



April 1, 2011

John Holdren

Assistant to the President for Science and Technology

Director, Office of Science and Technology Policy, Executive Office of the President

New Executive Office Building

725 - 17th Street NW

Washington, DC 20502

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Dear Dr. Holdren,

I'm writing on behalf of the Alliance for Taxpayer Access, a diverse and growing alliance of more than 100 organizations representing millions of taxpayers – patients, physicians, researchers, and institutions of all kinds – who support open public access to taxpayer-funded research. The Alliance asks that you consider making published articles reporting on all U.S. federally funded scientific research openly available to the public.

April 7th, 2011 will mark the third anniversary of the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) highly successful Public Access Policy. As you know, this is the first U.S. policy to ensure that all members of the public – including patients and their families, health care professionals, researchers within and outside the Academy, entrepreneurs and business owners – are guaranteed free online access to articles reporting on the results of research their tax dollars support.

This straightforward policy simply requires that researchers who are funded by the NIH submit a copy of all final peer-reviewed journal manuscripts to the agency's digital archive, PubMed Central (PMC). As a result of this policy, the American public now has access to an invaluable new resource: a wealth of information on the very latest biomedical research conducted by federally funded researchers. Today, PMC contains more than two million full-text articles that are accessed by nearly half a million users from all sectors of the public each day – highlighting the demand for this important layer of information.

With more than 75% of PMC users coming from outside of the higher education domain, the value of these articles to our nation's innovators, entrepreneurs, and business owners is clearly demonstrated. At a time when our economic growth depends heavily on innovation in science, the information reported in these articles provides crucial fuel to spur innovation, the development of new products and services, and job growth in the biotechnology sector and beyond.

The full-text digital articles contained in PubMed Central are now linked to a wide array of other publicly accessible databases at the NIH, from Genbank to PubChem. The ability to move seamlessly between articles and data, to explore semantic connections, and to apply new and cutting-edge computational tools and techniques to these articles gives researchers an unprecedented opportunity to unlock the full value of this information. In a world where interdisciplinary research

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is increasingly the norm, providing our scientists with tools to comprehensively access and use this digital information is key to accelerating the pace of scientific discovery and speeding returns to the public.

To build on this achievement, and further enhance the value of the public's annual \$60 billion investment in scientific research, we ask that you *consider immediately expanding the NIH Public Access Policy to U.S. departments and agencies with extramural research budgets of \$100 million or more.*

This expansion will provide connections to additional crucial resources that our nation's scientists require to carry out truly comprehensive scientific research in this digital age. With PubMed Central fully operational at the National Library of Medicine, the infrastructure is already in place to help facilitate implementation of an expanded policy, and it's proven to be extremely cost-effective. The NIH estimates that its annual operating costs for the system are about \$3.5 million annually – which amounts to only ~1/100th of one percent of its overall annual operating budget.¹ This is a small price to pay to ensure that all taxpayers have access to this body of information and increase our collective return on the taxpayer's investment in scientific research.

Economists who have studied the potential impact of providing greater access to publicly funded research outputs on the return on those investments have consistently concluded that economic benefits would be boosted. In a recent study focusing on U.S. R & D expenditures, economists noted that the return on each dollar spent on taxpayer-funded research could be increased by as much as 5% by making the results more broadly available.² When applied to our annual collective \$60 billion dollar investment in scientific research, this represents a significant benefit to the public and the nation's economy.

Expansion of the NIH Public Access Policy to all other HHS agencies is also in line with the growing trend among public and private biomedical research funders around the world to require broad public access to the results of their funded research as a crucial component of their innovation and competitiveness programs. For example, in the U.K., the value of requiring broad, public accessibility of research results is so deeply ingrained that 90% of all publicly funded biomedical research is currently covered by a mandatory public access policy.³

It would also be reflective of the current trend among higher education institutions, in the U.S. and abroad, to implement similar policies and set the campus default mode to "open." Faculty-led initiatives to require Open Access to research articles have resulted in policies being implemented on campuses as varied as Harvard University, the University of Kansas, and Oberlin College – to name a few.

