

April 3, 2020

Director General Francis Gurry  
World Intellectual Property Organization  
34, chemin des Colombettes CH-1211  
Geneva 20, Switzerland

Dear Dr. Gurry,

*We write to you as organisations and individuals representing researchers, educators, students, and the institutions that support them, to encourage WIPO to take a clear stand in favour of ensuring that intellectual property regimes are a support, and not a hindrance, to efforts to tackle both the Coronavirus outbreak and its consequences.*

*The COVID-19 pandemic has shone a bright light on how important intellectual property limitations and exceptions can be to development and human flourishing. Researchers discovered the spread of the virus through a text and data mining project analyzing copyrighted news articles<sup>1</sup>, enabled by Canada's flexible fair dealing right for research purposes. The earliest potential treatments have been developed through existing medicines, enabled by experimental use exceptions to patent rights.*

*Now, schools, universities, libraries, archives, museums and research institutes across the world, forced to close their buildings, are transferring materials online and providing remote access, but only where copyright laws permit. However, these and other critical activities to overcome the crisis are not being performed everywhere - including where subscriptions have been paid in advance - because they are not lawful everywhere.*

*We have seen helpful steps from a number of countries, and from some right holders themselves, to facilitate access to academic articles and other works, educational and cultural materials, research data, chemical libraries, and needed medicines and medical devices that are subject to intellectual property rights. These steps are to be lauded. But much more is needed. And WIPO can help lead the way.*

*We urge you to use your position as the leader of the global intellectual property system to take urgent action to guide Member States and others in their response to intellectual property issues that the coronavirus is raising. These steps should include:*

- *Encouraging all WIPO member states to take advantage of flexibilities in the international system that permit uses of intellectual property-protected works for online*

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<sup>1</sup> See Eric Niiler, An AI Epidemiologist Sent the First Warnings of the Wuhan Virus, Wired, 25.01.2020, <https://www.wired.com/story/ai-epidemiologist-wuhan-public-health-warnings/>

*education, for research and experimental uses, and for vital public interests, such as access to medicine and culture;*

- *Calling on all right holders to remove licensing restrictions that inhibit remote education, research (including for text and data mining and artificial intelligence projects) and access to culture, including across borders, both to help address the global pandemic, and in order to minimise the disruption caused by it;*
- *Supporting the call by Costa Rica for the World Health Organization to create a global pool of rights in COVID-19 related technology and data, as well as promoting the use of the Medicines Patents Pool, voluntary licensing, intellectual property pledges, compulsory licensing, use of competition laws, and other measures to eliminate barriers to the competitive global manufacture, distribution and sale of potentially effective products to detect, prevent, and treat COVID-19.*
- *Supporting countries' rights to enact and use exceptions to trade secret and other intellectual property rights needed to facilitate greater access to manufacturing information, cell lines, confidential business information, data, software, product blueprints, manufacturing processes, and other subject matter needed to achieve universal and equitable access to COVID-19 medicines and medical technologies as soon as reasonably possible.*

*We believe that WIPO through your leadership can show its commitment to achieving sustainable development by taking swift and clear action to ensure that the global intellectual property system promotes research, education, access to culture, and public health.*

*Yours sincerely,*

Organizations (listed alphabetically)

1. ABCU, Asociación Civil
2. Africa Centre for Clinical Governance Research and Patient Safety, HRI West Africa, Calabar, Nigeria
3. Aktionsbündnis Urheberrecht Bildung und Wissenschaft, Germany
4. Alianza LAC-Global por el Acceso a Medicamentos, Global
5. American Library Association, USA
6. Amical Wikimedia
7. Aprender 3C, Comunidad de Conocimiento Colaborativo
8. Asociación Chaqueña de Bibliotecarios, Argentina
9. Asociación Bibliotecarios de Córdoba (A.B.C.), Argentina
10. Asociación Civil de Bibliotecarios Jurídicos (ACBJ), Argentina
11. Asociación de Bibliotecarios de Jujuy, Jujuy, Argentina
12. Asociación de Bibliotecarios Graduados de la República Argentina (ABGRA), Argentina
13. Asociación de Bibliotecarios Graduados de la República Argentina (ABGRA) - Delegación Mendoza, Argentina
14. Asociación de Bibliotecólogos del Uruguay, Uruguay

