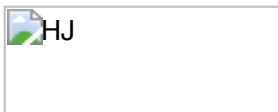




October 2015 Member Update

During October, SPARC was proud to sponsor the 8th annual Open Access Week, an event designed to highlight the progress of the global community towards setting the default mode to “open” in research and education. This year’s celebration featured events in more than 40 countries around the world, and underscored just how broad the adoption of practices and policies for the open sharing of knowledge has become. Our member campuses hosted scores of events, with many taking this year’s theme of “Open for Collaboration” to heart -- participating in the Wikipedia Edit-a-Thon that SPARC co-sponsored with Wikipedia Library, sharing details of their local events via the community Open Access Week website, and tuning into webcasts from institutions around the world. These events, which connected us with colleagues old and new, serves as a poignant reminder of the power that Open Access holds to create and empower a truly global research and education community.



- Heather Joseph, Executive Director, SPARC



OPEN ACCESS

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation/SPARC Open Access Policy Forum

With generous support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, SPARC was pleased to co-host a two-day meeting designed to catalyze a dialogue about opportunities for research funders to make the research they support more openly available to read, reuse, and build upon. Representatives from approximately 50 large research funders and other key stakeholder organizations attended the meeting in Washington, DC, with participants expressing a deep interest in using the meeting as a launching pad for an ongoing “community of practice” for funders interested in making Open Access a more central part of their research portfolios.

Open Access Spectrum Tool Launched

The [Open Access Spectrum \(OAS\) Evaluation Tool](#) quantitatively scores journals' degrees of openness. It uses the [HowOpenIsIt? guide](#) as its basis. SPARC was pleased to launch this resource during Open Access Week, with an initial cohort of 1,000 journals, looking at their policies on areas such as readership rights, reuse rights, and machine readability. The OAS Evaluation Tool can be used by authors, libraries, research funders, government agencies, and other interested parties to analyze publications' policies, and to understand

just where each is presently situated on the road to full Open Access.

COAPI Launches New Video on Campus Open Access Policies

The Coalition of Open Access Policy Institutions (COAPI) launched a [snappy new video](#) highlighting campus Open Access policies, and their value to authors, readers, and the world at large. The video is designed to help you and your library colleagues initiate conversations on your campus about how to get started on developing your own campus OA policy. SPARC was pleased to once again join with our colleagues at ACRL in providing funding to COAPI to create and deliver this new video.



OPEN EDUCATION

U.S. Department of Education Makes Bold Moves on OER

The [U.S. Department of Education has announced](#) that it will launch #GoOpen, an initiative to encourage states, school districts, and educators to use openly licensed educational materials. As part of the campaign, the Department of Education is proposing a new regulation that would ensure that educational materials created through the agency's discretionary grants be released openly. The proposed regulation would ensure that the public can freely use, adapt and share any educational resources that their tax dollars fund. The new campaign is housed at <http://tech.ed.gov/open>. The proposed policy is expected to be published in the Federal Register next week and the public will then have thirty days to submit comments.

White House Takes Action on OER

This week, the White House released its new [Open Government National Action Plan](#), which includes commitments to expand access to open educational resources and the results of federally funded research. The commitment to Open Education has been highly anticipated by the community since this summer, after more than 100 U.S. civil society organizations - including SPARC - [sent a letter to the White House](#) calling for strong executive action to make federally funded educational resources openly licensed. The plan specifies three activities the U.S. will take to advance open education, including promoting open licenses for federally-supported educational materials, creating a set of best practices for the creation of federally-funded OER, and a commitment to continue to convene stakeholders in the OER space.

Affordable College Textbook Act Reintroduced in Congress

Earlier this month, the [Affordable College Textbook Act](#) was reintroduced into both chambers of Congress. Sponsored by Senators Dick Durbin (D-IL), Al Franken (D-MN) and Angus King (D-ME) and Representatives Rubén Hinojosa (D-TX) and Jared Polis (D-CO), the bill aims to reduce the cost of textbooks by creating a federally-funded competitive grant program for colleges and universities to establish open textbook pilot programs. As a condition of the grants, any educational materials developed would be released under an open license and freely shared with other schools and the general public. The bill was [originally introduced in 2013](#), and its reintroduction signals the continued national significance of open educational resources as part of higher education's future.



OPEN DATA

SPARC convenes workshop on Harmonizing Research Data Sharing Policies

Earlier this month, SPARC partnered with the National Institutes of Health, the Wellcome Trust, and PLOS to convene a targeted group of international research funders and publishers to participate in a daylong workshop on “Open Research Policy Harmonization.” The purpose of the workshop was to identify specific actions that funders and the publishers can jointly agree to take to align their research data sharing policies to ensure that they are consistent, so that they can truly deliver useful and open access to data. This workshop, which was generously hosted by the World Bank, served as the first, of what we anticipate will be, a series of regular working convenings of this group.

Open Science Prize

The National Institutes of Health and the Wellcome Trust have partnered on a new [Open Science Prize](#). Recognizing that researchers’ ability to derive knowledge from data is predicated on their ability to find, access and use it, the Open Science Prize will support the development and prototyping of services, tools and platforms to overcome existing barriers to ensure data can be used to advance discovery and spur innovation. Up to six teams will win initial awards of \$80,000 each to develop their ideas into a prototype or to advance an existing early stage prototype, with the team determined to have the greatest potential to further open science receiving \$230,000. SPARC’s Executive Director, Heather Joseph, has been tapped to serve as an expert advisor to help determine the winners.



STUDENT ACTION

Student Forum at the University of Colorado Boulder

On Tuesday, October 27, SPARC, the College Republican National Committee and the University of Colorado Student Government, hosted a forum at the University of Colorado Boulder to coincide with the third GOP debate taking place on campus. Held at CU’s Norlin Library, Sean Spicer, Chief Strategist and Communications Director for the RNC, Rick Tyler Senator Cruz’s spokesperson, and Frank Fiorina, Carly Fiorina’s husband, and others, came and spoke on issues of importance to students -- namely college affordability and growing the American economy. Within this frame, we highlighted OA and OER as effective tools to advance these issues and encouraged the campaigns to engage with our issue areas in their remarks at the debate.

Virtual Participation in OpenCon 2015

This year, a staggering 3,000+ individuals applied to attend OpenCon 2015. While our [growing number of satellites events](#) across the world increases access to the event, we wanted to do more to accommodate this explosion in interest. We are happy to announce “OpenCon 2015 Live”, a new experiment in enabling people to participate virtually in OpenCon 2015 in a meaningful way. People who attend OpenCon 2015 in person are expected to leave the event better prepared to provide leadership to their local network,

and to take action - and we want to enable virtual participants to do the same. Through our high-quality live stream, conference call lines and more, OpenCon 2015 Live will strive enable virtual attendees to learn, network and be equipped to take action. You, and others on your campus are invited to join us virtually. You can find more about "[OpenCon 2015 Live](#)" [here](#).

Open Access Button Coming Onboard SPARC

A core part of SPARC's mission is the incubation of innovative projects in scholarly communications. We've supported the [Open Access Button](#), a tool helping track when people are denied access to research - and helping them find alternative access - since its inception, and awarded the team the [SPARC Innovator Award](#) earlier this year for their efforts. In order to better support their next phase of growth, we are very pleased that the Open Access Button has now become an official sub-project of SPARC. We're excited to work even more closely with the team to help provide a stable platform and other kinds of support that they need to continue to grow. Currently, the team is working on developing extending the Open Access Button's concept to include data - creating an Open Data Button - [through an incubator grant](#) from the Center for Open Science.

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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