

Dear Science and Technology Policy Office,

Thank you for offering us the chance to share opinions on what effects the research we fund. The fact that it has come to this is shocking to be honest, but I'm glad you are fighting in our corner. I'm sure you have heard the arguments, and I won't add anything here, except my full support for those who oppose the ridiculous idea that science, funded by the public should benefit large business, not us. It's almost as if banks, propped up by us, were still making huge sums of money for the senior management and shareholders. Oh wait. Bad example. Nevermind.

Anyway, please do the right thing.

Thank you

Andrew Abrahamson

“Thank you for extending the deadline for comments on Public Access to Peer-Reviewed Scholarly Publications Resulting From Federally Funded Research. The Research Works Act has only very recently come to the notice of scientists, and it is because of this extraordinary proposal that it is now apparent to us that we need to reaffirm what we thought was settled: that OF COURSE scientific work funded by the public should be freely accessible to the public. I do not understand how this can even be a matter for discussion. The public pays: the public should benefit in every way possible.

The language in the RWA is highly misleading, attributing to publishers far more input into the scientific process than they really have. The truth is that scientists (often funded by public money provide the underlying research, the writing and the figure preparation that result in a manuscript submitted for publication. Other scientists then provide the editorial services and (contra publishers' claims, as can be easily verified) the peer review. Publishers' contributions are limited essentially to typesetting, the provision of web hosting, and sometimes a very limited amount of compensation for senior editors only (usually not the handling editors who actually deal with authors' works). The notion that such a minor contribution should suffice to hand publishers, rather than the public, the right to determine how, where and under what regime the resulting works are disseminated, is ludicrous. It would be laughable if it were not so iniquitous.”

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