15. Asociación de Bibliotecarios Profesionales de Rosario, Argentina
16. Asociación Mexicana de Bibliotecarios, A.C. AMBAC, Mexico
17. Association of College and Research Libraries, USA
18. Association of Library and Information Professionals of the Czech Republic, Czech Republic
19. Association of Research Libraries (ARL)
20. Associação Nacional para o Software Livre (ANSOL), Portugal
21. Associação Portuguesa de Bibliotecários, Arquivistas e Documentalistas (BAD), Portugal
22. Australian Digital Alliance, Australia
23. Biblioteca del Congreso de la Nación / Library of the National Congress, Argentina
24. Biblioteca Depositaria de las Naciones Unidas y Hábitat, Argentina
25. Biblioteca Nacional de Maestros (BNM), Argentina
26. Biblioteca Nacional de México
27. Biblioteca Popular Chacras de Coria Mendoza, Argentina
28. Biblioteca pública Belén de Umbría, Colombia
29. Bibliotecarios Al Senado, Argentina
30. Canadian Association of Professional Academic Librarians/ l'Association canadienne des bibliothécaires en enseignement supérieur (CAPAL/ACBES)
31. Canadian Association of Research Libraries, Canada
32. Canadian Federation of Library Associations/Fédération Canadienne des Associations de Bibliothèques, Canada
33. Cancer Alliance, South Africa
34. Center for Democracy & Technology, USA
35. Center for Information Policy Research, School of Information Studies, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, USA
36. Center for Media & Social Impact, USA
37. Center for Private Law Foundation, Armenia
38. Centre for Intellectual Property Policy & Management (CIPPM), Bournemouth University, UK
39. Centre for International Studies on Internet, Innovation and Intellectual Property - GNet UFMG, Brazil
40. Centre for Internet and Society (CIS), India
41. Centro de Información y Documentación en Farmacodependencia, Costa Rica
42. Centrum Cyfrowe, Poland
43. CILIP, UK Library and Information Association, UK
44. Civil Liberties Union for Europe (Liberties)
45. Colectic, Spain
46. Colegio Colombiano de Bibliotecología - ASCOLBI, Colombia
47. Colegio de Bibliotecarios de Chile, Chile
48. Colegio Nacional de Bibliotecarios, A. C., Mexico
49. Comfamiliar Risaralda, Colombia
50. Commons Foundation, South Korea
51. COMMUNIA International Association

52. Consortium des Bibliothèques de l'Enseignement Supérieur de Côte d'Ivoire (COBES-  
CI), Côte d'Ivoire
53. Coordinadora de Bibliotecas Populares de La Matanza, Argentina
54. Corporacion Innovarte, Chile
55. Council of Prairie and Pacific University Libraries (COPPUL), Canada
56. Creative Commons
57. Creative Commons Brasil
58. Creative Commons Colombia
59. Creative Commons Czech Republic
60. Creative Commons Denmark, Danmark
61. Creative Commons Ecuador
62. Creative Commons Indonesia
63. Creative Commons Italian Chapter
64. Creative Commons Kenya
65. Creative Commons Lithuania
66. Creative Commons Nederland
67. Creative Commons Portugal
68. Creative Commons Slovenia
69. Creative Commons Uruguay
70. Creative Commons Venezuela
71. Cyprus Internet Observatory - Ellakcy
72. D3 - Defesa dos Direitos Digitais, Portugal
73. Derechos Digitales · América Latina
74. DiGiCULT/UFERSA - Grupos de Estudos e Pesquisas em Direito Digital e Direitos  
Culturais da Universidade Federal Rural do Semiárido, Brasil
75. Digital Republic, Bulgaria
76. Digitale Gesellschaft, Germany
77. Disabled Children's Action Group (DICAG), South Africa
78. Education International (EI)
79. Electronic Information for Libraries (EIFL)
80. Epilepsy South Africa
81. European Students' Union (ESU)
82. Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales Flacso Sede Argentina
83. Femsprocomuns, Spain
84. Free Knowledge Institute, Netherlands
85. Fundación Conector, Colombia
86. Fundación IFARMA, Colombia
87. Fundación Karisma, Colombia
88. Fundación Vía Libre, Argentina
89. GEDA - Grupo de Estudos de Direito Autoral e Industrial /Universidade Federal do  
Paraná - Brasil
90. Global Expert Network on Copyright User Rights
91. Global Humanitarian Progress GHP Corp.
92. GFOSS - Open Technology Alliance, Greece

