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June 30, 2016

National Cancer Moonshot Initiative  
National Cancer Institute  
9609 Medical Center Drive  
Bethesda, MD 20892-9760  
[cancerresearch@nih.gov](mailto:cancerresearch@nih.gov)

Re: Request for Information – Document Citation No. 81 FR 29871

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), I am writing to respond to a Request for Information issued on May 13, 2016, with regard to the National Cancer Moonshot Initiative (NCI).

ACRL is deeply appreciative of the Vice President's commitment to accelerating progress towards treatments – and ultimately, cures – for cancer. We applaud his focus on systematically identifying and removing unnecessary barriers at every phase of the research and discovery process. We are particularly supportive of the idea of incentivizing fast, open sharing of research data and articles, which he spoke about in recent speeches to the American Association for Cancer Research and at Health Datapalooza.

The Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) is the higher education association for librarians. Representing more than 11,000 academic and research librarians and interested individuals, ACRL (a division of the American Library Association) develops programs, products and services to help academic and research librarians learn, innovate and lead within the academic community. As reflected in our previous support for governmental policies and legislation that facilitate open access and open education, including the Office of Science and Technology Policy mandate and the bills Fair Access to Science & Technology Research Act and Federal Research Public Access Act, ACRL is fundamentally committed to the open exchange of information to empower individuals and facilitate scientific discovery. Too often, the data and articles resulting from research remains locked behind pay walls or siloed in proprietary computer systems. In order to unleash the power of this information and truly accelerate discovery, we need to ensure that research outputs is made immediately available to the global public, and that they are fully empowered to use it in new and innovative ways.

To that end, we would like to offer recommendations for actions that can be taken immediately to allow for research data and articles to be freely shared:

- **Enable free, immediate access to all U.S. National Cancer Institute (NCI) funded research articles.** The free and *immediate* access to all NCI-funded research articles would put a wealth

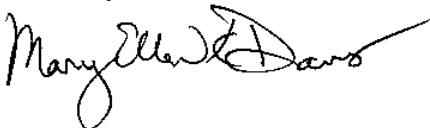
of information about the latest discoveries, trends and insights about cancer research into the hands of scientists and researchers who need it *today*. Any delay in the availability of this research is a potential barrier to innovation, and unnecessarily restricts competent and creative individuals from contributing to the discovery process.

- **Make the research data reported on in these articles immediately available upon publication.** This would allow researchers to quickly verify the claims made in papers, substantially cutting down time spent on misleading information or dead ends. It also empowers the community to innovate by conducting new and different analysis of this crucial digital information.
- **Reward researchers for sharing their research articles and data freely and quickly.** Right now, researchers are not incentivized to share their research outputs quickly. Rather, they are rewarded for holding onto their data, and for publishing articles in so-called “high impact” journals that take months (and in some cases, years) to approve papers for publication. We need to realign incentives for the sharing of research outputs that support the public’s interest – and that interest includes accelerating treatments and cures for cancer. U.S. federal agencies funding cancer research should incentivize researchers to share data and articles widely by actively rewarding this behavior in their promotion and funding processes.

In closing I want to emphasize that enabling free, *immediate* access to all NCI funded research articles and data will not only foster the discovery of new treatments and cures for cancer, it can also be a game-changer as an example to other research funders. The potential economic impact of this approach on publishers pales in comparison to the potential societal benefits gained by accelerating the research and discovery process through free, immediate access. An NCI policy requiring such access to research publications and data can inspire similar requirements at other research funders to benefit the public good.

On behalf of the Association of College and Research Libraries, I urge you to seriously consider these recommendations so that the National Cancer Moonshot Initiative can have its greatest impact. If you have any questions about these recommendations, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at [mdavis@ala.org](mailto:mdavis@ala.org) or 312-280-3248.

Sincerely,



Mary Ellen K. Davis  
ACRL Executive Director  
[mdavis@ala.org](mailto:mdavis@ala.org)