

Subject: AIA response to RFI re public access

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The Archaeological Institute of America (AIA) is pleased to join the American Anthropological Association (AAA) in its response to the Request for Information (RFI) issued by the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) on behalf of the National Science and Technology Council Task Force on Public Access to Scholarly Publications, published November 3, 2011 in the Federal Register. And we join them in requesting that those comments in response to the RFI announced at 76 FR 68518 be made an official part of the rulemaking docket.

Founded in 1879, the AIA is the largest organization in North America devoted to archaeology. With more than 220,000 professional, student, and lay members belonging to more than 100 local societies throughout the US, Canada, and overseas, it represents a very diverse population joined by an interest in learning about the material remains of the past.

One of the primary tools for advancing its mission of education is the scholarly quarterly American Journal of Archaeology (AJA), whose annual print length is approximately 800 pages. While AJA does present some primary archaeological reports (i.e., through its occasional "field reports," data gathered in the field) almost all of its content deals with archaeological interpretation rather than the primary reporting of archaeological data. We agree with the AAA that "while the government might have a right to the unfinished work product (i.e., the research data or 'findings') of researchers to whom they provide financial support, it does not have the right to journal articles that are the cumulative result of the significant time and financial investment of reviewers, editors, copywriters, designers, technology providers, archivists, publishers and distributors of such journal content—none of which is supported by federal research dollars." To get a sense of how much intellectual value is added during production, consider that the average time between the submission of articles to AJA and their final publication is approximately 18 months.

AJA strives to reach a wide readership by offering its content both in print and electronic versions. In the last years, it has expanded its electronic content by moving all book reviews and many museum exhibition reviews to the web. Striving for open access, AJA has made its content accessible in various ways: through a purchased annual subscription (rates are modest, with electronic-only at the lowest price point of \$50); through JSTOR's archive collection program, which gives access to all content except that of the last five years; through purchase of an individual article in PDF format (this applies only articles published after 1923). All content prior to 1923 is freely accessible as it is out of copyright.

We join the AAA in sharing the objective of enhancing the public understanding of our global archaeological heritage and to this end we support the widest dissemination of information possible. Access to such information currently already exists and no additional federal government intervention is necessary.

We thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments.

Elizabeth Bartman
President
Archaeological Institute of America