

Preface

Editorial Note

Dear Reader,

I have the honor to present to you the second issue of the fifth volume of JUnQ, which is in fact the tenth overall issue. So the issue – #science – is kind of a #jubilee. We want to celebrate it with you by having a look into the communication of science – eventually, that is what the publication of articles and journals is all about. In this issue, you will find interviews and articles about the communication of science between researchers as well as the mediation of scientific topics to a broader audience. Both subjects have changed over the past years and are also under constant debate.

Researchers are not only faced with finding answers to (unsolved) questions on a daily basis, but also have to take care that their findings do not lead to a misunderstanding by non-experts. This is nicely explained in an essay by A. Fischer from the Helmholtz Association. He writes about the role of science communication and its importance to avoid emotionally loaded debates for the benefit of fact-based discussions. The Helmholtz Association is the umbrella organization for several research centers and their science communication is also split up into several channels. In some of them, researchers themselves communicate with the public, e.g. via blogs.

In Germany there is also an organization for science communication: Wissenschaft im Dialog. In his article, Thorsten Witt provides insights into how science communication has changed over the last years. Of course social media plays a very important role and opens up new ways for researchers to distribute their knowledge. More possibilities, however, cause the problem that you have to make an effort in order to stay up to date on important developments. So #science can also be interpreted as a challenge scientists have to face. Besides these articles, in this issue you will also find several interviews. Kurzgesagt uses a YouTube channel to share educational videos for the general public. In this manner, they want to raise awareness and interest for scientific research in an entertaining kind of way.

The topic of researchers communicating with other re-

searchers is covered in an interview with Dr. Madisch, the founder of ResearchGate. The platform stands for the connection of researchers and at the same time, it wants to open up science to everyone. It also promotes open review, which in turn leads to a faster feedback for scientists. This is linked to Dr. Madisch's comments on the conventional, and still mostly used, publishing system that stems from a time before social media and internet availability.

In a scientific article, M. Gommel presents and discusses data of a survey conducted among doctoral students of German universities and research facilities regarding good scientific practice. Miscommunication in this case can lead to scientific misconduct. At this point, we have come full circle: Scientific misconduct questions the integrity of science and there is no possible way for researchers to compensate for this mistrust. Without trust, science communication is destined to fail.

Speaking of scientific integrity, a “Positionspapier” of the German “Wissenschaftsrat” on this topic has recently been published (April 2015). They not only state that the publication of negative results is important for the integrity of science but they also mention JUnQ by name as an example of a publication medium that should be used for the publication of negative results.¹

This intention of JUnQ does not change but our editorial board does on a regular basis. We once again have a new member, Soham Roy, who has designed the cover page of this issue. But we also have to announce that this will be the last issue with David Huesmann, Stephan Köhler and Thomas Spura as editors since they have finished their PhDs. I hope by reading this issue, we are able to raise or increase your awareness and your interest in #scicomm and maybe afterwards, you will also be willing to have a look at some of the platforms for science communication presented in this issue.

—Nicola Reusch

¹Wissenschaftsrat, Empfehlungen zu wissenschaftlicher Integrität, 2015.