<u>CALL FOR PROPOSALS</u>

Dealing with Crisis: Community, Alternative, Citizens' and Social Media in Times of Change

An OURMedia event
in collaboration with the Community Communication Section of the
International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR), the Global Communication and Social Change Division of the International Communication Association (ICA), the Community Radio Forum of Ireland (CRAOL), and Irish community media activists

Dublin, IRELAND
JUNE 24-25, 2013

'Crisis' has become the word most widely used to describe our shared global condition. Crisis highlights the urgency for change and for alternatives to established political, economic and media practices. For alternative, community, citizens' and social justice media makers, crisis brings together many of the themes usually considered – from inequality of all kinds to ecological destruction, the need for political transformation and reconciliation.

The dominant media and news services are facing their own crises, and especially their failure to change the corporate commercial model and adapt to technological change. Non-profit media provide useful alternative models; citizens' media have long demonstrated inclusive forms of user participation; and online activist projects have offered crucial solutions for crisis communication. But crises are also affecting grassroots media and communications organizations as their already precarious resource bases shrink further. And with social justice movements and citizens increasingly moving to commercial social networking platforms for their communication needs, the classic collective forms and relevance of alternative and community media are themselves challenged.

The various dimensions of crisis and change deserve closer investigation from the perspective of grassroots, participatory, civil society-based, community, alternative, radical and citizens' media. The 2013 International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) conference provides an important opportunity. Under the theme "Crises, 'Creative Destruction' and the Global Power and Communication Orders", it will run from June 25-29 at Dublin City University in Ireland. This OURMedia event will be held as a pre-conference to the IAMCR meeting, and will also connect with the International Communication Association (ICA) conference in London, UK, 17-21 June 2013.

Questions that will be discussed include the following:

- Reporting crisis: How do community, alternative and citizens' media engage with crisis messages? How do they spotlight the kinds of political, economic, ecological and social crises that affect the majority but continue to be marginalized by dominant media? How do they highlight the effects of the crisis?

- Building alternatives: Are alternative forms of media – including participatory, commons-based and non-commercial media – the answer to the media crisis? How are people using grassroots and citizens' media to develop calls for social/ economic/political change, and share them locally and around the world?

- Dealing with social division: How are grassroots alternative and citizens' media dealing with the increasing social divisions exacerbated by the global crises and the pursuit of austerity policies? What kinds of programming and innovative forms of media activism are helping to bridge gaps related to the treatment, for example, of immigrants and the poor, and of persistent racism and sexism?

- Practical crises of 'our media': How does the financial crisis affect community media? How can we develop models for sustainable citizens' communication? What are the most pressing political and policy problems and openings for change? Are activist groups and social movements increasingly using commercial online platforms instead of self-organised media?

- Conceptual crises of 'our media': With the rise of DIY social media and p2p communication, how do our traditional understandings of community and alternative media need to be revised? How do we examine the move from commons-based community media to corporate social media? Are collective self-organised forms of alternative media still relevant? How do we re-think concepts of citizens' participation, the commons, etc.?

- Towards new media models: What innovative approaches exist to connect the ideas and experiences of commons-based community media with new social media and emerging forms of digital (counter) culture? How can we create effective hybrid media types, cross-platform connections, and alternative forms of social networking?

Structure

This event will bring together academics and practitioners, scholars and activists, researchers and advocates. It will include academic paper presentations, skill-sharing workshops, strategy meetings, and public debates. Its components and activities will depend on the proposals that you submit!

Submissions

We call for a variety of proposals:

1. Academic paper presentation: Submit a 300-500 word abstract on one of the conference themes.
2. Panel discussions and workshops: Submit a statement of purpose (300-500 words), and a list of panel participants. We are particularly interested in innovative forms of sessions that allow for constructive collective debate among all participants.
3. Video screenings, technical showcases, webcasts, music and theatrical performances and public/street art: The event should include a wider range of practical presentations and activities. Please submit a 300-500 word statement of purpose and a description of activities, as well as any infrastructure requirements (space, projectors, etc.).

Deadline for submissions: 28 February 2013.

Submit proposals to the following email address: ourmedia@iamcr.org

This 2-day event will be held as a pre-conference to the annual IAMCR conference. Please consider also to submit paper proposals to the Community Communication Section of the IAMCR, where the discussion on these and other topics will continue.

Information on IAMCR

IAMCR: http://www.iamcr.org

Dublin Conference: http://iamcr2013dublin.com/

IAMCR Community Communication: http://www.iamcr.org/content/blogcategory/51/201/