

We are witnessing improvement in access to scholarly publications through a variety of high-quality mostly not-for-profit initiatives related to metadata standards, archiving, linking, low-cost article renting, plagiarism mitigation, and information dissemination to the resource-compromised. These information-dissemination and preservation systems are catalysts of innovation acceleration in the sciences and the arts, and they will thrive without interference from the government. Free public access to reports of federally funded research is a reasonable expectation. However, the investments of publishers, whether operating under subscription-based or open-access models, should not be compromised by public-access mandates regarding the peer-reviewed literature because society gains scientifically, culturally, and economically as systems for providing added value are sustained. Government can help by focusing on communications infrastructure expansion on a scale that it may be uniquely positioned to provide.

Ted Bakamjian  
Director, Publications  
Society of Exploration Geophysicists