

*As co-editor of the journal can you introduce Regional Studies, Regional Science to us?*

Yes *Regional Studies Regional Science* is a gold open access journal and it's the first open access journal to be published by the Regional Studies Association. And the reason it's an exciting development is it is open access, anyone, anywhere in the world can access it and the papers on it immediately on the website. It's also fast turnaround so if authors submit something it's not going to be held in a queue for a year or two years before its available, so it means that the results of people's research are going to be processed very quickly. It's also already established quite a good following globally, a lot of people are taking an interest in it, either submitting or looking at it so if people want to get their article or research to get exposure then *RSRS* is a great way to do that. I also think it's really good in terms of its diversity, so the published topics and a wide range of different areas within *Regional Studies and Regional Science*, that cover lots and lots of different fields, so over time; especially if we develop more content it will really have something for everybody who's interest in Regional Studies. We also offer different article types so if you've got a standard article, great, but if you try to publish something a bit different sometimes it's hard to find an outlet for that, so we're very flexible in terms of the kind of papers we'll publish.

*The journal launched late last year; what has been the reaction to the venture so far and how has it been going?*

It's been going great, people are still somewhat unsure about what open access is and where it will go but I think they see with *RSRS* that open access is happening and it's exciting and it's important in their field. So when it was officially launched at our global conference in Los Angeles in December 2013 people started to understand exactly what it was about so since it was launched we've had papers published or submitted from Brazil, Nepal, Ukraine, France, United States, U.K, Australia, New Zealand and we've got a pretty exciting paper I think from David Bailey, and co-authors, on the auto-mobile industry and its implications after the closure of the major plant in the West Midlands [link: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/21681376.2014.899477>] and what that meant for the wider region and it's really important in terms of its global reach because these are subjects that matter to places as diverse as Detroit, Adelaide, cities in China so this is a kind of topic with real global relevance that's being published any day now actually on the *RSRS* website. So that's another particular thing to look forward to.

*Can you tell us a little bit more about the Regional Studies, Regional Science early career mentored route?*

One of the things we thought was really important with *RSRS* was to make sure that people at early stages in their academic career who have something to say but maybe not have a fully-fledged academic paper could find an outlet for it that would get exposure, because people at an early stage of their career often have really good research but it's just not fully fleshed out. So in this

respect our early career mentored route is an excellent opportunity, it's led by Julie Porter who's based in the United States and her team, they take submissions from authors who are interested in publishing and they pick the best ones and they mentor them personally throughout a period of months to get the paper up to publication standard, and eventually it goes through all the stages and that's a really excellent route. We've published two of these already with another two coming and we've got in the pipeline an early career mentor paper so it means people who've got brand new research and a PHD or are possibly doing a post doc, it gives them an access, a route for a paper that may not fit with another journal format. So I think as well it's really important to engage people from all levels of their career and I think that early career mentor group is a really important part of the journal.

*What are you looking forward to most about editing the journal personally?*

Personally I think it's just the exposure to the wide variety of new ideas and new research that's gone on all over the world so it gives you an inside track of what's happening. Often you don't see the results of peoples work until their published in hard copy journals, which is great but this gives us a head start in terms of what's happening and our fingers on the pulse if you like. We get to know more about new regions and new nations for example like I say we've got a paper in the pipeline at the moment from Nepal and another one about real estate in Brazil, and these are the kind of things that we may not have specialism's in but we're really interested in knowing about. So it's that editorial role that gives us that knowledge that we probably wouldn't get, it's also fantastic working with people from all over the world and seeing the kind of research they're doing, the different methodologies involved and I think it's just a real bonus in terms of adding to our own intellectual growth and development.

*Finally what advice would you give to aspiring authors?*

I'd probably give lots of advice but if I was going to summarise it I would say to write clearly and simply to get your point across. I think there's a lot of academic writing which can be unnecessarily complicated, we might be writing about complicated things but I think the real challenge is to make it simple and clear for a wide audience. With a journal like *RSRS* where people may be from different areas, it's a very diverse constituency, writing clearly is probably the main thing that I think is important. Another thing is following the submitting guidelines, instructions for authors; every editor might say this but the instructions for authors are there for a purpose, they help the journal operate efficiently, they help you to get your message across and they really are important that's why we put them there. [Link: <http://www.tandfonline.com/action/authorSubmission?journalCode=rsrs20&page=instructions>] We have tried with *RSRS* to be a bit more flexible so if you want to imbed your tables and images within the manuscript that's fine, we think that is more helpful, so follow submission guidelines. Number three don't be afraid, it's always a bit scary thinking about what reviewers will say but everyone has that. The other thing I would say is if you do get criticism on your paper from a reviewer and it feels quite harsh, you need to turn that

around and use it to your advantage, try and see, even if it's not constructively worded, it's very useful to try and make yourself better. The last thing I think would be to submit to different kinds of journals but definitely from now on, open access is a big part of publishing so I think you need to think about having a way, a strategy, if you like for open access publishing. You need to start thinking about publishing open access; I think especially for early career scholars, it's a really important thing to think about.

*Great well thank you for talking to us today Alasdair*

You're welcome