

5 things you can do to improve access to scientific information

Ruth Lewis & Maribeth Slebodnik





Washington University Biology Library & Donald Danforth Plant Science Center Library

rlewis@wustl.edu & mslebodnik@danforthcenter.org

 Washington University in St. Louis



Influence professional societies & editorial boards 3

-  Keep subscription prices reasonable.
-  Establish friendly access terms for faculty.
-  Consider open access for current or back volumes.
-  Allow self-archiving by authors.

?? DID YOU KNOW ??


\$ The average academic library is projected to cut subscriptions by 45% by 2015


\$ Articles published commercially typically cost 3-7 times more to access than articles published by not-for-profit publishers


\$ Licenses for Web access are often more expensive and restrictive than for print copies


\$ Between 2001-2002, botany journal prices increased 9.8%

Become a savvy consumer 1




 Consider cost, value and local use when advising on journal purchases and cancellations.

 Not-for-profit journals are usually more cost effective than commercially published titles.


 Encourage full acknowledgement of electronic publishing in hiring, tenure and promotion discussions.


 Influence institutional policies on intellectual property rights, institutional repositories and related issues.


Change your ways when submitting or reviewing papers 4

-  Retain copyright of your publications; grant only some publishing rights.
-  Consider submitting to open access journals or those with reasonable pricing & access.
-  Investigate these issues when agreeing to review for a journal.


Find out about alternative publishing 2


 Alternative journals competing with commercial titles. Ex. SPARC-sponsored titles: *Journal of Vegetation Science*, *Evolutionary Ecology Research*, *The Arabidopsis Book*.


 Open archives. Ex. arXiv.org and q-bio, preprint and/or post-referee articles available from scientists' Web pages or institutional repositories.


 Open access. Ex. *BMC Plant Biology*, *Journal of Biology*, *PLoS Biology*, free volumes at Highwire Press and PubMed Central. Some journals offer free access a year or six months after publication, such as *PNAS*, *Plant Physiology*, and *JBC*. Usually costs are paid by authors or their institutions and articles are free to users.


Learn about the crisis in scholarly communication 5


 Expenditures for serials by research libraries increased 210% between 1986-2001 while the CPI increased 62%. The typical library spent three times as much but purchased 5% fewer titles.

 Publisher mergers have decreased competition and affected prices.

 All scholars have a stake – it's not scientist vs. humanist.

 Talk to your librarian! It's a rapidly changing field.

 Understand the issues at your institution that influence decision making for intellectual resources.

 Support efforts within your field and the scholarly community to win back control of scholarly communication from publishers.

For more information see: <http://library.wustl.edu/subjects/life/e/openaccess.html>