Open access mandates from the National Institutes of Health and the European Research Council


On January 11th, the NIH announced their new public access policy, which has now been strengthened to a mandate as required by the appropriations bill signed by President Bush in December.

The new NIH policy requires all NIH-funded research articles to be deposited into PubMed Central (PMC) and to be made publicly available within 12 months of the official date of publication. Articles must be submitted to PMC upon acceptance for publication. The policy comes into effect on April 7th this year.

The NIH has produced an extensive and very informative FAQ page, which indicates amongst other things that an estimated 80,000 articles will be published each year as a result of NIH funding – and public access to these articles is now assured (albeit after a delay). In another FAQ, it is stated that the NIH will reimburse publication fees, which also helps to reduce any financial burden on authors who wish to publish in open access journals such as those of PLoS. And publishing in such journals is of course an easy way to comply with the NIH policy – we automatically deposit all articles accepted in PLoS journals into PMC, where they are also publicly available immediately upon publication.

While all this activity has been taking place in the United States, another significant development has happened in Europe. On January 10th, the European Research Council (ERC) issued a new position statement on open access. The ERC is also now mandating public access, and requires "all peer-reviewed publications from ERC-funded research projects to be deposited on publication into an appropriate research repository..., and subsequently made Open Access within 6 months of publication". As pointed out by Peter Suber, the ERC has also indicated that it will cover publication fees in open access journals. The ERC is responsible for around €7.5 billion of the Framework Programme 7 which will be supporting research activity in Europe from 2007-2013.

(fuente: http://www.plos.org/cms/node/308)