

March 13, 2020

To Members of the Scholarly Publishing Community:

National Science and Technology Advisors from a dozen countries have been holding regular calls on the COVID-19 responses. A topic of considerable interest and discussion is enhancing the ability of researchers and other stakeholders to access and re-use or text-mine all published articles on coronaviruses, SARS-CoV-2, and COVID-19. This timely access is critical, as it allows researchers to keep up with the rapidly growing body of literature and identify trends and relevant information in efforts to characterize this novel virus and address the associated global health crisis. We support the January 30 statement of the Global Preparedness Monitoring Board on COVID-19 that called on countries, institutions, communities and partners to ensure that all relevant information about the outbreak is shared openly and rapidly.

We, as national leaders on science policy, applaud the efforts of researchers to understand and prevent the infection and spread of COVID-19. We also greatly appreciate the funders and publishers who play the important role of supporting, reviewing, and communicating research outcomes and making publications and data available to the global community for scientific research and public awareness.

To assist efforts to contain and mitigate the rapidly evolving COVID-19 pandemic, basic science research and innovation will be vital to addressing this global crisis. Given the urgency of the situation, it is particularly important that scientists and the public can access research outcomes as soon as possible. The countries listed below urge publishers to voluntarily agree to make their COVID-19 and coronavirus-related publications, and the available data supporting them, immediately accessible in PubMed Central and other appropriate public repositories, such as the World Health Organization's COVID data base, to support the ongoing public health emergency response efforts.

Importantly, this information should be in both human and machine-readable format to allow for full text and data mining using artificial intelligence with rights accorded for research re-use and secondary analysis. We further respectfully request this arrangement apply to articles published to date as well as future articles for the duration of this crisis.

A prompt response from the scientific and publishing community will accelerate global efforts to contain the SARS-CoV-2 virus and thus save lives and reduce societal disruption. Efforts made by publishers to date to make publications and data on COVID-19 publicly accessible are greatly appreciated.

Sent on behalf of the chief science advisor or equivalent representing the following countries:

Australia

Japan

Brazil

New Zealand

Canada

Republic of Korea

Germany

Singapore

India

United Kingdom

Italy

United States of America