



## LSU A&M FACULTY SENATE RESOLUTION 21-01

### Formation of Ad-Hoc Committee to Develop A Comprehensive Framework for Open Access Publishing at LSU

*Sponsored by the Faculty Senate Library Advisory Committee*

Whereas LSU is, according to its *Mission Statement*, committed to “using its extensive resources to solve economic, environmental, and social challenges”<sup>i</sup>; and

Whereas according to the Strategic Plan 2025, LSU aspires to be “a catalyst for transformation; a force for good that changes lives and makes a significant, positive impact on the world around us”<sup>ii</sup>; and

Whereas the federal memorandum “Increasing Access to the Results of Federally Funded Scientific Research”<sup>iii</sup> stipulates that government-funded research be “made available to and useful for the public, industry, and the scientific community” alike, resulting in the requirement of federal funding agencies to make research findings available through open-access platforms; and

Whereas the *COALition S*, a cooperation of leading European research institutions and organizations under the auspices of the European Commission and the European Research Council (ERC), pledges in their Plan S, “With effect from 2021, all scholarly publications on the results from research funded by public or private grants provided by national, regional and international research councils and funding bodies, must be published in Open Access Journals, on Open Access Platforms, or made immediately available through Open Access Repositories without embargo;”<sup>iv</sup> and

Whereas the current COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates with unprecedented the urgency for Open Science, showing that it is unethical to bar potentially life-saving research findings and data behind pay-walls and that instead, new findings must be made immediately available not just to the scientific community, but also to the larger public, as people, governments, and health care workers in every part of the world are in dire need of evidence-based, scientifically proven information to protect themselves and others from a formerly unknown and in many cases deadly disease; and

Whereas for-profit publishing corporations such as Elsevier or Springer have in recent years driven up the subscription costs for scientific journals to the point where even well-funded research libraries struggle to pay and individual readers are strongly deterred by annual costs of up to \$20,000 per journal<sup>v</sup>; and

Whereas journal subscriptions constitute by far the biggest item in the budget of any research library and steep annual inflation adjustments (5% at LSU, up to 6% nationwide) rapidly exacerbate the strains libraries already struggle with as library budgets around the country are “for the most part flat or diminishing”<sup>vi</sup>; and

Whereas many publishers have made open-access publishing available on the condition that authors pay Article Processing Charges (APC), in the case of Elsevier in the range of \$150 to \$5900 per article<sup>vii</sup>; and

Whereas APCs are not necessarily and rarely in full covered by research grants; and

Whereas experts warn that APCs create an unwarranted burden for individual researchers, noting that for graduate students trying to publish two articles in one year the costs can easily amount to “more than a quarter of their annual income”<sup>viii</sup>; and

Whereas the *Chronicle of Higher Education* reports that some open-access journals have gone so far as to require copies of personal bank statements from graduate students before even considering an APC fee reduction for them<sup>ix</sup>; and

Whereas a comprehensive study by the Max-Planck-Society concludes that “a large-scale transformation of the current corpus of scientific subscription journals to an open access business model” is possible at no additional costs to research institutions if, in a wide-spanning international effort, “the money currently locked in the journal subscription system [were to] be withdrawn and re-purposed for open access publishing services”<sup>x</sup>; and

Whereas the Max-Planck-Society modeled how research institutions can use transformative agreements in journal subscriptions such that subscription fees to journals grant affiliated researchers not just access to the content, but also coverage of the APCs for publications in these open-access journals;<sup>xi</sup> and

Whereas the LSU Library was able to procure in 2020 a transformative agreement with the American Chemistry Society, under which the library’s journal subscription automatically covers 28 APCs for LSU researchers;<sup>xii</sup> and

Whereas the ROARMAP that tracks open access policies around the world, lists 79 research institutions in the United States and 834 worldwide that already have implemented open-access policies, among them peer institutions to LSU such as the University of Florida, the University of Kansas, Kansas State University, or the University of Kentucky, and similar large state universities such as Oregon State University or Penn State University<sup>xiii</sup>; and

Whereas open-access policies encourage members of the respective research institutions to seek out open-access publication forums, define which standards the institution wishes to support with respect to principles and practices of open-access publishing agreements, provide guidelines to authors in identifying and avoiding predatory open-access publishing entities, enable researchers to make informed decisions about their open-access publishing options, and generally serve as institutional roadmaps in a changing publishing landscape; and

Whereas the LSU Libraries’ *Open Access Author Fund*, which normally supports roughly 20 to 25 faculty members, staff members, or graduate students every year with up to \$1500 to cover APCs of publications in fully open-access, peer-reviewed journals, has already seen a substantial increase in requests this year; and

