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Community Operational Research: Innovations, Internationalization  
and Agenda-Setting Applications

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## Special Issue Editorial

**Community Operational Research:  
Innovations, Internationalization and Agenda-Setting Applications****Michael P Johnson<sup>a</sup> and Gerald Midgley<sup>b,c,d,e,f,\*</sup>**

Special Issue Editors

**Jason Wright<sup>a</sup> and George Chichirau<sup>a</sup>**

Editorial Assistants

*a Department of Public Policy and Public Affairs, University of Massachusetts Boston, Boston, USA**b Centre for Systems Studies, Business School, University of Hull, Hull, UK**c School of Innovation, Design and Engineering, Mälardalen University, Eskilstuna, Sweden**d Victoria Business School, Victoria University of Wellington, Wellington, New Zealand**e School of Political and Social Sciences, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand**f School of Agriculture and Food Sciences, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia***Introduction**

For readers who have never come across Community Operational Research before, it has been variously described as “OR... for community development” (Midgley and Ochoa-Arias, 2004, p.3), OR for “social purpose organisations” (White, 2018) and OR with “the meaningful engagement of communities” at its heart (Midgley, Johnson & Chichirau, 2018). We will not dwell on definitions and their implications for practice, as this is the focus of the first section of papers in this special issue. Suffice it to say, however, that community concerns are central to Community OR projects, whichever definition is preferred.

We are proud and excited to be introducing this special issue to you, for several reasons. First, the quantity, quality and diversity of the papers all exceeded our expectations. Second, for us, this collection of papers exemplifies what it is possible for OR to aspire to in terms of both benefit to society *and* academic publishing. In the context of this last comment, we want to say something about how we approached our editorial role, which is consistent with our normative vision of OR.

**The Editorial Process: Towards a Normative Vision of OR**

We received 90 proposals of potential papers in response to our special issue call – many more than expected. The quality of these was generally high: it was going to be difficult to

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