Open Access to Scholarly and Scientific Research Articles

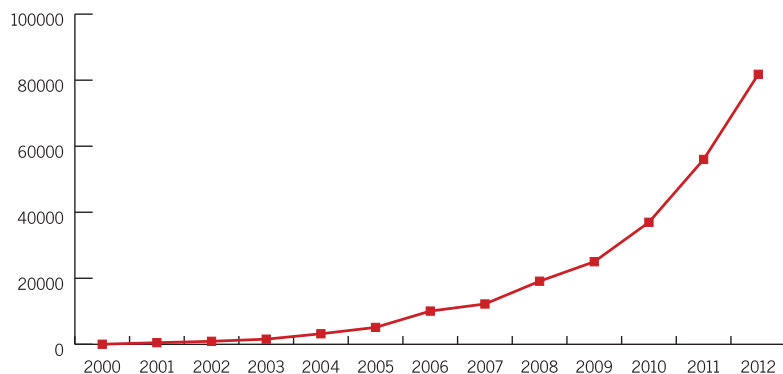## Why is Open Access important?

We engage and invest in research in order to accelerate the pace of scientific discovery, encourage innovation, enrich education, and stimulate the economy — to improve the public good. *Communication of the results of research is an essential component of the research process*; research can only advance by sharing the results, and the value of an investment in research is only maximized through wide use of its results.

Yet, too often, because of cost barriers or use restrictions, research results are not available to the full community of potential users. The Internet gives us the opportunity to bring this crucial information to a worldwide audience at virtually no marginal cost, and allows us to use it in new, innovative ways. This has resulted in a call for a new framework to allow research results to be more easily accessed and used — the call for Open Access.

Over the past decade, *Open Access has become central to advancing the interests of researchers, scholars, students, businesses, and the public — as well as librarians*. Increasingly, institutions that support research — from public and private research funders to higher education institutions — are implementing policies that require researchers to make articles that report on research generated from their funding openly accessible to and fully useable by the public.

Number of articles published with CC-BY licenses 2000–2012 [1]

Open Access is the *free, immediate, online availability* of research articles, coupled with the *rights to use these articles fully* in the digital environment.

81,780 articles in 2012
were published in Open Access journals [1]

252,418 articles
were published in Open Access Journals during 2000–2012 [1].

9,745 Open Access journals
A comprehensive list of Open Access journals is provided by the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) [1].

2,500 repositories
are available for authors to digitally deposit their work [3]. A comprehensive list of these is available through the Directory of Open Access Repositories (OpenDOAR).

SPARC✱

How Does Open Access Work?

SPARC considers the terms outlined by the Creative Commons Attribution-Only license (CC-BY) to be the standard terms for Open Access. Four primary mechanisms can be used to enable Open Access:

- Open Access publishing
- Digital repositories
- Effectively managed author rights
- Local, national and international Open Access policies

Open Access publishing Authors can choose to publish their research articles in a growing number of journals that meet the full definition of Open Access. Articles are free to all interested readers, and the publisher places no financial or copyright barriers between the readers and the article. Open Access publishing is the fastest growing segment of the scholarly publishing market, and journal options are now available for nearly every area of research.

Digital repositories Authors can choose to deposit their research articles in digital archives (often called Digital Repositories or Institutional Repositories) which conform to the standards of the Open Archives Initiative (OAI), and enable readers to freely access and fully reuse the article text. This allows any author to make their work available under Open Access conditions regardless of the journal out the article is published in.

Effectively managed author rights As the author of a research paper, you have the ability to ensure that your article can be accessed and used by the widest possible audience. Tools such as Addenda to traditional Copyright Transfer Forms are readily available, proven resources that can help you understand open licenses and publish your articles under full Open Access conditions.

Local, national and international Open Access policies Institutions that support research, from public and private research funders to higher education institutions, can implement effective policies that that support making Open Access to scholarly research articles the default mode for their researchers.

How Can You Advance Open Access?

Raise awareness Engage your campus community on the topic of Open Access. In conversations with faculty and students, explain how Open Access can raise the visibility and impact of their of research. Encourage authors to publish their work in Open Access journal, and to place their work your campus institutional repository.

Set an example Choose Open Access outlets to publish your own work whenever possible.

Host an event on campus During International Open Access Week or any other time of year, events help identify and educate colleagues, identify champions on campus and dispel common misconceptions

Advocate for an institutional policy More than 300 institutions around the world now have institutional open access policies. SPARC has resources to help you build a successful on-campus campaign and can connect you with colleagues who have passed policies themselves through the Coalition of Open Access Policy Institutions (COAPI).

Engage your elected representatives The library community and SPARC have led the charge in working with policymakers to ensure that the results of publicly funded research are made freely available. Use SPARC's legislative advocacy platform to contact your elected representatives in Congress and in your state.

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