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**Press Release**

**JOI ITO NAMED CHAIRMAN OF CREATIVE COMMONS;  
LAWRENCE LESSIG TO REMAIN CEO AND BOARD MEMBER**

*Announcement Coincides With Final Call for Contributions to  
CC's Annual Fundraising Campaign, Ending December 31*

**San Francisco, CA – December 18, 2006**

Today, Creative Commons announced that Lawrence Lessig will step down as the organization's chairman. He will be replaced by Joi Ito, a renowned Japanese entrepreneur and venture capitalist, who has been a Creative Commons board member since 2003. Lessig will remain as CC's CEO and as a board member.

The change in board leadership, which takes place immediately, is a reflection of Creative Commons' growing interest in supporting the use of CC principles and copyright licenses in commercial applications.

"This is a very happy moment for Creative Commons," Lessig said. "We are a movement, and it is important that movements have leaders. We are extremely fortunate to work with Joi, who is one of the key leaders in building the sharing economy. Creative Commons' next big challenge is to figure out how the sharing economy can better interact with a traditional commercial economy. Joi is the perfect person to lead the thinking on this."

Lessig reaffirmed his commitment to Creative Commons in an email message sent to members of CC's international community. "I'm not going anywhere," he said. "CC will continue to get everything I can give."

Ito is the founder of Digital Garage, PSINet Japan, and Infoseek Japan. He is also the CEO of Neoteny; chairman of iCommons and Six Apart Japan; and on the boards of Technorati, ICANN, and the Mozilla Foundation.

"I'd like to emphasize that this change is not about Larry doing less, but about another step in Larry's plan to make other people do more," Ito said. "As the organization and the movement continue to grow, it makes sense for my role to grow too. I appreciate the confidence and the opportunity to contribute more to Creative Commons."

Lessig and Ito made the announcement to the Creative Commons community during the organization's fourth birthday party in San Francisco this past Friday, December 15. Although unable to attend the party in person, Lessig and



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Ito delivered the announcement via a torch passing ceremony in the virtual world of Second Life. Video of the online gathering, which was attended by CC board members and supporters, was projected against a large wall at the real world event.

This announcement coincides with a final call for contributions to Creative Commons' annual fundraising campaign, which ends on December 31.

“You can look at this change in leadership in two ways, each of which gives some of you a reason for one last push,” Lessig said. “Some of you have been loyal supporters of me. To you, please show that support one more time. Others of you have been loyal critics, with a strong hope that CC move beyond the particular vision I’ve offered. Now you have your chance: please celebrate the change by supporting us in this final two weeks of our drive.”

### Quotes about the change in board leadership:

**Hal Abelson, Creative Commons co-founder and board member:** “A few of us started CC six years ago as a modest idea about licensing. Under Larry’s leadership, we’ve now grown into a worldwide movement encompassing science and culture, and we have plans for even more activities. It’s great that we’re able to expand CC’s top leadership, and thrilling that Joi will be part of it.”

**James Boyle, Creative Commons co-founder and board member:** “Larry is a tough act to follow. He is the visionary who has made CC what it is today. But as an entrepreneur, philanthropist, and digital visionary, Joi has an unparalleled breadth of vision about the tasks that face CC. I think we have the best of both worlds going for us with Joi taking over as chairman and Larry continuing as CEO.”

**Eric Saltzman, Creative Commons co-founder and board member:** “*The Wizard of Oz* isn’t yet under CC license, so instead of a short clip, just a reference: Larry had the brains to imagine Creative Commons and the heart and courage to build it into the influential global model and successful, practical resource it is today. It has been a great pleasure and an education to work with him on CC’s board these past four years. Luckily for CC, Larry will continue as CC’s CEO to do what he likes best, building the future. We’re all looking forward to our colleague, Joi Ito’s tenure as Board Chair. His breadth of knowledge and deep commitment to the expanding potential for sharing knowledge and creative work promise an exciting, productive next few years at Creative Commons.”



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### **About Creative Commons**

Creative Commons is a not-for-profit organization, founded in 2001, that promotes the creative re-use of intellectual and artistic works—whether owned or in the public domain. Creative Commons licences provide a flexible range of protections and freedoms for authors, artists, and educators that build upon the "all rights reserved" concept of traditional copyright to offer a voluntary "some rights reserved" approach. It is sustained by the generous support of various organizations including the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Omidyar Network, the Hewlett Foundation, and the Rockefeller Foundation as well as members of the public. For general information, visit <http://creativecommons.org>

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