

Subject: Survey of public access to government funded research and information

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Good day,

As a life-long, professional librarian, I am concerned about public access to knowledge and information and wish to express my opinion for your survey. While I currently serve as a part-time college librarian at Curry College in Milton, Massachusetts, I am retired from a long career as a high school librarian in the town of Weymouth, Massachusetts.

During these years in libraries, I have observed that institutions struggle with limited funding, providing access to patrons at point of need and an ever increasing need to focus patrons on credible material as opposed to bogus information.

Below are some thoughts. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Rosanne Aversa
Librarian
Levin Library
Curry College

(1) Are there steps that agencies could take to grow existing and new markets related to the access and analysis of peer-reviewed publications that result from federally funded scientific research? How can policies for archiving publications and making them publically accessible be used to grow the economy and improve the productivity of the scientific enterprise? What are the relative costs and benefits of such policies? What type of access to these publications is required to maximize U.S. economic growth and improve the productivity of the American scientific enterprise?

(Forgive me for lumping all my responses into one answer.)

Professors, teachers and students need access to the newest research findings in order to keep the United States in the forefront as the leader of scientific research and development globally. Asking universities, colleges, high schools or even the public to use dated knowledge or information is unacceptable. In this time of proliferation of pseudoscience, the government has a responsibility to provide free and open access as much as is practically possible to peer reviewed, accurate data.

As more and more high quality, cutting edge research is published in electronic versions only, we risk restricting this knowledge to a limited few who are affiliated with institutions that can afford subscriptions to expensive databases if we do not publish publically. While the companies that sell this data are delighted to have exclusive access, this mode of dispensation profits only those companies and no one else. We may be restricting the information from the next Bill Gates or Steve Jobs. We cannot return to the Middle Ages when only the wealthy had access to books and print materials while the masses labored in ignorance because of limited delivery methods.

Open access offers a good return on investment as the broadest swath of people may use research findings to expand on the ideas presented, avoid duplication of effort and potentially innovate valuable

concepts. This is the vision of the future that the United States needs to pursue. The federal government is uniquely poised to provide the widest, free, public access possible to ensure equality and a more level playing field as well as to permanently preserve, archive, keep accessible and distribute information that taxpayers funded and should be able to read.

How to pursue this ideal I leave to those better versed than me is distribution methods, but I will always advocate for the widest possible access to the greatest number of people. Surely this vision will open the best possibility to expand use of research to grow our economy and ignite and inspire greater goals and productivity among thoughtful people everywhere.