

## EDITORIAL

# We are in this together

*To be contemporary is to respond to the appeal that the darkness of the epoch makes to us. In the expanding Universe, the space that separates us from the furthest galaxies is growing at such speed that the light of their stars could never reach us. To perceive, amidst the darkness, this light that tries to reach us but cannot – that is what it is to be contemporary. The present is the most difficult thing for us to live. Because an origin, I repeat, is not confined to the past: it is a whirlwind, in Benjamin's very fine image, a chasm in the present. And we are drawn into this abyss. That is why the present is, par excellence, the thing that is left unlive.*

*Giorgio Agamben (Verso Interview, 2014)*

The Faculty for Social Wellbeing has embarked on a new initiative, in collaboration with *Corporate Dispatch*, of publishing our first ever Faculty Research Magazine, in the *Societas.Expert* series. This publication is intended to provide several short research papers, this time around, focused on social welfare. Apart from that, this Research Magazine will also serve as a resource providing for information and contact details of most of our academic staff and research officers. This is another loop in our commitment towards democratising our knowledge but also reaching out to society with empirical data and reflections on some engaging areas around social wellbeing. This edition will be converging some important debates around service provision, dialogue and conflict, taking loneliness and homelessness as two major issues that require our immediate attention.

We need to keep in mind that welfare emerged from the need to negotiate and reinvigorate the social responsibility for collective needs. Social and community operators have developed myriad initiatives to meet the imperative of help for the casualties of the economic and social system. Whilst it is exciting that our country seems to be moving away from 'a charitable helpless model' to 'a forward-looking helping model', there is still way to go. It was an effort that saw at the forefront the forthcoming principles of 'help' versus 'helplessness', 'solidarity' versus 'belittling' and 'participation' versus 'competition'.

In more ways than one, social wellbeing as a collective responsibility started taking on and complementing the government's welfare responsibilities, minimizing social tensions and going against the grain of community deterioration. This Faculty Research magazine is yet another loop in attempting to decipher at what stage we are at, when it comes to the relationship between the citizen and civic engagement. This Magazine, the first for our Faculty, will also lay out the strengths and weaknesses in this sector and the direction that our policy needs to take. Probably, a balance between creating 'a kitty mentality' and generating community is what is explicitly and implicitly involved. The spine of a healthy community lies in the inclusion of 'all' knowing well-enough that if 'we are in this together' we have a better chance of making it!

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