

THE NEW JOURNAL OF INFORMETRICS

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In April 2006, the publisher Elsevier (Oxford, UK) accepted my proposal for the foundation of a new journal in the field of informetrics. The *Journal of Informetrics* is the first internationally published journal that bears "informetrics" in its name. The abbreviation JOI also expresses my spirit concerning this approval!

This new journal will be launched after several years of investigation of the field of informetrics. It is evident that the major reason for the foundation of this journal is the growth of the field. This growth is caused, mainly, by the vast increase of the ways in which electronic information is created, distributed and used (including e-journals and repositories via the Internet, to mention just two important examples). Together with electronic information, new informetric indicators are created to measure their quantities and use: connect time is replaced by times of connections, citations are complemented by hyperlinks and by downloads, and so on. The need for more publication outlets in informetrics is also apparent by the expansion of the journals *Scientometrics* and *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* (JASIST). The former increased its number of issues from 9 to 12 issues per year, from 2005 onwards; the latter increased from 12 to 14 issues per year in 1998. Other evidence for the increase of the field of informetrics is described in Egghe (2005) and references therein.

Another reason for the increasing "popularity" of informetrics is its growing interdisciplinarity. Informetrics not only comprises the more classical fields of bibliometrics (metrics of libraries, bibliographies, ...) and scientometrics (citation analysis and its applications), but also (as mentioned above) network studies, generalizing citation networks to general networks such as Internet, intranets, collaboration networks, in short: social networks. This attracts scientists from fields such as mathematics, physics and computer sciences, thereby considerably increasing the number of researchers engaged in informetrics.

The new journal complements existing journals in the field in a number of ways. For example, JASIST is a general information science journal with interest in informetrics publishing many general papers or technical papers on information science which are not really in the quantitative (informetrics) area. The journal *Scientometrics* certainly publishes papers in the informetrics field but, in principle, it restricts its attention to applications of citation analysis. It also publishes many "case studies". The journal *Information Processing and Management* (IPM) (also published by Elsevier) occasionally published papers on informetrics but the majority of papers are on

theoretical aspects of information retrieval (IR). Although quantitative aspects of IR belong to the scope of JOI, the overlap of JOI with IPM will be minimal. Further, the publications *Journal of Documentation* and *Journal of Information Science* only exceptionally publish informetrics papers (which are exclusively non-technical in nature).

JOI is a journal with a broad spectrum of informetric topics: all quantitative aspects of information are included within the journal's scope. Of course, as for any peer-reviewed journal, there are the limitations to high-quality papers. Such papers can be described as articles containing mathematical-probabilistic-statistical models and/or containing a good description of universally interesting data-sets. The scope can be illustrated by the papers published in IPM in two special issues on informetrics in 2005 (V41/No.6 <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/03064573>) and 2006 (currently in press), for which I was the guest editor.

JOI will be a quarterly journal, each issue comprising about 100 pages. The first volume of JOI will be published in 2007. However it is the intention to have the printed and electronic version of the first issue ready by December 2006. This means that the editorial office should have the first issue ready by end of September.

You are hereby invited to submit a paper for JOI. Submission must be done using Elsevier's ees (electronic editorial system). Author guidelines will be available shortly, and papers may be submitted via Elsevier's web-based editorial system. In the meantime, if you have any questions regarding the suitability of your paper, please contact me directly (email leo.egghe@uhasselt.be).

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References:

Egghe, L. (2005). Expansion of the field of informetrics: origins and consequences. *Information Processing and Management* 41(6), 1311-1316.