

7 August 2014

STM response to [‘Global Coalition of Access to Research, Science and Education Organisations calls on STM to Withdraw New Model Licenses’](#)

The STM Association is pleased to see such wide-ranging discussions taking place around the best licensing options available for Open Access. Inclusive dialogue will help the respective communities work together to ensure that the variety of licensing terms offered are both appropriate to the needs of authors, funders, institutions and publishers alike, as well as reflective of the freedom which exists for authors to choose the terms which best fit their specific requirements.

Creative Commons (CC) licenses are designed to be used across the entire creative sector, and are not specifically designed for academic and scholarly publishing. Many of the Association’s Members already use CC BY or other Creative Commons licenses for their Gold OA offerings, and likely will continue to do so. The broad background to STM’s efforts in creating standard model user license clauses is that there are a variety of publisher-bespoke user licenses of open access content, in addition to the use of various CC licenses other than CC BY. STM encourages model licenses and user language across the industry that are easy to use and have clear and relevant terms for researchers.

The STM licenses are intended to be a flexible alternative to other licenses in use. Using STM sample licenses does not mean it is impossible to switch to other licensing schemes or to adopt them in ways that are forward and backward compatible with other standardised licenses. STM shares the positive vision of enabling the flow of knowledge for the good of all, and we believe that our licenses and supplementary language works well with CC and CC approaches, and that there are broad commonalities.

STM acknowledges that some organisations feel that the benefits of one single “standardised” license outweigh any concerns that some researchers and research organisations have raised (for example on commercial re-use). As noted, that includes Members of the Association, who believe in the efficiency of standardising around one license. Other Members however prefer to offer choices and options to authors that may reflect particular concerns. STM respects these tactical and strategic decisions and, of course, continues to represent all Members.

STM remains open and committed to any constructive collaboration which helps to identify and alleviate interoperability and compatibility problems which exist within the architecture of widely used licensing options. We likewise welcome all constructive debate and discussion around improving the options available to authors, funders and publishers within open access licensing.

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