

The National Academies of
SCIENCES • ENGINEERING • MEDICINE

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TO: College and University Leaders and Designated Institutional Representatives

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SUBJECT: Convening Next Steps: Launching a Community of Practice

Thank you again for engaging with the University Presidents' Convening on Open Scholarship, hosted by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's Roundtable on Aligning Incentives for Open Science. As per the discussion on October 11, we are keen to launch a higher education community of practice in conjunction with the Roundtable. This memo reiterates the high-level components of what participation entails. It is our hope that you will confer with the appropriate stakeholders on your campus and let us know by November 15 if your institution will be part of this cohort. Our intention is to formally launch the group in early 2022.

The impetus for collective action is clear. As Danny Anderson, President of Trinity University, noted in his remarks, "Our current system conditions researchers to think small, to protect their individual work, to embrace the comfort of the incremental. But we live in a world that is crying for culture change. Our world brings us to questions that are larger than an individual intelligence or a single discipline."

Engagement in the community of practice has three core components:

1. Presidential Commitment

- Elevate the development of open incentives and practices as a strategic priority
- Designate a high-level presidential representative to coordinate this work on campus and within the NASEM community of practice
- Representative meets regularly with the president to review progress
- Build timeline for development and implementation of campus open research strategy

2. Campus Engagement

- Work with relevant campus units to develop coordinated open activities consistent with both institutional values and disciplinary norms
- Collaborate with internal stakeholders to develop appropriate tangible milestones, communication channels, infrastructure, support, resourcing, and accountability mechanisms

3. Community of Practice

- Meet regularly with peers from other institutions to identify areas of shared interest and possible collaboration (e.g., infrastructure, training)
- Discuss successes, challenges, and lessons learned
- Develop adaptable blueprint for other institutions

As Ron Daniels, President of Johns Hopkins University, observed during the session, the time for collective action is now. “We are no longer at a moment where scientists can sit from on high and tell citizens to trust us simply because we are the experts. Expectations and norms have changed. A thoughtful and purposeful move towards open science, towards greater transparency in the production and publication of research, could play an important role in bridging the widening gulf between experts and the public.”

It is our expectation that this community of practice, supported and informed by the NASEM Roundtable, will uniquely catalyze efforts within higher education and across the broader research ecosystem to create the incentive structures, infrastructure, and support necessary to make open scholarship the norm. We hope that you will join this effort. Please feel free to contact us with any questions you may have. Again, we look forward to your response by November 15.

Attachments

1. Agenda of the Presidents’ Convening on Open Scholarship
2. Summary of the Presidents’ Convening on Open Scholarship