The recent changes to Elsevier’s article sharing policy have struck a deep chord within the academic and research library community, with more than 2,800 institutions and individuals signing the joint COAR/SPARC statement calling for the policy to be reconsidered.

However, Elsevier’s action has done more than simply spur indignation; many institutions are also now considering strategies to proactively secure the rights to research articles generated by members of their faculty, effectively returning control over their distribution to the author and their academic institution. The most effective mechanism to do this is through a rights-retention based institutional Open Access policy, like the ones in place in the University of California System and at institutions including Harvard and MIT.

To find out more about these policies, join our SPARC-hosted webcast on this topic at 1pm ET on July 9th.

- Heather Joseph, Executive Director, SPARC

### OPEN ACCESS

#### Updated Open Access Week Website Launched

This month, SPARC launched an updated version of the Open Access Week website to make the site more useful and easier to navigate. The homepage was the focal point of the revisions with changes designed to make the latest information easier to find. The new “Featured Posts” section will highlight curated content and resources to help plan and promote Open Access Week activities. With the theme of “Open for Collaboration,” this year’s Open Access Week will be celebrated from October 19-25. You can learn more at www.openaccessweek.org.

#### SPARC Contributes to New “Aligning Repositories” Report

A comprehensive report on the current state of international digital repositories was recently published by The Confederation of Open Access Repositories (COAR). It was produced on behalf of the Aligning Repository Networks Committee, a group of representatives from repository networks around the world, including SPARC’s Executive Director, Heather Joseph. The report notes that as of May 2015, over 2,800 repositories exist around the world, with approximately 85% of those hosted by a research or academic institution. The full report can be found here.
Department of Veterans Affairs Releases Public Access Plan
The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) became the latest U.S. Agency to release its plan for creating public access policies for articles and data resulting from its funded research. The agency will partner with the National Institutes of Health and requires all funded researchers to deposit final accepted manuscripts, upon acceptance in a peer-reviewed journal, into the NIH's PubMed Central database and to be made publicly available no later than 12 months after publication. The VA will take a slightly more cautious approach to its research data sharing policy than other agencies, due in large part to concerns over protecting veterans’ confidential health information. The will use a staged approach - opening data under "controlled public access” terms initially - and implementing a more fully-open approach upon completion of an analysis of privacy risks, slated to be completed by the end of 2016.

OPEN EDUCATION

Open Textbook Network Summer Institute
SPARC is pleased to be collaborating with the Center for Open Education at the University of Minnesota on a three-day professional development institute for the Open Textbook Network (OTN). The goal of the institute is to bring OTN member institutions together to enhance open textbook program development across OTN members, envision the future of OTN with our members, and strengthen presentation capacity for future open textbook workshops. The event will be organized and hosted by UMN, and SPARC will be closely involved in developing the program and accompanying resources.

Connecticut State Legislature Unanimously Passes OER Bill
In the final hours of its 2015 legislative session, the Connecticut State Legislature unanimously approved a bill to expand the use of open educational resources within the state. The bill redirects the equivalent of approximately $50,000 in state resources (in the form of staff time and infrastructure) to support OER programs in the state and also creates a study task force committee for assessing the savings to be achieved. Library and student advocates played a critical role in helping to pass this bill. A similar bill is pending in the Oregon legislature, awaiting action in the Ways and Means Committee.

Highlights from BC Open Textbook Summit
Earlier this month, SPARC attended the BC Open Textbook Summit in Vancouver, an event in its third year that brings together the open textbook community from across North America. Highlights from the event include a keynote by OpenCon alumna Chardaye Buechert, who has been leading open textbook advocacy at Simon Fraser University, and a workshop by SPARC's Nicole Allen on building a campus OER action plan. More information and resources from the conference are online at http://otsummit.bccampus.ca/.

OPEN DATA

SPARC Convenes New Member Advisory Group on Data
To ensure that our members have direct channels to help SPARC focus our programs on efforts that are of the most immediate use to you, we've recently set up a series of targeted Member Advisory Groups to help guide our work. Last week, our Advisory Group on Data convened for the first time, and discussed initiatives that fit into SPARC’s program area focusing on research data sharing policy and practices. The Advisory Group will play a central role in helping us to determine where SPARC should focus our resources so that we’re not duplicating work already being done elsewhere, but rather, leveraging your dues dollars to provide services that we are uniquely positioned to provide. Watch our Research Data Sharing Initiative pages for more information on forthcoming resources!

**SPARC Supports New Transparency in Research Guidelines**
This month, SPARC joined more than 30 other research, academic and publishing organizations in becoming an original supporter of a new set of guidelines designed to enhance the transparency and reproducibility of research. The newly-announced TOP (Transparency and Openness Promotion) guidelines present journal publishers with a set of standards that can be adopted - and adapted - to set increasingly rigorous requirements for sharing the underlying data, code and procedures needed to validate research findings. SPARC supports this initiative as an important step towards promoting and ultimately, rewarding strong research data sharing practices. For additional information and the full text of the guidelines, see the TOPs website.

**Harvard University and Purdue University Host Joint Symposium**
On June 16-17, Harvard University and Purdue University hosted a joint symposium on data management. The symposium brought together individuals from the library community, researchers, the publishing industry and policy makers to discuss the various drivers behind the research data movement to date and various tools that may be used to as this continues to develop. This symposium placed a heavy emphasis on the evolving roles of libraries. As more funders require the data be made ‘open’ and sharable, libraries are well-positioned to act as central players in this ever-emerging world of data management.

![STUDENT ACTION](image)

**OpenCon Sets Record for Number, Diversity of Applicants**
More than 3,300 individuals from 150 countries around the world applied to attend this year’s OpenCon 2015 meeting—nearly doubling the number of applications from last year. The huge increase in applications demonstrates a deep and growing interest in Open Access, Open Education and Open Data among students and early career academic professionals. SPARC has worked to cultivate this interest over the past six years, through its Right to Research Coalition, which developed the OpenCon event. While the OpenCon application period is now closed, your campus can still participate by sponsoring a representative to attend or hosting an OpenCon satellite event.

**“Open Research and Your Career” Webcast Series Continues**
Our “Open Research and Your Career” webcast series will continue on Tuesday, July 7th, at 9am PT / 12pm ET, with Ethan White, an associate professor at the University of Florida
and a Moore Investigator in Data-Driven Discovery, discussing “On Success and Working Openly in Science.” Ethan will share his perspective on the risks and rewards associated with a career committed to open practices. Please join us for this webcast at: opencon2015.org/community/webcasts. This webcast follows our other two talks in this series, How to Get Tenure* (“while practicing open science) and “Using Open as an Asset in an Academic Career.”

SPARC Provides Student Perspective at Key Meetings
This month, SPARC’s Right to Research Coalition participated in a number of key European meetings ensuring that both SPARC and the student community were represented as leading stakeholders. These meetings included the OA19 conference hosted by CERN, a SPARC Europe and LIBER-hosted workshop, the Young European Associated Researchers (YEAR) conference, and an EU expert consultation hosted by the Netherlands as they prepare for their term holding the EU Presidency during the first half of 2016.

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