconnects between this field and related academic fields?

<u>**Submissions**</u>

Format: All proposals must include:

1. Title, author/coordinator name(s), institutional affiliation(s) and full contact information (mailing address, email address, and telephone number).

2. Topic area (one of the focus topics, see above, or 'other').

3. Type of proposal:

   TYPE A:
   Individual or co-authored scholarly paper: Applicants must submit a 300-500 word abstract. The abstract should describe:
   - the main question or research problem
   - its significance
   - the theoretical framework
   - what is known from existing research
   - the research method
   - expected outcomes
   - relation with the chosen topic area

   Submitted abstracts will be evaluated on the basis of their theoretical and/or research contribution, originality and significance, sound methodology, quality of writing, relevance to the work of the section.

   NOTE: For project presentations (without a theoretical background) we encourage applicants to choose a format under TYPE C, not TYPE A.

   TYPE B:
   Panel proposal: The panel coordinator must submit a well-defined statement of purpose (300-500 words) and a complete list of panel participants. For each panelist, a full abstract (as above under Type A) has to be submitted, with a note of the panel title at the top.

   TYPE C:
   Other session/presentation formats: We encourage proposals for innovative formats such as workshops, video screenings, performances, webcasts or field trips. The coordinator must submit a well-defined 300-500 word statement of purpose and a detailed description of activities, as well as any infrastructure requirements (space, projectors, etc.). We cannot guarantee that all these formats will be feasible, but we commit to supporting proponents in making them possible.

Please indicate at the end of your abstract if you would be willing to chair a session.

Procedure:

All proposals must be submitted through the online Open Conference System at http://iamcr-ocs.org between 1 December 2015 and 15 February 2016. Early submission is strongly encouraged. Email submission of abstracts is not accepted.

Individuals may submit 1 abstract (paper) per Section or Working Group, and a maximum of 2 abstracts (papers) to the overall conference altogether. Under no circumstances should there be more than 2 abstracts bearing the name of the same applicant either individually or as part of any group of authors. Submitting the same or very similar abstract to more than one section or working group is not allowed. Such submissions will be deemed to be in breach of the conference guidelines and will be automatically rejected by the Open Conference System, by the relevant Head or by the Conference Programme Reviewer. Such applicants risk being removed entirely from the conference programme.

Paper Submission:

Presenters are expected to bring fully developed work to the conference. Prior to the conference, it is expected that a completed paper will be submitted to the Section.

Deadline for full papers: **30 June 2016**.

Submitting to the Right Section:

If you submit your proposal to the wrong section, it may be rejected. Please consider carefully if the Community Communication Section is most appropriate for your proposal (check the list of sections at http://iamcr.org/s-wg). Please contact us well before the deadline if you are unsure.

Languages:

IAMCR accepts submissions in its official languages of English, Spanish, and French, though an English translation (even a brief summary) of your abstract will be much appreciated. For conference presentations, we encourage presenters who wish to talk in a language other than English to prepare slides or print-outs in English to facilitate understanding, interaction and debate. The Section endeavours where possible to provide summarized translations of key papers in Spanish and French, although we have no funds to hire translators. To this end, we are looking for volunteer translators/interpreters for abstracts, sessions and papers.

If you can contribute and help translate some papers or key points into Spanish or French, please contact us (see details of Chair and Vice-Chairs below).

Decisions on acceptance of abstracts will be communicated to applicants by **April 8, 2016.**

Information:

General IAMCR Conference Call: http://iamcr.org/news/cfp2016

Community Communication Website: http://iamcr.org/s-wg/section/community-communication

To contact your Community Communication Section Heads, or to find out more about ComCom in IAMCR, contact:

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Finally, note the following deadlines and key dates for the 2016 IAMCR Conference:

1 December 2015	Open Computer System (OCS) opens for abstract submission at http://iamcr-ocs.org
15 February 2016	OCS closes – final deadline for abstract submission
1 April 2016	Conference registration opens
8 April 2016	Notification of acceptances of abstracts
28 April 2016	Deadline for confirmation of participation
20 May 2016	Deadline for Early Bird registration
30 June 2015	Deadline for full paper submission
27-31 July 2016	IAMCR Conference, Leicester