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A Forum for Integrating the Life Sciences

American Institute of Biological Sciences

Getting Your Word Out

For almost a decade, AIBS has hosted the popular, free-access, educational Web site ActionBioscience (*www.actionbioscience.org*). Designed to inform the public about issues that depend on biological research, the site's more than 170 articles enjoy over 1.6 million page views per year. They routinely come near the top of Google searches. Our surveys indicate that ActionBioscience is used extensively by high-school students and teachers and by undergraduates and college professors. The articles' content covers a wide range of subjects; they are peer reviewed and edited for accessibility. Some have been translated into Spanish.

To keep the site updated and to maximize its value for AIBS and its member organizations, AIBS is now soliciting sponsored contributions for ActionBioscience from AIBS's member societies. Sponsoring an article about a topic of concern to your professional society or other organization will put that topic before a wider public than reads specialized journals, even a wider readership than that of *BioScience*. It will thus demonstrate to your society's members the leadership role that the society is assuming.

Sponsorship will also allow your society's name and logo to be prominently displayed to all who read articles on ActionBioscience, along with a link to its Web site. It will thus bolster your organization's public presence on a high-traffic site and associate it with a scientifically credible report on a matter of public importance of your choosing. Future biologists among the site's readers will be made aware of the cutting-edge role that the society plays in bringing critical issues to public attention.

Because of the need to keep online-only articles short, pithy, and accurate, AIBS will put submissions through an appropriate type of peer review, then edit and format the content for the intended readership, before confirming a final version. If your society is unable to furnish an author for the article, AIBS can identify a suitably qualified writer and commission it. We plan to more extensively link articles to related public-access articles in *BioScience*, and translating the article into Spanish is also possible. Your organization will retain copyright of the sponsored article; AIBS would require only a nonexclusive license to host it online on ActionBioscience. There, it would be indexed, tagged for search engine discovery, and promoted through AIBS social media outlets and the AIBS e-newsletter.

As editorial director of the AIBS Publications division, I am now systematically reaching out to AIBS member societies with an invitation to sponsor ActionBioscience articles. But readers of this Editorial who want to seize the initiative might also consider approaching their societies' leadership to propose a suitable topic. I will be responsive to proposals. The result could be not only a more vibrant ActionBioscience that advertises the importance of biology's professional organizations but a more biology-literate and informed public—a goal that is surely shared by all individual and society members of AIBS.

TIMOTHY M. BEARDSLEY
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