



## New Directions for Active Citizen Involvement in the Network Society



Tim Berners-Lee, inventor of the Web, states in the paper, *Web Science: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Understanding the Web* (*Communications of the ACM*, July 2008) that he co-authored with four colleagues, that "Today's interactive [web] applications are very early social machines." They go on to say that "technology [is] needed to allow user communities to construct, share, and adapt social machines so successful models evolve through trial, use, and refinement" and claim that "An important aspect of research exploring the influence of the Web on society involves online societies using Web infrastructure to support dynamic human interaction. This work—seen in [trout.cpsr.org](http://trout.cpsr.org) [now hosted at [www.publicsphereproject.org](http://www.publicsphereproject.org)] and other such efforts—explores how the Web can encourage more human engagement in the political sphere. Combining it with the emerging study of the Web and the coevolution of technology and social needs is an important focus of designing the future Web."

This **March 11**, we are lucky to host and meet **Doug Schuler**, the founder and coordinator of the Public Sphere Project site mentioned in the Web Science article. Doug's book, *Liberating Voices: A Pattern Language for Communication Revolution*, containing 136 "patterns" for citizen-led social change, recently published with MIT Press, is an outgrowth of the work on the public sphere project site.

The workshop is the first of a series that the Civic Informatics Laboratory is organizing in 2009 to discuss the issues brought forward in the Web Science article. Each workshop will put together a senior scientist and a young researcher.

On March 11, **Daria Santucci**, PhD in Political Science at the University of Turin will present her research on e-petitioning and web campaigning in Europe. Doug will present his work on civic intelligence and what should be done to understand and promote it. There will be time for discussion during both presentations and at the dinner.

Since both Doug and Daria paid attention to Barack Obama's presidential campaign, which was strongly based on the web and other new communication technologies, we asked them to add some thoughts on this new phenomena to their presentations.

The workshop will be held at the **Department of Informatics and Communication, via Comelico 39**, Milano (for directions, <http://www.dico.unimi.it/raggiungere.php?z=0>)

The workshop **agenda** is:

14.30 – 14.45	Meeting together/welcome
14.45 – 15.00	Opening by <b>Ernesto Damiani</b> , Director of the PhD School in Informatics
15.00 – 16.30	<b>Doug Schuler</b> (Public Sphere Project and The Evergreen State College) <b>Civic Intelligence and Active Citizen Involvement in the Network Society</b>
16.30 – 17.00	Break
17.00 – 18.00	<b>Daria Santucci</b> (University of Turin) <b>Political participation and internet communication: online petitions as a form of web campaigning</b>
18.00 – .....	Discussion and dinner together

The workshop is appropriate for students — from undergraduate to PhD candidates — researchers, and anybody who is interested in the web as a social environment. The presentations will be in English.

If you are interested in attending the workshop please send an email to [workshopmarch11@rcm.inet.it](mailto:workshopmarch11@rcm.inet.it) with your name in the subject line. If you are interested in attending the dinner, please mention this in the body of the message.