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# NPG's annual letter to customers (2011)

21 September 2011

Dear Colleague,

I first set out NPG's vision as a partner of the scientific community, in my **letter to our customers** three years ago. Community partnership has been our focus at NPG in recent years, and remains central to our efforts as we look to 2012.

You don't need me to remind you that we live in a fast-changing and unsettled world. In scholarly communication and research, the impact of the economic climate and the pace of change continue to be felt. Library budgets and research funding are under pressure. 'Gold' open access continues to gain acceptance as an attractive solution for authors, readers and publishers alike, and emerging technologies create challenges and opportunities for providing the best information and services to our users. All of this change against a back-drop of the long-term trend of more research being published every year.

Open access has been at the heart of NPG's expansion for the last two years, as we seek to avoid adding further stress to library budgets. Of the five new journals we have launched in 2011, four have been open access. Perhaps the most significant of these launches has been ***Scientific Reports***, our multidisciplinary open access journal covering all of the natural sciences. In addition, in the past year we have introduced **open access options** on 19 further journals. Of the 74 NPG journals that publish research, 51 now have an open access option or are fully open access, and open access options are available on 92% (49 of 53) of our academic and society journal portfolio.

NPG offers authors a choice of Creative Commons licenses for open access papers. We now make an **annual donation** to Creative Commons of $20 for every article processing charge (APC) paid for publication in all the journals owned by NPG with an open access option. We have also back-dated these payments to every APC we received from 2005, when we started offering open access publishing options, to 2010. Many of our academic and society journal partners are also considering joining us in this initiative. This financial support is part of our commitment to openness and reuse and the legal framework behind them.

While supporting open access, we remain convinced that there is a diverse future for journal publishing. Our **open access position statement**, published in January 2011, sets out NPG's views. Subscriptions continue to make sense for highly selective, widely read titles such as *Nature* and the Nature research journals. At the same time, our self-archiving policy and **manuscript deposition service** mean that thousands of author accepted versions of articles we publish are archived in PubMed Central. We have been an active participant in the PEER project to evaluate the impacts of self-archiving, and look forward to the results next year.

We believe that science and innovation are central to national and international development, and to a healthy population and planet. Bringing high quality research and comment to a global audience is one factor in driving innovation, and remains central to our mission here at NPG. One way that we know we are achieving that mission is citations of our content, which remain a clear indicator of usage, relevance and scientific value. We were delighted this year when ***Nature's* Impact Factor** reached a new high of 36.101. *Nature* articles received over 500,000 citations in 2010, making it the most highly cited journal in the JCR. *Nature Chemistry* received its first impact factor (17.927) and is now the number 1 primary research journal in the multidisciplinary chemistry category. Sixteen titles published by NPG lead their JCR categories, and 17 Nature titles are in the top 50 journals by Impact Factor in the JCR. ***Nature Climate Change***, launched earlier this year, continues that tradition of excellence. The journal seeks to clarify the impacts and implications for society of a changing climate, and bring the science in this important field to a global audience.

We are committed to serving the research community, and we value our authors, referees, editors and editorial board members. Authors entrust their outstanding research to us, and referees play an important part in ensuring that our journals continue to publish a high standard of work. So we are improving our services to authors and reviewers, and to academic editors and editorial board members. Authors on many of our journals can also now view download statistics and citation details for their articles in our manuscript tracking system, and we continue to work to improve our online submission and manuscript tracking systems.

As well as supporting the researchers of today, NPG wants to help to encourage careers in research and inspire future scientists. Scientific research is not always an easy career choice. NPG has long championed the career development of scientists through our annual ***Nature* Mentoring Awards**, which in 2011 focus on France. In 2011 we are pleased to extend our activities in this area to supporting scientist-parents, with a five year commitment to underwrite the **American Society of Cell Biology Childcare Awards**.

The next generation of scientists is particularly key to our future. Nature Education, our education division, is now introducing the first in a series of interactive textbooks in January 2012. ***Principles of Biology*** is designed with today's undergraduate biology student in mind. Affordably priced at $49 per student for lifetime access, and available individually or via a site licence model, the textbook works on devices from mobile phones to tablets to PCs, and will be continually updated as our scientific understanding develops.

We hope to inspire school-age children to consider a science education and career, too, through our **membership** of Change the Equation. *Scientific American* has this year launched three key **education initiatives**, and later this year will help match science teachers in the US with over 1000 scientists who have volunteered to help with science in the classroom.

NPG continues to respond to our changing world. We strive to be responsible and forward-thinking in our business practices and to continue to provide the very best content and services to the research community. Above all, NPG remains committed to serving science and scientists. Thank you for working in partnership with us to achieve those goals.

Yours sincerely,

Steven Inchcoombe
Managing Director, Nature Publishing Group

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