

Global Labour Journal : **Our Last Edition**

This is our last edition as founders and editors of the *Global Labour Journal (GLJ)*. Eight years ago at the 2006 Durban International Sociological Association World Congress, we proposed that RC-44 launch a new journal to support emerging research on global labour studies. In our research, teaching and writing over the previous decade and a half we had begun to identify a broad set of issues that was taking us beyond traditional labour studies. In recasting a new global labour studies, we were reaching out to several other areas of sociology, such as political sociology and the sociology of social movements, as well as other disciplines such as labour geography, feminists studies, comparative politics, international relations and global political economy.

In the process of widening and broadening the study of labour movements, the International Sociological Association Research Committee on Labour Movements (RC44), had begun to provide a truly global forum for the study of labour. It had increasingly recorded and analysed those forms of action and organisation that fell outside of the traditional focus of labour studies to include labour linked NGOs, community organisations and other labour related organisations.

After a couple of years of discussion, and two further years of work, the *Global Labour Journal* was launched in January 2010. The journal was designed with (and still retains) four significant characteristics. First, it is online and open access so that people interested in labour issues can access it around the world free of charge. Research funders increasingly demand open access publishing and because of GLJs growing reputation it is well placed as a venue for labour studies' publications in this regard. Second, the editorship is shared between a Southern and a Northern institution. The partnership idea is crucial so that the content is not skewed toward the North. Third, copyright is held by authors rather than a commercial entity to ensure that work is widely distributed and authors retain control over their work. Fourth, the journal is run by the editors and not published by a commercial firm. It is non-profit and prevents commercial publishers from gaining the benefits of our intellectual labour.

GLJ has now come to the end of its fifth year of publication. It has enjoyed considerable success. By the end of this year *GLJ* will have published over one hundred contributions (articles, global issues pieces and book reviews) and over 85,000 downloads. Downloads have increased from just over 6,000 in our first year to a projected 30,000 this year. Article flow is strong with a steady stream of non-solicited articles and proposals for special issues. *GLJ* has published on a wide range of labour topics drawing on a variety of disciplines from authors around the world. It has published the work of both senior and junior scholars and activists.

We decided last year that it was time for us to stand down and to allow a new editorial team to be appointed. At its business meeting during the ISA World Congress in Yokohama in July 2014, RC44 members agreed to set up a task team to propose the way forward. A proposal has now been put to the membership of RC44 for the *Global Labour Journal* to become the official journal of RC44, co-hosted by the Global Labour University and supported by the International Center for Development and Decent Work (ICDD) in Kassel and the Penn State's Centre for Global Workers' Rights.

We are extremely pleased by the transition for two reasons. First, we are confident that the new team will build upon the success of the journal. Second, the new team will continue to uphold two key principles that have underpinned the *GLJ* to date (1) to be online, open access and freely downloadable; and (2) to be run by an editorial team with colleagues from the Global South as well as North.

Launching and running a journal of this nature has taken considerable time and energy. We owe a great deal of thanks to numerous people and institutions. *GLJ* could not function without high quality submissions and an army of academics willing to give generously of their time to review articles, submit book reviews and compose global issues pieces. We are grateful to former book review editors Andries Bezuidenhout and Ari Sitas, present book review editor Katherine Joynt and former Associate Editor Charlotte Yates for their contributions. Funding for the journal was provided by the Mancinelli Professorship in Global Labour Issues at McMaster University. Our final and deepest debt is to our managing editors who have done the vast majority of the work and ensured we kept on schedule. Kara Vincent was responsible for sorting out the technical aspects of setting up an online open access journal and served as managing editor from 2010-2014. Angela Ceccato took over as managing editor for our final year and has overseen the journal's migration to a new electronic platform. Their professionalism and willingness to put in extra hours has kept us afloat.

With best wishes to readers and colleagues,

Edward Webster and Robert O'Brien
Editors, Global Labour Journal