

Subject: Response from the Consortium of Academic and research Libraries in Illinois

Date: December 20, 2011 4:57:30 PM EST

The Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois (CARLI) welcomes the opportunity to provide information and recommendations on the **America Competes Reauthorization Act of 2010** (ACRA; Pub. L. 111-358) in order to ensure long-term stewardship and broad public access to the peer-reviewed scholarly publications that result from federally funded scientific research.

CARLI is a consortium of 153 academic and research libraries that serve more than 880,000 students and more than 10,000 instructors, scholars and researchers. Member institutions include major research universities, five medical schools, over sixty schools training nurses and allied health professionals, a comprehensive network of forty eight community colleges, and an array of quality baccalaureate institutions. Many CARLI members will submit responses focused on the specific institutional needs, but there is also an important shared perspective to consider.

The economic argument for open access to publications derived from federally funded research can be clearly demonstrated through the examination of information resource sharing in a library consortium, such as CARLI. The identification, training and employment of scientists and technical staff comprise a continuum. Community college students and undergraduates become technicians and graduate students, who become public and private sector researchers and scientific scholars. In so far as the economic strength of the United States depends on robust and cutting edge scientific research, open access to the literature of federally funded research is both a social and economic good.

This progression is materially strengthened when the information resources available to students and faculty at each stage are consistent, relevant and of the highest quality. Making the most current and important research findings available to any student or faculty member in Illinois means that more and better scientists will be engaged in the next generation of research in the most timely and cost effective manner. In addition, open access to scientific information poses little, if any, threat to publishers' markets. CARLI's experience clearly shows that the majority of our 153 members cannot afford and subscribe to relatively few scientific publications of commercial publishers or scholarly societies. Only as part of consortial resource sharing can such information be made available. For our members who do not or cannot participate in the scientific publishing marketplace, open access represents no threat to the publishing industries interests.

Protection of intellectual property rights is not central to the discussion of open access for peer reviewed publications in modern science. In the majority of cases, the appearance of a published article represents a historical record. Publication has always trailed the conduct of actual science significantly, and the age of electronic information and instant communication has only widened the gap. Increasingly, the published article represents a mere synopsis of research, while electronic access to data sets, images and analytical results are the real intellectual property. The published literature of science is central to the promotion and tenure structure of American higher education, but plays a less vital role in scientific practice. Scientific literature is also vital

to the educational process and in this dimension open access accelerates the process, as the level of resource sharing conducted by a diverse consortium like CARLI demonstrates.

As a consortium devoted to the development of equitable and effective means of discovering and accessing information for 880,000 and 10,000 faculty, CARLI strongly believes that a centralized approach to managing the federally funded products of research is in the best interest of the scientific and educational communities. The ability to create clear and consistent metadata for these publications means that all of the relevant research can be efficiently discovered and made available to meet the instructional, scholarly and investigative needs of both public and private researchers and scientists.

CARLI has extensive experience in the challenges of meeting the diverse needs of our users with multiple electronic platforms and complex commercial licenses for information that was paid for with tax dollars and should be readily accessible. The efficacy of consolidated management of information resources has been demonstrated by the current NIH requirements for open access to the research it supports.

Since the published record compiles science already done, extensive embargo periods are not warranted. The investment in the peer review and editorial process of the publishing industry should be acknowledged, but they should not be overestimated. It is incumbent on the publishing industry to document the true cost of enterprises that utilize reviewers and editors from the academy.

In conclusion, CARLI, on behalf of its member libraries and the institutions they serve, strongly urges that the **America Competes Reauthorization Act of 2010** and any rules derived to implement the Act encourage, support and require that the literature resulting from federally funded research be made openly accessible to any citizen as quickly, transparently and inexpensively as possible. The approach taken by the NIH to accomplish this should serve as a model for all federally funded research.