



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL & MEDICAL PUBLISHERS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Oxford, UK, 27 December - – The International Association of Scientific, Technical & Medical Publishers (STM), a publishing trade association, has issued a position statement on ‘The Use of Orphan Works.’ An orphan work is a copyrighted work for which the user can’t identify and/or contact the legitimate holder (“copyright owner”) to obtain permission to use the work. Because of this difficulty, orphan works risk exclusion from the cycle of creation and exploitation, since users may choose non-use over the risk of liability for copyright infringement.

STM believes that reasonable solutions can be found to solve these problems and that good faith efforts to locate and obtain permission should be encouraged. As both producers of copyrighted works and users of orphan works, publishers are experienced both in administering and granting permissions as rights-holders and in trying to obtain permission from other rights-holders.

The United States Copyright Office has recently recognized the problems of ‘orphan works’ that authors, libraries, and other institutions are seeking permission to re-use and similar issues are being raised in the European Union.

Michael Mabe, CEO of STM, noted: ‘facilitating the reasonable exchange of rights and permissions, and dealing with problem areas such as orphan works, is an important contribution to the entire scholarly communication system, and we welcome the debate in this area.’ He noted further that ‘STM is determined to add to the debate and provide additional resources, and in connection with this will be working on additional guideline documents and the identification of publishing imprints commonly used in the past.’

The principles outlined in the STM position statement on orphan works should serve as effective guides to resolving many of the issues that have been identified. STM will be working with other publishing associations and stakeholders of all kinds on these points.

STM is an international association of about 100 scientific, technical, medical and scholarly publishers, collectively responsible for more than 60% of the global annual output of research articles, over 50% of the active research journals and the publication of

tens of thousands of print and electronic books, reference works and databases. We are the only international trade association equally representing all types of STM publishers - large and small companies, not for profit organisations, learned societies, traditional, primary, secondary publishers and new entrants to global publish.

STM's mission is assisting publishers and their authors with their activities by disseminating results of STM research, assisting national and international organisations and industries to improve electronic dissemination of STM information, and working with international and national publishers associations and other governmental and professional bodies, concerned with these tasks.

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