Whereas LSU faculty already serve in editorial roles on open-access journals for preeminent publishers including PLOS, PeerJ, Frontiers, and Hindawi and can attest that open-access scholarly publishing is as rigorous and comprehensive as traditional publication models; and

Whereas open-access publishing platforms often enable researchers to retain copyright on their publications and may offer to authors new metrics to measure the impact of their scholarship which can serve as supporting evidence in tenure and promotion cases,

Therefore be it resolved that LSU live up to its aspiration of being a catalyst for transformation that positively impacts the world around us by modeling a sustainable and innovative open-access publishing policy and thereby productively contributing to the global transformation of the publishing industry that is already well underway; and

Be it further resolved that an ad-hoc committee be formed and charged with the task of drafting a comprehensive open-access publishing policy that provides a robust regulatory and budgetary framework for open-access publications by LSU faculty, staff, and students; and

Be it further resolved that this ad-hoc committee consist of representatives from the Office of Finance and Administration, the Office of Research and Economic Development, the Faculty Senate Budget and Planning Committee, the Faculty Senate Library Advisory Committee, the administration of the LSU Libraries, and the Faculty Senate Executive Committee; and

Be it lastly resolved that the ad-hoc committee closely collaborate with the Dean of the Library in identifying both short-term and long-term strategies for repurposing or redirecting existing funds to ensure that individual authors at LSU are never forced into subsidizing open-access publications of their research with personal funds.

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<sup>i</sup> “Mission and Vision”, <https://lsu.edu/about/mission.php> (last accessed on 10/28/2020)

<sup>ii</sup> “LSU Strategic Plan 2025”, [https://lsu.edu/strategicplan/files/lsu\\_strategicplan\\_2025.pdf](https://lsu.edu/strategicplan/files/lsu_strategicplan_2025.pdf) (last accessed on 10/28/2020)

<sup>iii</sup> “Increasing Access to the Results of Federally Funded Scientific Research”, Executive Office of the President, Office of Science and Technology Policy, 2/22/2013, [https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/ostp\\_public\\_access\\_memo\\_2013.pdf](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/ostp_public_access_memo_2013.pdf) (last accessed on 10/28/2020)

<sup>iv</sup> “Principles and Implementation”, <https://www.coalition-s.org/addendum-to-the-coalition-s-guidance-on-the-implementation-of-plan-s/principles-and-implementation/> (last accessed on 11/23/2020)

<sup>v</sup> “2021 Subscription Price List”, Elsevier, [https://www.elsevier.com/\\_data/assets/excel\\_doc/0016/1052107/Pricelist2021-USD.xlsx](https://www.elsevier.com/_data/assets/excel_doc/0016/1052107/Pricelist2021-USD.xlsx) (last accessed on 10/28/2020)

<sup>vi</sup> Stephen Bosch, Barbara Albee, & Sion Romaine, “Costs Outstrip Library Budgets. Periodicals Price Survey 2020”, Library Journal April 14, 2020, <https://www.libraryjournal.com/?detailStory=Costs-Outstrip-Library-Budgets-Periodicals-Price-Survey-2020> (last accessed on 11/23/2020)

<sup>vii</sup> “Article Publishing Charge (APC) Price List”, Elsevier, <https://www.elsevier.com/books-and-journals/journal-pricing/apc-pricelist> (last accessed on 10/28/2020)

<sup>viii</sup> Andrew V. Suarez and Terry McGlynn, “The Fallacy of Open-Access Publication,” Chronicle of Higher Education, Nov 15, 2017, <https://www-chronicle-com.libezp.lib.lsu.edu/article/the-fallacy-of-open-access-publication/> (last accessed on 10/28/2020)

<sup>ix</sup> See Suarez and McGlynn.

<sup>x</sup> Ralf Schimmer, Kai Karin Gerschuhn, and Andreas Vogler, “Disrupting the subscription journals’ business model for the necessary large-scale transformation to open access”, MPG PuRe (2015) <http://hdl.handle.net/11858/00-001M-0000-0026-C274-7> (last accessed on 10/28/2020)

<sup>xi</sup> See for example, IOP Science, “Researchers from Max-Planck-Society,” <https://publishingsupport.iopscience.iop.org/questions/open-access-max-planck-society/> (last accessed on 11/23/2020)

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<sup>xii</sup> LSU “News & Notes: LSU Libraries is first in North America to sign a “Read and Publish” transformative agreement with the American Chemical Society,” Feb 24, 2020, <http://news.blogs.lib.lsu.edu/2020/02/24/lsu-libraries-is-first-in-north-america-to-sign-a-read-and-publish-transformative-agreement-with-the-american-chemical-society/> (last accessed on 11/23/2020)

<sup>xiii</sup> RoarMap database, <http://roarmap.eprints.org/>