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MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY  
**GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL**

**General Council Meeting  
 December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2011**

**58gsc.7.3  
 Resolution on Public Access to Peer-Reviewed Scholarly  
 Publications**

*Whereas*, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Graduate Student Council represents the graduate student population at MIT; and

*Whereas*, access to scholarly articles is a critical component of the education and research undertaken by graduate students; and

*Whereas*, public access to scholarly publications would benefit the graduate student population in their scholastic, research and entrepreneurial pursuits; and

*Whereas*, public access to scholarly research could result in a broader dissemination of publications authored and read by graduate students; and

*Whereas*, the United States Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) has put forth a Request For Information (RFI) on how open access to federally funded research will affect participating parties, among which are graduate students; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Graduate Student Council in meeting duly assembled*, that the MIT Graduate Student Council endorses the attached letter in response to the above-mentioned RFI.

*Resolved by the Graduate Student Council in meeting duly assembled*, that the MIT Graduate Student Council encourages individual students to submit their opinions in response to the RFI within the prescribed deadlines set forth by the Office of Science and Technology Policy.

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**GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL**

To: Office of Science AND Technology Policy  
 From: MIT Graduate Student Council  
 Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
 Cambridge, MA

[Special Note to GCM: Questions are listed here: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2011-11-04/pdf/2011-28623.pdf>]

Comment 1: Open access allows all educational institutions, regardless of size or funding, to educate the next generation of scientists and engineers with up to date and relevant information. When students leave the academic community, typically by graduating, they lose access to journals. Without access to both new ideas and archives of older research, young scientists and engineers are less able to innovate and invent. Open access will enable entrepreneurs and small businesses to take advantage of publicly funded research and grow the economy.

The costs of these extraordinary benefits are low. Today, we can take advantage of the very low marginal cost of distributing content electronically through the Internet. A demonstration of these low costs is the NIH Public Access policy, which at around \$3.5M annually represents approximately 0.01% of the organization's \$30B annual budget.

Comment 2: The intellectual property interests of those involved with scholarly publication can best be addressed with disclosure of any new public access policies. This will enable stakeholders to make informed decisions about how to publish and distribute research material. The need for peer reviewed scientific literature will always exist.

Comment 3: Centralized collections simplify data mining and other content intensive research. Splitting content across several repositories could work, provided that the collections are sufficiently interoperable and accessible. The existence of a federally centralized and maintained collection would not prevent interested private parties from building and maintaining similar systems. Federally maintained archives would ensure that content remains available in the long term, independent of private sector disruptions.

Comment 4: No comment at this time.

Comment 5: No comment at this time.

Comment 6: Federal agencies that fund science can maximize the benefit of public access policies to the U.S. taxpayers by mandating that scholarly publications that result from federally funded research are available to the U.S. taxpayers. Federal agencies can maximize their investment in peer-reviewed literature, while minimizing the burden and costs for stakeholders by establishing a public access policy that:

- (1) Does not add any additional cost to the author to publish in a public repository;
- (2) Does not add any additional cost to libraries to access the public repository; and
- (3) Facilitates and streamlines the process of publication submittal between publishers and the public repository, thereby not adding any additional cost to the publishers.

Comment 7: Peer-reviewed conference papers and proceedings represent a significant portion of published literature and information that is relevant to their respective fields. Due to both their impact and contribution, these types of publications should be included in the same category as journal articles with respect to public accessibility. Furthermore, conference proceedings and papers allow authors to share their research with the broader community as it progresses. Public access to such publications will enable others to keep up-to-date with current and future trends on specific subjects, enabling a fast dissemination of knowledge throughout the research process.

Comment 8: Public access to federally funded research should be granted with an embargo period between 0-12 months. A longer embargo period would significantly inhibit the dissemination of up-to-date information.