

Subject: Response to RFI: Public Access to Peer-Reviewed Scholarly Publications Resulting From Federally Funded Research

Date: December 28, 2011 1:57:20 PM EST

Dear Members of the National Science and Technology Council / Task Force on Public Access to Scholarly Publications:

The Association of Southeastern Research Libraries (ASERL) represents libraries at 40 leading research institutions in 11 states. Our members firmly support free and open public access to the scholarly publications and the use/re-use of data emanating from research that is funded with taxpayer dollars.

ASERL believes the American public and the American economy should be able to reap maximum benefits from investments made with our tax dollars. Additionally, the NIH has existing channels that can be leveraged so these data and publications can be made publicly available with relative ease and at minimal cost to the government. We believe it is important that these opportunities for economic growth, scientific innovation, and educational leadership be open to all. A federal policy requiring immediate, full, free access to research data and publications -- with the rights to re-use the data -- can significantly increase opportunities for innovation and economic growth. Such a requirement would also allow new research to be incorporated into teaching and learning as quickly as possible. And lastly, we believe it is the fair and right thing to do!

To state the converse, ASERL believes limitations on the products of publicly-funded research (e.g., embargoes or behind paywalls or other barriers) are against the public interest. Such opportunities should not be limited by the desires of private publishers or others who seek short-term private profits from long-term public investments.

In short, we urge you to create a policy that maximizes the public's return in its investments – full, free, immediate public access to the data and scholarly publications resulting from publicly-supported

research, with full rights to re-use the data. This can be accomplished via the Creative Commons CC-BY license model – a well-established, legally valid method for ensuring access and re-use while providing due credit to the original author(s). We believe anything less would reduce America's return on our investments and limit opportunities for the future.

We ask OSTP to create policies that mandate public access to these publications and data without barriers. Many thanks for your consideration of our thoughts on these important matters.

--*jeb* John Burger, Executive Director **Association of Southeastern Research Libraries**