



February 2016 Member Update

This month marked the the third anniversary of the [White House Directive](#) requiring U.S. agencies to develop policies for increasing public access to publications and data resulting from their funded research. While it may not have been particularly visible to the larger community, an enormous amount of progress has been made behind the scenes. To date, 16 Federal departments and agencies have issued [public access policy plans](#), many of which will take effect during this calendar year. This represents a sea change in the basic assumptions regarding the accessibility and utility of U.S.-funded research outputs.

This change is taking place in parallel with progress in Europe, where a similar process is playing out. EU member countries are currently responding to the landmark [Horizon 2020](#) Open Access and Open Data framework, building comprehensive new open access policies to EU-funded articles and data. The spotlight in Europe is firmly on advancing the Open Agenda, which is being championed as a top priority by the current Dutch Presidency of the Council of Europe, which runs through June of this year.

Because our systems for research and education are truly global, SPARC's advocacy efforts are structured to reflect this reality. Through the involvement of SPARC staff and SPARC affiliates, we work hard to ensure that our members' interests are robustly represented in these important policy forums, and SPARC remains actively engaged with policymakers on both continents as they continue to shape these policies. Visit the [SPARC](#) and [SPARC Europe](#) websites for the latest news and details.

- Heather Joseph, Executive Director, SPARC

OPEN ACCESS

New Content Added for SPARC MORE Meeting; Register now for Best Rates

SPARC is pleased to announce the addition of an exciting, interactive workshop designed to address the changing needs of faculty in the digital environment. The workshop, "Meeting the Rising Tide of Faculty Needs", will look at the ways that digital scholarship is challenging faculty to think about organizing and sharing, information from datasets to images, audio, technical reports, course materials, syllabi, and more. How can the library

move from being out at sea to riding this new wave of digital scholarship? Attend this workshop on Monday, March 7, from 7:30-9:00am, to find out.

Regular registration rates for SPARC members and non-members expire at the end of the day on Thursday, February 25. Beginning Friday, on-site registration rates begin (\$425 for SPARC members and \$535 for non-members). For more information please visit the [meeting website](#).

Bill Gates Speaks out on Open Access

On January 27, the Dutch Presidency of the European Union (which runs from January thru June 2016) hosted an informal meeting of the Competitive Council, a group comprised of European Ministers responsible for research and competitiveness on the continent. One key topic of this meeting was open access, and Bill Gates, Founder of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, offered the keynote address. In his speech, he directly addressed the importance of open access to research outputs - a public indicator of how important this issue is at the highest levels of the Gates Foundation. The Foundation issued a strong [open access policy](#) in November of 2015 requiring all its funded research articles to be made immediately openly available carrying a CC-BY license.

Extension of Knowledge Unlatched Pledging Period

[Knowledge Unlatched](#) (KU) is extending its pledging period for Round 2 for an extra month to February 28 to allow for more consultation across disciplines in libraries. KU has noted that with the growth of titles and choices than previously available in the Pilot, and with books now organized by subject packages as well as publishers, libraries may require a little more time to sort through the details. If you are interested in more information on consortium arrangements contact celeste.feather@lyrasis.org.

OPEN EDUCATION

Federal Open Licensing Policy Update

Last month we shared the exciting news that the U.S. Department of Labor has adopted an open licensing policy for educational materials. This followed a similar policy proposed by the Department of Education late last year, and many SPARC members have wondered how they compare and contrast. These policies are similar in that both apply broadly to intellectual property produced through competitive grants, and require the use of a license that permits full reuse of the material on the condition of attribution. The DOL takes their policy a step further by explicitly naming the Creative Commons Attribution license as its preferred license. Neither policy directly addresses the sharing and distribution of resources to the public once licensed, which will be a critical element for both agencies to address as they move toward implementation. For more detailed information and talking points, visit our [website](#).

