

Subject: open access comments

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A bit about me before responding to the several questions concerning future open access and information dissemination sustainability. I am an executive editor for a methods journal and handle the assignment of reviewers and subsequent disposition of 50-60 manuscripts a year. I am also a retired professor emeritus of genetics. My telecoms are listed below.

Question 1: Open access greatly enhances the scientific research and enterprise of the country as well as facilitates the development of new technology driven businesses. One extremely annoying problem with top journals in the sciences, Nature journals in particular, is that there is no free access to archived papers. I recently tried to access the original DNA articles in Nature as well as a paper demonstrating the genetic code is a triplet code but could only have obtained if purchased for several dollars each. Yet, I can go to my university library and copy for a few pennies charged to a research account. This is patently absurd.

Solution 1: I cannot formulate a specific policy apart from federally funded research agencies disallowing publication in such high end journals unless they change their free access to archived articles. How long should access be delayed after print or online publication? 30-60 days. Perhaps the PTO policy with regard to submitted patent publication might be looked into. The journal Science has a good policy in this regard.

Question 2: Protecting IP is reasonable and expected of any policy and I think it is covered by most university policies at the moment. At my own university, public disclosure, e.g., a seminar or poster or other meeting presentation, can be held up for 60 days until the IP is provisionally or otherwise submitted. This is necessary, especially for young scientist in training - undergraduates, graduate students and postdoctoral fellows - to ensure the freedom to publish their findings to enhance their careers.

Question 3: I think the government and federally funded agencies should keep their noses out of it as much as possible except as noted above. The critical issue is trying to protect the publishers/ journals' interests as well as the scientists and the IP if applicable while maintaining relatively rapid open access. Instantaneous open access through ejournals will probably evolve and occur in the future, but the current publishing model has served the scientific enterprise

well and deserves some consideration during the transition. Said another way, what will happen will happen as scientists collectively adjust and use the new electronic access features and the print model will die away.

Question 4: Not that I am aware of however Google's copying of library contents may make this a moot point.

Question 5: No comment apart from what was said above.

Question 6: As noted in Solution 1 - develop a policy with regard to the time lag after publication when public access is available online. Libraries provide the dissemination point for most research scientists and companies have their own intralibraries of critical journals. Perhaps moving libraries and their ability to license a large collection of journals through individual publishers is the way to pave to free online access. Library of Congress can do this, too?

Question 7: Yes.

Question 8: Answered above. And this is the critical, essential question that needs to be resolved. Good luck and thanks for asking.

Bob...

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