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ICFA Statement on Open-Access Publishing in Particle Physics

The dissemination of scientific knowledge requires unrestricted access to research literature and scientific results that is freely available at the point of use. This open-access has been discussed for many years and various declarations (Budapest 2002, Bethesda 2003 and Berlin 2003) signed by hundreds of international organizations have all recommended free access to scientific literature through self-archiving, creation of new open-access journals and the conversion of subscription journals into open-access publications. An important ingredient for high quality scientific publishing is the peer-reviewing process which is fully compatible with open-access.

The particle and accelerator physics community has always been at the forefront of the open-access initiative through central self-archiving of preprints in arXiv.org since 1991 and later through peer-reviewed journals and conference proceedings such as the APS Journal Physical Review Special Topics Accelerators and Beams or the JACoW conference platform that both grant access to readers without charge through institutional sponsoring.

The International Committee for Future Accelerators (ICFA) met on 15 August 2007 in Daegu, Korea and was pleased to see the recent rapid developments of the SCOAP3¹ initiative to extend open-access publishing to the entire particle physics literature as described in the SCOAP3 report². ICFA fully endorses the ultimate goal of this report to establish a model of free and unrestricted web-based access to peer-reviewed journals in particle physics without any financial barriers for individual authors. SCOAP3 proposes a new business model for scientific and peer-reviewed publishing where an international consortium of high-energy physics funding agencies and libraries will assist publishers to convert their high-quality peer-reviewed journals to open-access in a way transparent to authors.

ICFA notes the large benefits of open access publishing for scientists, authors, funding agencies and publishers if fair-share business models are implemented. However, worldwide consensus and funding are needed to accomplish the large-scale transition to open-access journals in particle physics within the near future. ICFA therefore encourages all concerned parties from all world regions to actively get involved in the SCOAP3 initiative to assure its success. ICFA also invites its members to facilitate the implementation of SCOAP3 by raising awareness on open-access publishing in their communities.

¹ SCOAP3 - Sponsoring Consortium for Open Access Publishing in Particle Physics

² 'Report of the task force on open access publishing in particle physics', available at <http://cern.ch/oa/SCOAP3WPReport.pdf>.