93. Grupo Bibliotecario sobre Acceso a la Información y Propiedad Intelectual (G-BAIPI), Argentina
94. Grupo de Estudos de Direito Autoral e Industrial (GEDAI), Universidade Federal do Paraná, Brasil
95. Grupo de Investigación Plebio, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Colombia
96. Health GAP (Global Access Project)
97. Homo Digitalis, Greece
98. ICOM - International Council of Museums, France
99. Institute for Intellectual Property and Social Justice, USA
100. Intellectual Property Institute, Slovenia
101. International Council of Museum - Croatian National Committee
102. International Council on Archives (ICA)
103. International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)
104. International Music Managers Forum
105. International Treatment Preparedness Coalition Latin American and Caribbean (ITPC-LATCA), Guatemala
106. Internet Archive
107. InternetLab - Law and Technology Research Center, São Paulo, Brazil
108. IP Unit, University of Cape Town, South Africa
109. ISUR, Colombia
110. Knowledge Commune, South Korea
111. Knowledge Ecology International (KEI)
112. La Red Nacional de Asociaciones de Bibliotecarios de la República Argentina (RENABI.AR), Argentina
113. Lawyers Collective, India
114. LIBER, The Netherlands
115. Libraries and Archives Copyright Alliance (LACA), UK
116. Library of American University of Central Asia, Kyrgyzstan
117. LWC Health
118. Medical Training Services
119. Misión Salud, Colombia
120. National Library of the Faroe Islands
121. Nepal Library and Information Consortium (NeLIC)
122. Nexa Center for Internet & Society, Italy
123. Northeastern University's Center for Law, Innovation and Creativity (CLIC), USA
124. Observatorio Astronómico de Córdoba, Argentina
125. Observatorio del Tratado de Marrakech en América Latina
126. Open Content, z.s., Czech Republic
127. Open Denmark, Danmark
128. Open Knowledge Foundation
129. Open Nederland
130. Open State Foundation
131. Ovedje Rory Writing Services, Nigeria
132. Partido Interdimensional Pirata, Argentina

133. Polish Librarians Association, Poland
134. Proprietas (National Institute of Science and Technology), Brazil
135. Public Citizen, USA
136. Public Knowledge, USA
137. REBIUN Spanish Academic Libraries, Spain
138. Reciaría Red de Redes de Información AR
139. Red BibliotecasJuriRed
140. Red de Latinoamérica y del Caribe de Derecho de Autor, del Acceso a la Información, la Cultura y otros temas relativos (REDLACDA - Copyright Network)
141. Red Distrital de Bibliotecas Públicas de Bogotá - BibloRed, Colombia
142. Research Libraries UK, United Kingdom
143. Romanian National Public Libraries and Librarians Association, Romania
144. Salud y Fármacos Estados Unidos
145. SCONUL (Society of College, National and University Libraries), United Kingdom
146. Secretariado Latinoamericano y del Caribe de Caritas (SELACC)
147. Shuttleworth Foundation
148. SPARC Europe, Netherlands
149. Special Libraries Association, United States
150. South African Disability Alliance
151. South African National Council for the Blind (SANCB)
152. Telemedicine Society of India
153. Tohatoha Aotearoa Commons, New Zealand
154. Treatment Action Group, South Africa
155. Vialidad Nacional, Argentina
156. Vrijschrift
157. Wikimedia Argentina
158. Wikimedia Deutschland
159. Wikimedia España
160. Wikimedia Italia
161. Xnet, Spain
162. Young Pirates of Europe, Pan-European youth organization

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119. Sridhar Gutam, Open Access India
120. Fernando Gabriel Gutiérrez, Universidad Nacional de Luján. Sistema de Bibliotecas y Centros de Documentación, Argentina
121. Luisa Fernanda Guzman Mejia, PhD Student at Universidad del Rosario, Colombia
122. Wilma Haan, Open State Foundation
123. Eldar Haber, University of Haifa, Israel
124. Susan Haigh, Canadian Association of Research Libraries, Canada
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128. David Hansen, Duke University, USA
129. Md. Shahajada Masud Anowarul Haque, BRAC University, Bangladesh
130. Michael Harrington, Berklee Online, USA
131. Naomi Hawkins, University of Exeter Law School, UK

