Editorial

Time flies, especially when you are doing a nice job.

ACM Editors in Chief are nominated for a three-year term and could be renewed only once. My second term at ACM JOCCH is elapsing on next April, 2018. Therefore, this is a sad moment, since I enjoyed serving this journal and working with the ACM staff, the colleagues of the Editorial Board, the anonymous reviewers and, obviously, the paper authors.

When I took over from the previous EiC, Amy Friedlander, I wrote an editorial where I listed my objectives for JOCCH. Quoting from that first editorial, I mentioned my willingness:

- to improve the visibility and quality of JOCCH, which I aimed to consolidate as the premier scientific journal for the interdisciplinary Computer Science (CS) & Cultural Heritage (CH) community;
- to introduce new policies for improving the quality and the number of submissions;
- to reduce the average duration of the reviewing cycle;
- to start the process leading to inclusion of JOCCH in the pool of journals listed by ISI and obtaining the impact factor;
- to establish a closer cooperation and synergies with the major scientific events in the CS & CH domain;
- and, finally, my willingness to revise the composition of the Editorial Board and instituting term limits.

Most of these objectives have been accomplished. According to my personal evaluation, the journal scientific visibility improved in these last years. The number of submissions is adequate and sufficient to easily fill the pages assigned by ACM to JOCCH every year (4 issues, 450 pages). We had an acceptance rate of 27% in the last term 2015-2017 (this average value has been computed by excluding the submissions to the Special Issues, which have usually a lower acceptance rate). The review cycle time reduced considerably, since the average time to receive the first review response is now two months. ISI has included JOCCH in the Science Citation Index and thus we have precise figures on the impact factor (0.5 in 2016, a value that I hope will improve in next years). We established cooperation with many scientific events (VAST, EG GCH, VSMM, Digital Heritage, ArcheoFOSS, ICIAP), leading to jointly selected conference Best Papers and the submission of extended versions of those paper to JOCCH. The Editorial Board is now organized with clear rules stating the term duration (three-year term limit) and every eighteen months we renew 50% of the members.

Overall, the status of JOCCH is safe and its appreciation in our community improved. Nevertheless, we still have space for improvement.
Increasing the quality of the submissions is always a major objective; as for many journals, we have to fight with conferences, which are often perceived as a more rapid venue for the dissemination of research results.
An open issue is the availability of anonymous reviewers. This is a limited and precious resource, that we should not waste (this is the reason for using the Desk Rejection instrument on a subset of submissions). Anyway, each of us, being a representative of the scientific community, should commit more with review tasks. I strongly believe this is a crucial part of our professional activity and a key resource for any scientific journal. The apparent trend in denying review requests should be contrasted, maybe devising innovative rewarding systems.

To conclude, it has been an honor to serve as EiC of JOCCH. The work done in this six years would have not been possible without the support of some excellent colleagues. I would like to thank Laura Lander (ACM Journals manager), Karina Rodriguez (EB member and Editorial Assistant), all past and current EB members, submitted paper authors and, last but not least, all the colleagues that I bothered in the last six years with so many review requests.