



The Small but Mighty Publisher

How Rockefeller University Press helped define a solution for monitoring open access to funded research that works for publishers of all sizes.



With only three journals in its portfolio, Rockefeller University Press (RUP) could be seen as a small publisher in the large arena of STM publishing. However, given that those three journals are *Journal of Cell Biology*, *Journal of Experimental Medicine*, and *Journal of General Physiology*, the Press is a heavy hitter in the world of biomedical research. Since the early 20th century, articles published in these three journals have documented numerous important breakthroughs in the study of human health, including the identification of the flu as a viral infection, the first images of synaptic vesicles in neurons, and the identification of early and progressive skeletal muscle defects—including disrupted muscle maturation—that may provide new opportunities for understanding and treating Huntington’s Disease.

In their roles as editors, authors, and reviewers, researchers from government-funded agencies such as NIH have long played a crucial role in the success of Rockefeller University Press. In addition, a considerable amount of the Press’s revenue has historically come from government agency subscriptions.

“Given the importance of government-funded researchers to RUP’s success, we believe we have an obligation to give something back to the agencies—and the public—that provide research funding,” states RUP Executive Director, Dr. Susan King. The Press has been fulfilling that obligation since 2001, when it began opening access to all published articles no later than six months after publication—well before the NIH mandate was drafted in 2004 and signed into law in 2008. “Participating in CHORUS allows us to demonstrate our long-standing commitment to public accessibility of publicly funded research,” says Dr. King.

Since its inception, CHORUS has been working with other publisher members to establish a simple solution for monitoring public access to federally funded research that uses standard metadata from the research publishing process to track access. Having represented both a large and small publisher during her involvement with CHORUS, Dr. King understands

the importance of a solution that works for a wide array of publishers. “In the end, regardless of publisher size, CHORUS’s value proposition for publishers is simple: it easily and cost effectively allows for the structured collection of metadata that helps authors and institutions manage compliance with public access requirements,” she concludes.

Rob O’Donnell, Director of Publishing Technologies at RUP joined the CHORUS Technical Working Group to explore what would work best for RUP journals. The group is responsible for developing a proven system of metadata collection that works seamlessly with existing publishing platforms and processes to minimize publisher effort and expense.

“Signing with CHORUS propelled RUP to implement license and funder tagging in all content. Conversations with other working group members and the resulting CHORUS implementation documentation were integral in helping us structure robust tagging and validated our workflow approach,” says Mr. O’Donnell. Echoing Dr. King’s remarks on RUP’s obligation to promote public accessibility to publicly funded research, he further states,

“Joining CHORUS was not about benefits we might receive as a publisher. It was about meeting the call of the OSTP memo by helping US agencies identify articles reporting on the research they funded. CHORUS provides a robust, simple, and affordable solution to help identify publicly funded research, and we want to show support for, and be a part of, that solution.”

RUP demonstrates how successful an implementation of CHORUS can be from a publisher perspective. They have even gone the extra mile to mine accepted manuscripts for funding information and have authors approve the selected meta data at the proof phase, making the process so much easier for the author. As an added bonus, implementation of the CHORUS work flow has revealed that the breadth of funding for RUP published research is much, much wider than originally thought.

For more information about the benefits of becoming a CHORUS Publisher member, please e-mail us at info@chorusaccess.org.