IECA Research Committee
6/6/2023 Meeting Summary
Participants: Kundai Chirindo (IECA incoming board member); Steve Depoe (IECA Treasurer and founding board member), and Fiona Richmond (T&F Global Portfolio head for Communication)

Background

The IECA has what is called an "affiliate agreement" with T & F. This agreement is the contractual basis for the IECA/T & F publishing partnership for our journal, *Environmental Communication* (RENC). An important detail to note is that T & F owns the copyright to the journal (although that doesn't mean we are necessarily beholden to them). Our most recent agreement with them ended at the end of 2022. That agreement includes an automatic one-year roll-over clause which means that the partnership is continuing under the terms of the agreement until the end of December 2023.

As you will see in issue 1 below, the journal now has a new home within T & F. This change, which just happened in the last few weeks, meant that even though she was open and receptive to the issues we raised, Fiona isn't well enough versed in the journal's operations to be able to promise us anything at the moment. Still we think this is a propitious moment to address these important issues.

Meeting agenda

The IECA representatives felt the following matters need to be addressed before and/or included in the next affiliate agreement:

1. Moving the journal to T & F's Communication portfolio: at its inception, *Environmental Communication* was put under the Earth Sciences portfolio at T & F. This meant, among other things, that the journal was not marketed along with T & F's other Comm. Studies publications at conventions, for instance, and that the journal was not handled by the same people or in the same way that T & F's other Comm. Studies publications have been handled. Fortunately, we successfully negotiated for *Environmental Communication* be moved to the Communication portfolio within T & F!
2. Articulating a clearer relationship among the company (T & F), the journal's editor, and the IECA: We are interested in clarifying and strengthening the relationship between the journal editor, IECA members, and the company that will enhance the place of *Environmental Communication* as the flagship journal in the field in the years ahead. Items that we are asking to be included in the next affiliation agreement include:

    a. Stating a specific length of term for editor and process for selecting future editors.
    a. IECA board providing annual reviews of the editor for the company.
    b. The company sharing the annual publisher's report on a timely basis with both the editor and the association's research committee.

    c. IECA will have a stronger position in the relationship as we add more members and more committed members to the association from around the world.

0. Finding a way for T & F to offer remuneration to IECA (beyond a subscription discount for our members) for the labor the association and its members perform on behalf of the journal as a product and a scholarly enterprise (it is clearly the flagship journal of an emerging and growing global field). To be blunt, IECA has not been compensated at all by T & F despite the considerable intellectual labor our members have contributed to the journal over the years. We know T & F makes a lot of money from the journal, and that they offer robust/generous financial support to some of their other publishing partners. We therefore think that the moment is right for us to demand some adjustment to the terms of our relationship. Fiona will update us in a week after she's done more digging around on her end.

0. Boosting open access with the journal via provision of deeper Article Publishing Charge (APC) discounts for authors who are IECA members as well as for authors from low-income countries. Fiona shared T & F's APC discount eligibility framework.