Description

This is a follow-up post to our feature article on the Gates Foundation accelerating open access

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has been a major funder of academic research providing about $4.2 billion in grants in 2015 alone. The Gates Foundation requires that the results of any work it funds be published in an open access format along with a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 Generic License (CC BY). This type of license is in contravention with many non-open access publishing houses, including Nature, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and Elsevier.

There was some concern about whether or not major subscription journals would find a way to comply with the Gates Foundation's open access policy. However, an agreement announced on February 14, 2017, has set a precedent that represents a victory for the open access movement. The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and the Gates Foundation have signed a deal in which the Foundation awarded $100,000 to the AAAS to allow the publication of any paper submitted by a Gates Foundation author in full compliance with the Foundation's open access policy. The AAAS is responsible for the publication of five subscription journals: *Science*, *Science Translational Medicine*, *Science Signaling*, *Science Immunology*, and *Science Robotics*. The Foundation expects that about 10 to 15 studies that it has supported will be published in AAAS journals in 2017. The agreement is provisional and will be re-evaluated in 2018. The Foundation will use the results of this agreement to evaluate if this is a sustainable way to support open access publishing in subscription journals.

This agreement is yet another way in which the open access movement is being strengthened. Matthew Cockerill, co-founder of the open access publisher BioMed Central, remarked that this is a natural response to funders wanting to ensure that the work they support receives maximum visibility. Robert Kiley of the Wellcome Trust applauded the work of the Gates Foundation in securing the deal and expressed a desire to pursue similar open access publication avenues for journal articles whose authors have received funding from Wellcome Trust grants. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation have revealed that it is in similar talks with other journals and that it might have more announcements in this area soon.

Category

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