

Editorial

Our readers may be interested to know that the Australian Research Council's *Excellence in Research for Australia* (ERA) produced a ranked list of about 20,000 journals, where each was linked to one or more fields of research. Journals were also ranked into four groups, based on their alleged quality, starting with A*, A, B, and C being the lowest rank. The ranking system was not a transparent one, and it is clear that a major driver behind it was self-interest. This ERA journal list included the two international journals published by the WIETE, that is, the *Global Journal of Engineering Education* (GJEE), established in 1997, and the *World Transactions on Engineering and Technology Education* (WTE&TE), established in 2002. The allocation of journals both to fields of research and to ranking groups generated a huge academic debate due to the ambiguous terms of reference and the opaqueness of the ranking process.

The ERA journal ranking scheme invited public input, and the WIETE contributed to this debate by submitting its opinion on the procedural deficiencies of the scheme. So much was the discontent in the sector that on 30 May 2011, the Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, Senator Kim Carr, released a ministerial statement in which he formally announced *improvements* to the ERA. One of them was the removal of the prescriptive and highly divisive ranks from the journal quality indicator. Instead, the Minister has come up with another measure of the quality of scientific journals by *The introduction of a journal quality profile, showing the most frequently published journals for each unit of evaluation*.

I wonder how the ARC and ERA will convert this rather vague statement into a democratic and representative system of evaluation of scientific journals. The positive side of this affair, however, is that the academics, who are in the centre of the ERA exercise, expressed their views and concerns about the secretive way the matter had been handled by the ARC. And the moral of the story is that academics should always be alert to bureaucratic interventions in academic affairs. Academics must always be free to exercise their rights to contribute to debates, and express their views and concerns on burning and critical issues concerning their work. I hope that our readers will come up with articles on the matter of quality in engineering and technology education, and how this process may be instituted so that relevant assessments of quality outlets may be made.

Another important issue that concerns our operation is the organisation of the 3rd *WIETE Annual Conference on Engineering and Technology Education* under the theme of *Networking in Engineering and Technology Education*. The Conference will be held between 6 and 10 February 2012 at Seri Place Hotel, Pattaya, Thailand, and a Conference announcement, including a call for papers, is available from the WIETE Web site.

In the meantime, we are delighted and honoured to be able to release this issue of the *Global Journal of Engineering Education* (GJEE), marked Vol.13, No.2. It features six peer-refereed original articles from authors representing six countries: Australia, Canada, Cuba, Taiwan, Thailand and the USA. As originally planned, this first full annual volume will comprise three issues. A call for articles is made in the Journal's site on the Internet.

On behalf of our readers, the entire editorial team, and indeed myself, I wish to thank the authors of the articles for their willingness to publish their articles in this journal. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to Ms Dianne Q. Nguyen and Ms Krystyna Wareing for their assistance in the preparation of this issue for publication.

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