The NIH Public Access Policy has demonstrated that such measures are effective mechanisms to balance the public's right to access research funded with their tax dollars with the interests of scholarly journal publishers. Most major journal publishers now deposit final manuscripts into PMC on behalf of their authors. Even more striking is that more than 1,000 journals currently voluntarily

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¹ <http://www.hhs.gov/asl/testify/2010/07/t20100729c.html>

² <http://www.cfses.com/EI-ASPM/>

³ <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/news/research-technologies/2010/100111-pr-innovative-new-web-interface.aspx>

deposit the *final published version* of NIH-funded articles into PubMed Central – actually going *beyond* what the policy requires and demonstrating the viability of this policy for all stakeholders.⁴

Providing access to this layer of information is a simple, effective step that can be taken today. Thank you for your consideration of this important request. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can provide you with any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heather Joseph". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Heather Joseph
Spokesperson, Alliance for Taxpayer Access

cc: Tom Kalil, Deputy Director for Policy; Carl Wieman, Associate Director of Science, Science Division; Aneesh Chopra, Associate Director and Chief Technology Officer, Technology Division; Celeste Rohlifing, Assistant Director for Physical Sciences

(Attachment)

⁴ http://publicaccess.nih.gov/submit_process_journals.htm



Members

Action to Cure Kidney Cancer - NY
AIDS Action Baltimore - MD
AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition - NY
American Association of Law Libraries - DC
American Library Association - DC
American Medical Student Association - VA
Amherst College Library - MA
Anaheim Public Library System, Central Branch - CA
Appalachian State University Library - NC
Arthritis Foundation - DC
Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum - DC
Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries - WA
Association of Cancer Online Resources - NY
Association of College & Research Libraries - IL
Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs - DC
Association of Research Libraries - DC
Association of Southeastern Research Libraries - GA
Autism Speaks (formerly National Alliance for Autism Research) - DC
Autosomal Recessive Polycystic Kidney Disease and Congenital Hepatic Fibrosis Alliance (ARPKD/CHF Alliance) - PA
Barth Syndrome Foundation - FL
Boston College Libraries - MA
Boston Library Consortium - MA
Bowdoin College Library - ME
Bowling Green State University Libraries - OH
Breast Cancer Network of Strength - IL
Carnegie Mellon University Libraries - PA
CFIDS Association of America - NC
Chemists Without Borders - CA
Chordoma Foundation - NC
Christopher Reeve Foundation - DC
Colorectal Cancer Coalition - DC
Committee for Economic Development - DC
CUNY – City College Libraries - NY
CURE: Citizens United for Research in Epilepsy - IL
Cutaneous Lymphoma Foundation (formerly Mycosis Fungoides Foundation) - MI
Coalition for Heritable Disorders of Connective Tissue - DC
Colorado State University - CO
Conquer Fragile X Syndrome - FL
The Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD) Foundation - OH
Cystinosis Research Network - IL
Denison University – William H. Doane Library - OH
Down Syndrome Treatment and Research Foundation - CA
Eastern Kentucky University Libraries - KY
Electronic Frontier Foundation - CA
Emory University Libraries - GA
Essential Action - DC
Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered (FORCE) - FL
Francis Countway Library of Medicine (Harvard Medical School) - MA
Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center - WA
FreePatentsOnline
Genetic Alliance - DC
Global Neuroscience Initiative Foundation - WA
GNU EPrints - UK
Grand Valley State University Libraries - MI
Greater Western Library Alliance - MO
International Mosaic Down Syndrome Association (IMDSA) - TX
International Journal of Medical Sciences - MD
IP Justice - CA
IsoDicentric 15 Exchange, Advocacy and Support (IDEAS) - OR
Kent State University Libraries - OH
Knowledge Ecology International (formerly Consumer Project on Technology - CPTech) - DC
Linda Hall Library of Science, Engineering & Technology - MO
Loyola University Chicago Libraries - IL
Medical Education Online - MI
Memorial Library, Berry College - GA
National Coalition for PKU & Allied Disorders - MA
National Fragile X Foundation - MI
National Tay-Sachs & Allied Diseases Association - MA
New England Biolabs - MA
Oberlin College - OH
Ohio Library and Information Network - OH
Parent Project Muscular Dystrophy - OH
Planetree - CT
Polio Survivors Association - CA
Prader-Willi Syndrome Association – FL



Members (cont'd)

Pseudoxanthoma Elasticum (PXE) International
- DC
Public Knowledge - DC
Public Library of Science - CA
Purdue University Libraries - IN
Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources
Coalition (SPARC) - DC
South Dakota State University, Hilton M. Briggs
Library - SD
Special Libraries Association - VA
Spina Bifida Association of America - DC
Students for Free Culture - FL
Swarthmore College - PA
Tourette Syndrome Association - DC
Trinity University Coates Library - TX
Tufts University Libraries - MA
Turner Syndrome Foundation, Inc. - NJ

Universities Allied for Essential Medicines - NJ
University of Colorado at Boulder Libraries - CO
University of Connecticut Libraries - CT
University of Kansas - KS
University of New Hampshire - NH
University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill, School
of Information and Library Science - NC
University of Wisconsin – Madison Libraries - WI
University of Wisconsin Oshkosh – Forrest R.
Polk Library - WI
Utah Academic Library Consortium - UT
Veterinary Information Network - CA
Washington State Board for Community &
Technical Colleges - WA
Wayne State University College of Nursing - MI
Williams College Libraries - MA