

For Immediate Release

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Prominent Funding Organizations Team Up to Launch Open Research Funders Group

Collaboration promotes wider sharing of research articles and data

WASHINGTON, DC (December 15, 2016) - Eight highly-visible organizations today announced the launch of the Open Research Funders Group, a partnership designed to increase access to research outputs. With nearly \$5 billion in combined annual grants conferred, these organizations are committed to using their positions to foster more open sharing of research articles and data. This openness, the members believe, will accelerate the pace of discovery, reduce information-sharing gaps, encourage innovation, and promote reproducibility.

Inaugural members of the Open Research Funders Group (ORFG) include the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, the American Heart Association, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, the John Templeton Foundation, the Laura and John Arnold Foundation, Open Society Foundations, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

“The Open Research Funders Group provides a unique opportunity for funders to speak with a single voice regarding open access, open data and open science,” said Trevor Mundel, President of Global Health at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. “It amplifies our shared commitment to accelerating access to the work we fund and the knowledge it generates.”

Added Dr. Ivor Benjamin, Chair of the American Heart Association Research Committee, “The ORFG aligns with the American Heart Association's strategic goals and our core belief that investment in research is maximized through its wide availability to an expanding community of stakeholders and end users. We look forward to learning from peer organizations that have developed and implemented open access and open data policies, and, in turn, to sharing what we have learned from our own experience.”

The Open Research Funders Group will confer regularly to develop actionable principles that can be used by research funders to accelerate access to research and underlying data. The ORFG will compile and curate resources and best practices to help funding organizations develop and communicate open policies to internal and external stakeholders. Additionally, the group will identify opportunities to develop and/or support infrastructure that can accelerate openness globally. The ORFG will be assisted in its efforts by SPARC (the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition), which will serve a coordinating role for the project. The group arose out of a forum of open access stakeholders convened by The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and SPARC in late 2015.

More information on the Open Research Funders Group may be found at www.orfg.org. Membership is open to nonprofit organizations around the globe that maintain or aid charitable, educational, or other activities serving the public good. Potential members must fund and/or directly undertake scholarly or scientific research, select award recipients based on objective merit using a review procedure that is clearly documented, and make a list of awarded grants freely available to the public through publication of an annual report and/or publishing the list of grants on the organization's website.

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