

IEEE Statement on Open Access and Public Access

Joint statement by PSPB & TAB, Approved by BoD 16 Aug. 2010

The IEEE Publication Services and Products Board (PSPB) and the IEEE Technical Activities Board (TAB) recommend that the IEEE Board of Directors adopt the following five statements with respect to open access and that it directs TAB and PSPB to actively engage in the search for sustainable open access publishing models:

IEEE endorses the principle of providing open access as one of the ways to enhance dissemination of publicly-funded research results in ways that serve to strengthen science and engineering, encourage innovation, and serve the greater interests of society. At the same time, IEEE believes that there needs to be a sustainable economic model that pays for the value added to the work by IEEE through peer review, editing, dissemination, and perpetual maintenance of an ever-growing online archive.

These efforts are guided by the "Principles of Scholarly Publishing," adopted by the IEEE in 2007 to chart a course in a changing environment. The principles state that scholarly publishers should a) operate unfettered by censorship or bias based on personal, commercial or governmental agendas, b) ensure that there are no financial barriers for authors publishing their results, and c) preserve the scholarly value of the original work by maintaining a trusted "version of record" that cannot be altered by the author or anyone else.

1) The IEEE will engage in the public dialogue to ensure that the publication of high-quality, peer-reviewed, financially-sustainable journals remains an essential part of IEEE's mission as a learned society.

Learned societies, such as IEEE, are the natural home of scholarly publishing. The IEEE should advance its cause, and the cause of its fellow learned societies, by participating in open access and engaging in the debate, rather than merely commenting on it. IEEE remains committed to its publications continuing as the premier outlets in its disciplines. These activities need to be sustainable to enable IEEE to carry out its mission of advancing technology in the best interests of humanity, which means that any OA publishing paradigm must be based on a financially viable business plan.

The IEEE will take a proactive approach and endeavor to establish face-to-face meetings between the IEEE President and/or the Executive Director and the appropriate government officials, legislators, funding agencies and open access advocates both in the US and other countries to petition for greater participation and discussion by the learned societies in resolving open-access issues.

2) Open access can coexist with traditional publishing.

A growing number of funding agencies recognize the inherent costs of scholarly publishing and are willing to provide authors with funds to support open access. In a spirit of cooperation, the IEEE will expand voluntary "author pays" open access to all IEEE journals. The model will be "hybrid" open access, which combines open access to articles supported by author fees with conventional subscription-based publishing. This approach would uphold the principle that government or non-government agencies that wish to require public access to IEEE-copyrighted materials should provide authors, as part of their research grant, with funds to pay publishing fees rather than to start independent archive efforts.

The IEEE will continue its policy to allow authors to post their peer-reviewed articles on their own Web sites, or those of their employers.

3) Public access is best done on existing platforms of publishers.

Using the existing platforms of scholarly publishers is preferable to creating new public repositories because this:

- Preserves the peer-review process that ensures the integrity of research.
- Is more cost effective than building and maintaining duplicate repositories.
- Preserves the editing, abstracting, indexing, and other publishing functions that add significant value to the quality and usefulness of the publications.
- Ensures that authors have access to publishing outlets of high professional standing regardless of their source of funding or ability to pay publishing charges.
- Preserves the author's freedom to choose where to publish his/her work.
- Preserves the identity of the publication, which currently serves as the focus for a sustained community of authors and reviewers.

4) Any public access approach must respect the intellectual property rights of authors and publishers.

Some proposed versions of government or funding agency mandates require that authors must deposit into a free-access repository the final, copyrighted, published version of a paper that was based on their funded research.

IEEE considers it to be the responsibility of an author to comply when a government or other funding agency mandates that authors deposit into free-access repositories their peer-reviewed research articles. In those cases the IEEE will assist its authors in complying. But, IEEE favors development of improved public access models that uphold fair copyright principles.

5) The IEEE will continue experimentation with open access and monitor its impact on the organization.

The IEEE will continue to monitor the effect of delayed open access by tracking Xplore usage of articles that are made publicly available through content repositories after a given embargo period. For instance, the IEEE will seek to determine the impact of government-mandated posting of articles funded by the USA National Institutes of Health on the NIH's PubMed Central within 6, 12, and 18 months after publication.

The IEEE will also examine commercial sponsorship as a possible method to make hybrid open access sustainable. IEEE believes that any such sponsorship should be done in such a way as to preserve the editorial independence and integrity of the publishing process.

<Note: Ver 3.3 21 July 2010>