



# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GRADUATE-PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS

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**Organization:** *National Association of Graduate-Professional Students (NAGPS)*

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## Statement on the OSTP Policy Guidance on Open-Access

On Thursday, August 25th, the White House and Office of Science and Technology Policy [issued an updated policy guidance](#) for open access to federally funded research. This set of policies, laid out in a memo written by Dr. Alondra Nelson, head of OSTP, includes the following policy recommendations for Federal Research Funding Agencies:

- Make publications and supporting data from federally funded research to be made available without an embargo for free and public release, as soon as possible, but no later than December 2025;
- Establish transparent procedures that ensure scientific and research integrity is maintained in public access policies;
- Coordinate with OSTP to ensure equitable delivery of federally funded research results and data

These are extremely important and welcome changes to the current publication system and represent a step into the future of research collaboration. Today, not only are research groups restricted from *reading* many journals due to subscription costs, but even *publishing* in certain journals due to publishing costs. This is to say nothing of the fees for publishing in open access journals, which often have fees for publishing in the thousands of dollars. Furthermore, one typically retains *no* copyright of their work after publication, with the ability to share it further significantly restrained.

As students, educators, and researchers, open access to research funded by US federal science agencies is critical for our success. The information in these articles and data provides the necessary foundation for current and future research that benefits the public directly. Open access will improve the quality of federally funded research, lead to more efficient use of government research funding, and allow for even faster innovation in many critical research areas. With more access to relevant work in their fields, scientists will be able to make more informed choices in regards to their research and explore previously undiscovered/untraversed paths.. Similarly, with more information available to these groups, we can prevent work from being unnecessarily duplicated, and better use federal research funding. Finally, these two factors improve the speed of innovation, as open access leaves more money and man-hours available to perform improved and novel research.

Each of these items is exemplified by research into the Vaccine for COVID-19, which was directly cited in the memo. At the request of the federal government, many journals lifted their paywalls for research into COVID-19, and the results were astounding. With no barriers and a clear goal, scientists across the globe were able to freely collaborate and share their work, and as a result, were able to develop, test, and begin to manufacture a vaccine to COVID-19 in less than two years. We greatly look forward to what advancements may come with these policies spread over all fields.

[NAGPS](#) is a national organization composed of graduate and professional student governments across the US that represents over 350,000 graduate and professional students at a diverse group of member institutions.



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It is also heartening to hear that equitable delivery of research results and data is a priority for the administration. It is critical that open access is truly open, that those to whom access has been denied due to cost or other factors will be able to gain access under these new policies. This open access policy does present other concerns related to equity, however. With the advent of a freely-available repository of federally-funded research, recipients of these grants will have higher visibility for their work, which could lead to a reinforcement cycle where those groups that have already received federal funds to be more likely to receive them again due to this higher visibility. Federal funds must be equitably distributed in order for the whole system to function equitably.

These new policies ensure that students, educators, and researchers have access to the research they need to advance critical research to mitigate climate change, solve complex medical puzzles which unlock the cure to diseases, send our rockets to the moon, and far more. We look forward to seeing what will come next.