Federal Public Access Mandates
Proposal for Facilitating Compliance at the University of Arkansas

The National Science Foundation (NSF), the National Institutes for Health (NIH), and several other agencies require researchers to make publications (and, in some cases, data) originating from federally funded research publicly available. Failure to comply with this mandate could result in the delay or withholding of funds, the denial of future funding, or other penalties imposed upon the delinquent principal investigators (PIs) and/or the University. The Office of Research and Innovation relies – and must continue to rely – on PIs to fulfill this mandate. Nonetheless, through collaboration within the Office and partnerships with other campus units, we can better facilitate and monitor compliance. This proposal outlines strategies in four areas: policy, outreach, administration, and infrastructure and direct costs.

Challenges:
Federal agencies have not provided funding, despite the significant costs of fulfilling the public access mandate. Whereas several agencies require PIs to deposit publications in federal repositories, such as PubMed and NSF-PAR, there is no federally sponsored repository for research data.

Administrative and Outreach Costs
- Educating faculty, staff, and students about the mandate, open access publishing, and data management
- Record-keeping and tracking of publications and datasets resulting from funded research
- Assisting PIs with data management and depositing data in appropriate repositories

Infrastructure and Direct Costs
- Funding publications in journals which impose article processing charges (APCs) for open access
- Funding use of data repositories which charge fees
- Building and maintaining a local data repository for those disciplines which lack designated repositories

Proposed Strategies for Facilitating Public Access Compliance
The University has already begun to implement some of these strategies; others are under discussion. All require additional investment and significant coordination across units.

Policy
- Advocate more strongly for the University’s open access policy (Academic Policy 1220.00), adopted in June 2016, which encourages faculty to deposit articles in the digital institutional repository (currently ScholarWorks @UARK) so that some version of faculty publications are publicly accessible. Response to the policy has been less than enthusiastic; moreover, a deposit in this repository does not substitute for a deposit in the federal repository specified by the funding agency.
  - The Office of Scholarly Communications (OSC), which manages the repository and which is jointly sponsored by the University Libraries and the Office of Research and Innovation, could lead the advocacy effort.
- Expand the existing open access policy to include research data.
  - Because the institutional repository is not designed for data, the policy would need to specify alternatives for depositing data. The Research Council or a designated task force might draft the policy addendum and pilot it through the approval process.
- Introduce a policy requiring PIs to submit progress reports and final reports for research awards to Research and Sponsored Programs (RSSP).
  - The Research Council or a designated task force might draft the policy and pilot it through the approval process.
Outreach

- Provide campus-wide outreach to educate faculty, staff, and students about copyright, publishing agreements, open access, data management, and the principles and practices of data sharing.
  - University Libraries currently host a number of online guides pertaining to open access and data management.
  - Individual colleges and departments could get more involved in these outreach efforts.
- Assist researchers with identifying open access journals and interpreting the rights provisions in publishing agreements.
  - OSC offers guides and personal consultations; workshops on publishing might be co-hosted by colleges or departments.
- Create a University of Arkansas template for the data management plan required by federal agencies and post it on the DMP Tool website.
  - Currently, the Investigator's Toolbox offers a template, introduced in 2017, but more detail about how data will be handled and specific instructions for using the template would increase its value. Furthermore, researchers are more likely to discover a template on the DMP Tool website.
- Assist PIs with identifying appropriate repositories and preparing data for deposit.
  - University Libraries appointed a Research Data Services Librarian who might provide such assistance. The Libraries also host an online guide to data management.
  - Individual colleges and departments could take the initiative in training their faculty, staff, and students in the best practices for managing and sharing research data.

Administration

- Require PIs to submit progress reports and final reports for federal awards to RSSP.
  - This requirement may entail a campus-wide policy change, as mentioned above.
  - RSSP will need additional personnel to process these reports.
- Harvest from these reports information about publications and datasets in order to monitor compliance with the public access mandate.
  - RSSP may be able to gather this information from Web of Science and, eventually, from Digital Measures, the faculty profile system currently in the pilot phase.
  - OSC can also use this information to post hyperlinks to the published articles in ScholarWorks @ UARK

Infrastructure

- Create a fund for article processing charges (APCs) and fees for depositing data in repositories.
  - Funding might come from RIFs or other money set aside from an award.
- Explore options for building and maintaining a local data repository for those disciplines which lack designated repositories.
  - Investigate the potential for a coalition sponsored by the Great Plains Network (GPN), the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU), the Southeastern Conference Universities (SECU), or some such organization.

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