



NERL Demands a Better Deal

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NERL members are among the most prestigious and productive research institutions in the United States, with researchers at NERL-affiliated institutions producing an estimated 10-12% of the most important and impactful scholarship in the world. We are committed to leveraging our influence to achieve global sustainability, parity, and access in scholarly publishing. Ensuring a sustainable ecosystem for scholarly communications is crucial across our institutions for impact, access, and preservation. **When we say we demand a better deal, we mean more than a good price.**

In keeping with NERL's support for [The MIT Framework for Publisher Contracts](#), we are committed to contracts that allow for maximum flexibility and options for researchers. As partners in the scholarly communication ecosystem, publishers and libraries share in the challenges of unprecedented health and economic crises, and our shared priority must be opening access to scholarship as our best way of supporting solutions to those crises.

For nearly three decades, NERL libraries have worked together to secure beneficial pricing and terms that make paywalled scholarship widely accessible to each of our communities. Now, we come together to call upon vendor and publisher partners to work with us to put an end to outdated and unsustainable pricing models that constrain the vital work of an interconnected global research world.

We challenge all those working in this marketplace to work collectively to provide transparency for the costs of access models to enable and support collective and open action. **We are united in the work ahead, and while acknowledging institutional differences, we assert our shared priorities for access, preservation, and investment.** We will actively prioritize partners who are willing to work with us to achieve a more equitable and sustainable academic publishing ecosystem.

We seek agreements that reflect our core values:

- **Transparency:** NERL commits to transparency of the negotiating process and will share details of discussions, outcomes, and cost wherever possible to demonstrate leadership for academic libraries. We commit to demanding transparency from our vendor partners and will prioritize vendor partners who honor this commitment.
- **Sustainability:** NERL negotiates for terms that ensure greater sustainability, pursuing opportunities to support collective infrastructure and collective ownership. We prioritize agreements that move past historical pricing models and precedent. We encourage smarter, better, and often smaller deals that do not increase cost with unrequested content while providing clear and transparent pricing models.
- **Equity:** NERL negotiates for terms that support the rights of all researchers to participate in the scholarly communications ecosystem as knowledge creators. To do so requires partnership between libraries and publishers to eliminate barriers. We work to ensure that costs to researchers and institutions are aligned with the costs of publishing so everyone has access to open access publishing.
- **Reproducibility:** NERL agreements uphold Author's Rights, ensuring no forced copyright transfer from author to publisher, computational rights for researchers to use articles in text mining or other practices, and the right to deposit articles in institutional repositories.

- **Flexibility:** We will encourage and prioritize NERL Agreements that incentivize emerging, efficient, and sustainable business models. We seek meaningful and creative alternatives that support the dissemination and preservation of the scholarly record.