New Report Links Textbook Costs and Financial Aid

The Student PIRGs, a SPARC advocacy partner group, released a [new report](#) examining the connection between textbook costs and financial aid. The report notes that 3 in 10 students rely on financial aid to pay for textbooks, spending ~\$300 in grants, loans and

work study funds on books each semester. If extrapolated to the entire U.S. student population, it means that roughly \$3 billion in financial aid is spent on textbooks each semester -- most of which is taxpayer-funded or -subsidized. This report is a potential game changer for conversations around textbook affordability, since it illustrates the issue's relevance to the larger college cost debate, and highlights open educational resources as a clear solution. The report was covered by high-profile outlets including [NBC News](#).

Amazon Moving Into OER?

Amazon recently made waves with [an announcement](#) that it is launching a new platform that will allow schools to upload, manage, share, and discover OER using an interface modeled on the company's retail website. Amazon pledged to develop this tool last fall in partnership with the Department of Education's #GoOpen campaign for K-12 schools and has been engaged in conversations with open community leaders. However, the announcement was thin on details about OER, and it remains to be seen the extent to which the platform will be truly supportive of open content. One of the key features SPARC and our allies will advocate for the platform to contain is full integration of Creative Commons licenses, ensuring that both authors and users can easily mark, find and download content with open licenses. We'll keep you posted as details develop!

OPEN DATA

Medical Journal Editors Propose Data Sharing Policy

In mid-January 2016, The International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) [proposed a striking new policy](#) requiring the open sharing of data underlying clinical trials as a condition for publication of a clinical trial report in its member's peer reviewed journals. The ICMJE, whose members include publishers from many of the most prominent medical journals in the world - including The New England Journal of Medicine, the BMJ, and JAMA, proposes to require authors to share with others the de-identified individual patient data underlying the results presented in the article no later than six months after publication. The proposal also requires authors to include data sharing plans at the time of trial registration. The ICMJE is [inviting comments](#) on this proposal through April 18.

Text and Data Mining as Fair Use

As our community marks Fair Use/Fair Dealing Week 2016, it's an opportune time to note the crucial role that Fair Use plays in enabling the Text and Data Mining (TDM) of scholarly articles in the U.S. While some publishers are now asking libraries to consider adding language defining acceptable parameters for TDM in journal licensing agreements, in many cases, this language can actually create greater restrictions to use, and add unnecessary administrative and time burdens into a researcher's workflow. During Fair Use Week, SPARC encourages you to revisit the protections that Fair Use provides your faculty and students to perform computational analysis, text and data mining on scholarly texts. A full issue briefing is [available here](#) and more information is also available on the [SPARC website](#).

STUDENT ACTION

WhyOpenResearch.org Shows Researchers the Value of Open

Many researchers support the idea of open access to research, but worry about the implications to their own careers if they openly share their work. To help tackle these concerns directly, SPARC's Right to Research Coalition (R2RC) supported Erin McKiernan, an early career researcher and Open advocate, to create a new resource called WhyOpenResearch.org. This new website combines simple talking points, data, and accessible cartoons to help educate researchers on how sharing can actually be beneficial for their careers. Along with useful (and fun) web presence, WhyOpenResearch.org provides a number of easily printable cards and one-pagers for use on campus and at conferences. The website launched during OpenCon 2015.

Making Textbooks Affordable Student Government Toolkit

Fighting for Open Textbooks on campus is tough, complex work. However, student governments can be, and have been, extremely effective in the battle. To help, we've put together a [toolkit](#) taking students from basic knowledge, to campus policies. The toolkit contains resources, strategies, tactics and templates to make it easier to have an impact. This resource was co-produced by our friends at [Student PIRGs](#) and the [Student Government Resource Center](#).

OpenCon Alumni Designing our #FutureCommons

Later this month, the Force 11 Scholarly Commons Working Group will convene a [two day workshop](#) examining what is required to support an effective scholarly communications ecosystem - a Scholarly Commons - for 21st century scholarship. The program will focus on assessing the degree of convergence of current thinking across communities and stakeholders, mapping current efforts against this thinking, and developing the materials necessary to promote future activity in this space. The participants will include leaders in the scholarly communications space, including over a dozen alumni from past OpenCon events. To warm up for the workshop, the R2RC is partnering with the working group on this month's [OpenCon Community Call](#).

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Thoughts on ways to improve this communication? Please send them to Shawn Daugherty, Assistant Director for Operations & Programs at shawn@sparcopen.org