



THE SCHOLARLY PUBLISHING
& ACADEMIC RESOURCES COALITION

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Thank you for the opportunity to speak at this important meeting today. I'm Heather Joseph, Executive Director of the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC). As an international alliance of academic and research libraries dedicated to promoting the expanded sharing of research, SPARC has extensive experience in working with both public and private research funders to develop and implement successful open access policies.

We fully support the recent OSTP memorandum, and applaud OSTP for its leadership in seeking policies that ensure ready access to and full use of articles reporting on publicly funded research, in order to accelerate discovery, improve education, and fuel the translation of this research into innovative new products and services.

In the time allotted, I want to emphasize four elements, that in our experience, and the experience of research funders around the world who have implemented successful open access policies, have been shown to be crucial in order for agency policies to achieve the goals such as those set out by the OSTP memorandum.

1. We need both barrier-free access to and full digital re-use of the full text of digital articles. Providing anything less (such as simply linking to a PDF or providing a metadata solution) deeply inhibits the ability of the research community and the public to unlock the full value of this information. Policies must ensure that appropriate rights are assigned to enable full reuse -including text/data mining and computational analysis. We need policies that enable forward-looking digital uses of individual articles, as well as the full corpus of digital articles. We don't want to end up in a siloed, "read-only" world.

2. Where access to research is concerned, faster really is better. To truly facilitate innovation in research, education and commerce, the public needs access to the latest research as quickly as possible. While immediate access is the ideal, we support the inclusion of a flexible embargo period that's in line with emerging standards around the world - no longer than six months for the life and physical sciences, and no longer

than 12 months for social sciences, the arts and humanities. Longer delays undercut our ability to begin translating the results of our research into tangible benefits as quickly as possible.

3. *There is no need to reinvent the wheel.* When developing these policies, Agencies should avoid unnecessary duplication of existing investments, and take advantage of proven blueprints for success. We strongly encourage agencies to consider leveraging the significant public investment in the highly successful NIH PubMed Central repository infrastructure, as well the investments made by higher education institutions and their libraries in non-proprietary digital archives. These can provide cost-effective, stable, long-term solutions for housing digital articles in an environment that can enable true interoperability. This is particularly important to also ensure that there are clear pathways for linking these articles to a second critical research output - digital data.

4. *Finally, consistency is key.* 31 flavors may be great for ice cream, but it isn't a practical approach for research access policies. We ask that agencies be as deliberately consistent as possible in their compliance requirements to minimize the cost and complexity to both PI's and administrators. Harmonizing actions as simple as using the time of acceptance of an article in a journal as the standard action point for compliance provides a proven, simple, effective mechanism for minimizing confusion and maximizing compliance.

This is that rare moment in time that we, the citizens who fund research and the agencies we entrust to invest our tax dollars in that research – have the chance to ensure together that the policies we choose to support the communication of research results are updated to better serve the Interest of the research academy and the public. We have the opportunity to optimize our use of the Internet for exactly what it was created for – to revolutionize the speed, efficiency and effectiveness of how we conduct - and communicate - research.

SPARC and our member libraries look forward to working with OSTP and all of the federal agencies here in productive and positive ways to construct and implement simple and effective policies that can make this a vision of 21st century research communication a reality.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Heather Joseph". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Respectfully,".

Heather Joseph,
Executive Director, SPARC

