

January 24, 2020

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

As 21 Nobel Prize award-winning scientists and scholars we are writing to express our strong support for immediate open access to the results of research funded with U.S. taxpayer dollars. We understand there is an Executive Order under consideration by your Administration that would remove the 12-month embargo currently in place for access to published, taxpayer-funded research and strongly urge you to sign this order.

Immediate online access to the bounty of research funded and published with U.S. support is fundamental to realising the full potential of our nation's \$65b investment in science. We must ensure that human and machine readers alike have open access to the reports, data, and code stemming from our work in order that it may be built upon swiftly, efficiently, and be translated effectively into benefits for society.

Such barriers must be removed. The work of our nation's seven million scientists¹ is inhibited so long as there are delays before we are able to read the latest work in our fields. Improving public health through the investigation of new treatments and potential cures for disease is delayed. Growing the U.S. economy through the translation of research into new services, tools and businesses is delayed. Progress across all of our fields is delayed by the embargo on access.

Immediate, open online access to U.S. research will create valuable visibility. We publish our findings so that they may be read and built upon. The more quickly our work is seen, the more widely, the more likely it is that a collaborator will add to it and help us carry on the line of investigation toward a potentially crucial discovery.

Of course we are not the only ones to benefit from wide online access to the fruits of scientific research. American students, teachers, physicians, businesses, policymakers, and people also stand to benefit deeply from a richer understanding of the latest research – starting with access to read it.

It is past time for the U.S. to require immediate open access to the results of the research we fund. The power to deliver open online access to research was proven in 1991 by Paul Ginsparg and the arXiv. The importance of policy to engage researchers was proven in 2008 by the Public Access Policy of the National Institutes of Health. And, all the while, the

¹ <https://fas.org/sqp/crs/misc/R43061.pdf>

volume of new research outputs has reached an excess of three million per year – a figure that is currently growing at a rate of 3% per year.

The old model of subscription publication is not a good fit for the modern electronic era. The U.S academic enterprise can and must adjust to a more open form of scientific communication removing the middleman to deliver the fruits of government-funded research to all as quickly as possible. Successful and much less expensive publication formats have spawned a new generation of open-access journals that deliver value at a considerable savings to all. The money saved by a policy change will add substantial value and enhance the productivity of our nation's investment in science.

Your policy, President Trump, has the potential to transform American research, to accelerate the conduct of science across The States, and to further increase our nation's profile on the world stage.

Please, sign this important Executive Order and remove the embargo on access to publicly funded research in the United States.

Signed by the following Nobel Laureates

Randy Schekman - Physiology or Medicine, 2013

Peter Agre - Chemistry, 2003

George A. Akerlof - Economics, 2001

David Baltimore - Physiology or Medicine, 1975

Linda B. Buck - Physiology or Medicine, 2004

Elias J. Corey - Chemistry, 1990

Joseph L. Goldstein - Physiology or Medicine, 1985

Carol W. Greider - Physiology or Medicine, 2009

Louis J. Ignarro - Physiology or Medicine, 1998

Brian K. Kobilka - Chemistry, 2012

Roger D. Kornberg - Chemistry, 2006

Robert J. Lefkowitz - Chemistry, 2012

Craig C. Mello - Physiology or Medicine, 2006

H. David Politzer - Physics, 2004

Edward C. Prescott - Economics, 2004

Adam G. Riess - Physics, 2011

Sir Richard Roberts - Physiology or Medicine, 1993

George P. Smith - Chemistry, 2018

Harold E. Varmus - Physiology or Medicine, 1989

Jody Williams - Peace, 1997

Robert W. Wilson - Physics, 1978

Contact: Randy Schekman, schekman@berkeley.edu