Open Platform for Public Access Policy and Data Sharing: The Experience of the U.S. Department of Energy

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An increasing number of governments, institutions, and associations are adopting policies to promote public access to the results of government research investments. Calls for open science, increased ease of access due to advances in information technology, and the hope that more widely sharing research results will advance knowledge are some of the factors driving this trend. Governments, scientists, and the private sector will need to confront challenges posed by greater calls for open data sharing and free access to publications. The presentation will discuss these challenges, the principle of open science, and how the U.S. Department of Energy is executing its open science mandate.

In the United States a statutory mandate has required the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to provide access to accepted manuscripts or peer-reviewed scientific journal articles resulting from NIH-funded medical research after a 12-month embargo period. In 2010, Congress passed a law directing the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) to develop government-wide policies for "the dissemination and long-term stewardship of the results of unclassified research, including digital data and peer-reviewed scholarly publications" funded by federal science agencies. In early 2013, OSTP issued a memorandum directing federal science agencies to develop public access plans for making accepted manuscripts, journal articles, and scientific data in digital formats publicly available in a timely fashion.

In response, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is implementing a public access plan under which DOE is 1) instituting data management principles and requirements that will apply to proposals for research funding submitted to all DOE program offices and 2) deploying a web-based portal that makes scholarly scientific publications resulting from DOE research funding publicly accessible and searchable at no charge after a 12-month administrative interval. This portal is called the DOE Public Access Gateway for Energy and Science^{Beta} – or DOE PAGES^{Beta}. DOE PAGES^{Beta} builds on DOE's existing infrastructure for collecting, preserving, and disseminating scientific and technical information, and it also integrates the public access efforts of scientific publishers. The DOE public access search engine was developed and is maintained by the DOE Office of Scientific and Technical Information, which also operates WorldWideScience.org on behalf of the WorldWideScience Alliance, a federated search tool providing access to global science information from more than 70 nations.