Striking a chord that works

Last week the Professional and Scholarly Publishing Division of the Association of American Publishers announced an important initiative. A large segment of the scholarly publishing community has mapped out a system that would greatly increase public access to peer-reviewed publications resulting from federally funded research. The Clearinghouse for the Open Research of the United States (CHORUS) is a publisher-conceived initiative, offered to the US federal funding agencies to help them meet the public access requirements issued by the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) in February.

Agencies are tasked with delivering by August draft plans that will enable the identification of articles resulting from public funding, the provision of a full text version of those articles available for free to the public (either upon publication or after an embargo period), the provision of an open structure for article hosting that is compatible with familiar search and discovery tools, and long-term preservation and archiving.

CHORUS is being offered to federal agencies and other important stakeholders, such as the university and library communities, as a means of satisfying the OSTP directive while minimizing effort and costs to agencies, grantees, university administrators, and publishers alike. The publishing community can make this offer because CHORUS uses existing infrastructure and promotes access from the publishers' platforms.

CHORUS had its origins almost a year ago when a small group of publishers began a pilot project with four funding agencies to solve the initial problem of identifying those articles that resulted from federal research funding. This project, called FundRef, was done under the aegis of CrossRef, a nonprofit organization formed by publishers in 2000 to promote electronic access to scholarly literature by establishing identification standards. Widespread adoption of these standards interlinks the worlds' online publication platforms—4300 publishers use CrossRef's methodology, and more than 2000 libraries can access key identification information for nearly 60 million manuscripts from 27,000
scholarly journals. With the simple addition of metadata fields to reveal funding sources for all of these articles, federal agencies can easily track the bulk of published literature that results from their agency’s funding. This is important to the agencies, and to us, because it will help demonstrate the value of their investment in research.

CHORUS builds on the FundRef protocols and provides a straightforward means of public access for the entire community of researchers, institutions, funding agencies, and the public. Using FundRef for identification and CrossRef to link to the publisher’s site—where a free, full-text article will be available, and preserved and archived—the CHORUS steering group estimates that 80% of necessary infrastructure is already in place. The publishing community has pledged to provide the remainder of the build-out costs. The system is paid for by standard charges that publishers pay to CrossRef as we deposit articles and associated identification data into the CrossRef database.

Everyone in the research community is sensitive to the importance of funding research. The OSTP memorandum enables agencies to focus on research investment by urging them to develop public access plans that do not duplicate existing resources and through partnerships with organizations that can provide the needed services. My colleagues and I on the CHORUS steering group believe that CHORUS fits this bill, and we are pleased with our constructive conversations with agency and research community representatives about the CHORUS project and how to make it work.

CHORUS puts no additional demands on the researcher; the author is in communication with the publisher from submission to publication. Publishers will be responsible for complying with the agreed-upon terms. By directing readers to the publisher’s site where the manuscript is first published, updated as necessary, and archived, publishers are compelled to preserve the value of their platform and the integrity of the record.

Using FundRef as a model partnership, the CHORUS collaboration continues to seek input from agencies and research institutions. The goal is to demonstrate a proof of concept to meet OSTP’s August deadline for the agencies. The details of CHORUS are still in flux, to allow input from all stakeholders.

On the Association of American Publishers website you can read the project summary that was released to press last week. Press reactions to the CHORUS announcement were generally positive, but most expressed skepticism of publishers’ motives. The shared mission of scholarly publishers is to produce and provide access to our author’s publications. AIP’s nonprofit mission encompasses the advancement of science itself—which is very much in sync with the promise of public access. Both missions, however, require a viable business structure that sustains the resources necessary to manage the peer-review, preparation, hosting and permanently archiving of these essential communications of scholarship. CHORUS firmly believes that we can accomplish both, by striking the right chord in productive partnership.

Microfluidics and nanofluidics at Notre Dame

AIP Publishing staff attended the 4th annual Advances in Microfluidics and Nanofluidics (AMN) conference at Notre Dame University in South Bend, IN. The conference is sponsored by and closely associated with AIP Publishing’s journal Biomicrofluidics. AMN functions as a venue for researchers studying very diverse problems in microfluidics to find common ground in physics and engineering. The
conference continues to grow, featuring 50% more talks and twice as many attendees as last year. *Biomicrofluidics* Editors Leslie Yeo and Chia Chang co-chaired the conference, gathering an impressive array of invited and keynote speakers, and reminded attendees to submit their best work to *Biomicrofluidics* in time to qualify for this year’s Best Paper Award.

**Physics Resources Matters**

**Congressional fellows chosen for 2013-14**

AIP is pleased to announce that we have selected two congressional fellows for the 2013-14 term. The AIP-ASA fellow will be Rose Mutiso. A member of APS, Mutiso will earn her PhD in materials science and engineering from the University of Pennsylvania in August 2013. Her dissertation research focuses on electrical percolation and resistive switching phenomena in polymer-metal nanowire composites and nano-gap devices, respectively. The AIP fellow will be Mark Mozena. Mozena is completing his PhD in astrophysics this June at the University of California, Santa Cruz, where his research focused on galaxy evolution with Professor Sandra Faber. He is a member of APS and AAS.

**Member Society Spotlight**

**Introducing the 2013 US Physics Team**

Each year, AAPT manages the US Physics Team program to promote and demonstrate academic excellence through preparation for and participation in the International Physics Olympiad. AAPT volunteers design several exams that are administered to high school students throughout the country. The highest-performing students earn spots on the US Physics Team, and after a 10-day intensive training camp at the University of Maryland, a chance to compete for a spot on the coveted Travel Team.

Winners were announced last Friday at the close of the training camp. They will represent the United States at the 44th International Physics Olympiad to be held from July 7-15 in Copenhagen. There they will test their knowledge against their peers on the world stage. AIP and all of its ten Member Societies co-sponsor this impactful program.

**Around AIP**
Did someone say picnic?

The American Center for Physics summer picnic will be Wednesday, June 12. Activities include the ever-popular egg relay and open mic performances by your colleagues.

The AIP Publishing summer picnic will be held on Thursday, June 27. Bring your cloak but leave your daggers at home for this murder mystery event.

Coming Up

June 9-14

- CLEO (OSA) (San José, CA)

Wednesday, June 12

- ACP Summer Picnic, 12-2 pm (College Park)
- Staff birthday breakfasts (Melville and College Park)

June 21-23

- AIP Executive Committee retreat (Irvington, VA)

Thursday, June 27

- AIP Publishing Staff Picnic and “Murder Mystery” (Melville)