Editorial

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It is a pleasure to announce in the first issue of 2014 a new and fresh editorial board for *Interest Groups & Advocacy* (IGA). Jan Beyers and Darren Halpin succeed Grant Jordan as co-editors of IGA, along with the continuing presence of Burdett Loomis. Jan Beyers will process submissions that deal with European and EU politics, transnational and global advocacy. Darren Halpin will cover the United Kingdom, Ireland and the rest of the world (including the Asia-Pacific). Burdett Loomis will take care of all submissions coming from North America. As has hitherto been the case, Conor McGrath remains the link between the professional world of lobbying and the academic research community. Finally, Heath Brown joins the team as reviews editor and will help connect the Journal with social media.

We would like to take this opportunity to extend a vote of thanks on behalf of the field to Grant, for his role in getting this Journal up and running. At our very first meeting at American Political Science Association (APSA) 2009, Grant was nominated and agreed to take on this role. Not only has the Journal been seen through to reality, but he has shepherded it from launch through two years of issues. It is easy to take things for granted once they are established, but one ought not underestimate the truly major task of establishing a new journal. The future success of the Journal will no doubt reflect well on Grant's founding contribution. And of course, we look forward to his input as part of the Editorial Board and as a contributor.

One goal in setting up the Journal was to address the fact that 'past scholarship happened by and large in separate national silos'. The founding editors argued that the new journal would 'overcome the past fragmentation in national cliques and disparate outlets'. Thanks to their efforts, this important field of political science research now has its home. Slowly, we see an international scholarly community emerging. During its first years the Journal has contributed significantly to this development. The new editorial team plans to continue further in this direction. The Journal should be a tool for creating an international literature on interest group politics, political advocacy and related topics.

One way to facilitate this development is by carefully selecting reviewers. The editorial team will seek, as far as possible, a broader mix of reviewers so that, for instance, papers on legislative lobbying in the United States would be reviewed

by one European scholar who is an expert on the same topic in Europe. We believe that this will make different national scholars more aware of interesting work conducted beyond borders. One other plan to boost the global stature of the Journal is to revitalize the editorial board. There will be a meeting of the editorial board at the next APSA Conference in Washington. In the course of the coming years we will invite new people for the editorial board to improve the coverage of some areas. We think in particular about Central and Eastern Europe, global advocacy, and Asia-Pacific scholarship. In addition, we plan to strengthen the links with the Political Organizations and Parties section of the APSA and the Standing Group on Interest Representation of the European Consortium of Political Research.

We take great pleasure in observing that the first issues of the Journal have been a great success, and we thank the initial editorial team for its excellent work. The overall quality of the various papers that have appeared in the Journal, plus the increasing recognition of the Journal in the field, makes us confident about *IGA*'s future. We deliberately opted for a slow start, with two, then three, issues a year. Given the increasing number of good submissions, our aim is to move to four issues a year from 2015 on. The plan is to have one special issue each year. For 2014, there will be an issue focusing on quantitative research with large numbers of cases, edited by David Lowery. This issue might become a relevant landmark in the field as it will be one of the first publications out of the larger INTEREURO research project. In 2015, we intend to have a special issue dealing with interest group politics and social movement research. The aim of the special issue is to bridge the gap that exists between these two separate, but at the same time, related fields of research.

The editorial team seeks to publish the highest quality of research. A risk for new journals is to fill their first issues with somewhat weaker papers. Again, the founding editorial team has done excellent work in this respect. We are getting more and better submissions, largely because the most prominent scholars in the field have published in the Journal. In particular, we aim to avoid publishing pieces that would not have a chance in other medium- or high-ranked specialist journals. A minimum requirement is that all articles published should have some innovative aspect in terms of theory, methods or empirics. We estimate that almost half of the submissions during the past two years were desk rejected because they lacked theoretical rigor, methodological soundness or empirical richness. Another significant objective for the Journal is to seek inclusion and impact factor ranking in the Social Sciences Citation Index at the earliest possible opportunity.

A journal that publishes significant papers should also be read and reach out to the broader academic community. One of our plans is to develop a valued, authoritative online resource, which might encompass online searchable content, functionality allowing commenting/debate on published content, a blog, news feeds and so on. The objective would be to create an online resource and community that would be the natural 'first stop' for anyone with an interest in this field, and the extensive use of social media will be important in creating greater visibility of the Journal.

Finally, we will be adopting an electronic submission system in the next few months, and we have changed our abstract requirement, moving from a longer, executive summary format to a more traditional brief abstract framework.

We thank all who have published in, submitted to and reviewed for *IGA*. The field of interest groups and advocacy is rich in talent and in significant questions to address. We know that *IGA* will stand at the center of this talent and these questions as we move forward.

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