**Canadian Association of Research Libraries**

**Association des bibliothèques de recherche du Canada**

January 8, 2015

Stephen Walker
Executive Director, Information Management and Open Government
Chief Information Officer Branch
Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat
270 Albert St
Ottawa, Ontario  K1A 0R5

Dear Stephen,

**RE: Letter of support for Canada's Second Action Plan for Open Government**

On November 6, 2014, the Government of Canada published Canada's Second Action Plan for Open Government, covering the period 2014-2016. The aim of the plan is to foster greater public access to government data and information. It is about creating a more responsive government and about connecting, empowering, and supporting Canadians who want to help transform government and society through greater openness and transparency.

CARL strongly supports the federal government's commitment towards greater openness. CARL libraries serve over 75%[1] of Canada's university student population.  Easy, timely and open access to publicly funded research is of inestimable value for students, educators and researchers alike.

While just one part of the broad open government agenda, CARL's mandate particularly aligns with open science. CARL libraries' parent institutions attract over 90%[2] of federal research funding that flows toward the Canadian universities.  We share the Government's view that open science has numerous benefits including accelerating scientific discoveries, enabling greater international collaboration and coordination, enhancing the engagement of society, and supporting economic prosperity. CARL also applauds the Government's proactive approach to move forward through identifying specific deliverables via the Action Plan.

CARL has been engaged in the issues of open access to information resources and research data for over a decade now, and has gained significant knowledge and experience in this area. Research libraries are important players in implementing open scholarship practices at universities. Libraries maintain repositories that provide open access to research outputs including articles and data. They host and support open access journals, and they offer crucial on-the-ground services that educate and inform researchers. These local services are then linked

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[1] Extrapolated from Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, Enrolment by University, 2014 preliminary full-time and part-time enrolment at AUCC member institutions. http://www.aucc.ca/canadian-universities/facts-and-stats/enrolment-by-university/

[2] Extrapolated from Canadian Association of University Business Officers, "Financial Information on Canadian Universities and Colleges 2012-13," section 1.1 and 3.1.  http://www.caubo.ca/sites/137.149.200.5.pilot/files/CAUBO_2012-2013_FINANCIAL_INFORMATION_OF_UNIVERSITIES_AND_COLLEGES_0.pdf

across institutions in order to connect local infrastructures into national and international networks.

The Action Plan deliverables include the adoption of open access and research data management policies, guidelines and tools. CARL and its members have been developing mechanisms to ensure the successful adoption of such policies. For example, through institutional agreements, we can now guarantee that all researchers in Canada have access to an Open Access (OA) repository in which they can deposit their articles. Most university libraries offer an OA repository through which their own university's researchers can make their publications available to the world; and now, to address situations where there is no such local repository, several major CARL member libraries from across the country have agreed to accept articles from other universities' researchers in order to achieve complete pan-Canadian access to repository services.

At the present time, CARL is spearheading the development of a research data management (RDM) network called Portage. The aim of the Portage network is to pool and expand existing expertise, services and infrastructure so that all academic researchers in Canada will have access to the support they need for RDM. The Portage network will have two major components: (1) a library-based distributed centre of expertise for research data management; and (2) a national preservation and discovery infrastructure for research data that will evolve and expand over time. A brief describing the project has recently been made available.

We believe this network and several other CARL activities contribute directly to the Government of Canada's goal of providing open access to publications and data resulting from federally funded scientific activities.

CARL welcomes close collaboration with federal departments and agencies to make certain that our activities are aligned; to ensure the successful adoption of policies; and to advance our common vision of open science and open government. We would be pleased to meet with Open Government officials or to furnish additional information on any of our initiatives.

**About CARL**

The Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) is the leadership organization for the Canadian research library community. A not-for-profit organization, CARL coordinates the joint initiatives of our members and advances their causes to achieve excellence in Canadian research and higher education. The Association's members are the 29 major academic research libraries across Canada together with two national memory institutions.

Yours sincerely,

Gerald Beasley, President
Vice Provost and Chief Librarian
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