132. Elizabeth Heckenberg, ALIATech, Australia
133. Evelin Heidel, Member, Creative Commons
134. Yaniv Heled, Georgia State University College of Law, USA
135. Mandy Henk, Tohatoha Aotearoa Commons, New Zealand
136. Joachim Henkel, Technical University of Munich, Germany
137. Daniel Hermida Pezzelatto, Instituto de Formación Técnica Superior No. 13 (Ciudad de Buenos Aires), Argentina
138. Francisco Hernández, Secretariado Latinoamericano y del Caribe de Caritas (SELACC)
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149. Mishael Ifeanyi, University Of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria
150. G. Iglesias, Diputació de Barcelona, Spain
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155. Priyal Jain, ICFAL Law School, India
156. Guriqbal Singh Jaiya, Telemedicine Society of India
157. Steven Jamar, Institute for Intellectual Property and Social Justice, Washington, DC, USA
158. Peter Jaszi, American University Washington College of Law, USA
159. Eric E. Johnson, University of Oklahoma College of Law, USA
160. Charles Jones, Pennsylvania State University, United States
161. Paulius Juncys, Creative Commons Lithuania
162. Brewster Kahle, Internet Archive
163. Lisette Kalshoven, Creative Commons Nederland
164. Toshiya Kaneko, Meiji University, Japan
165. Mohammad Ataul Karim, East West University, Dhaka, Bangladesh
166. Brandy Karl, Pennsylvania State University Libraries, USA
167. Ariel Katz, University of Toronto Faculty of Law, Canada
168. Dick Kawooya, University of South Carolina, USA
169. Amalyah Keshet, Copyright Management for Cultural Heritage
170. Behrang Kianzad, Copenhagen University, Faculty of Law, Denmark
171. Aristeidis Kimirtzis, Greece

172. Danny Kingsley, Visiting Fellow, Australian National centre for the Public Awareness of Science, Australia
173. Howard Knopf, Macera & Jarzyna, LLP, Ottawa, Canada
174. Martin Kretschmer, CREATE, University of Glasgow, UK
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176. Adhy Kurniawan, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia
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178. Charalampos Kyritsis, student at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece
179. Ignasi Labastida, Universitat de Barcelona, Catalonia
180. Maria Silvia Lacorazza, Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Pcia Buenos Aires, Argentina
181. Adriana Langiano, Universidad Nacional del sur Argentina
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186. Edith López, Universidad Nacional del Sur Argentina
187. Yvette Joy Liebesman, Saint Louis University School of Law, USA
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192. Ilse López, Universidad de la República. Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y de Administración. Instituto de Economía. Biblioteca, Uruguay
193. Laura Luchetti, CONICET, Argentina
194. Ivonne Lujano, Arizona State University, United States
195. Alex Lungu, Artist
196. Marina Monteiro Machado, Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, Brasil
197. Ana Miriam Rebelo Machado Rebelo, Universidade do Porto, Portugal
198. Lisa Macklem, University of Western Ontario, Canada
199. Othusitse Ricky Madibela, Botswana University of Agriculture & Natural Resources, Botswana
200. Michael Madison, University of Pittsburgh School of Law, USA
201. Kara Malenfant, Association of College and Research Libraries
202. Bashar Malkawi, University of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates
203. Hitesh Manglani, ICFAI University, Jaipur, India
204. Paige Mann, University of Redlands, USA
205. Scondras Marcela, Abgra, Argentina
206. Nancy Marrelli, Concordia University, Canada
207. Rene Martin, Alberta University of the Arts, Canada
208. Silvina Veronica Martin, Abgra
209. Isabel Martínez-Hervás, Biblioteca-Hospital Universitario Severo Ochoa, España
210. Josep Matas, LEGALMENT, Catalunya
211. Duncan Matthews, Queen Mary University of London, United Kingdom

212. Maria Eugenia Maza, Esc. N° 92
213. Stephen McJohn, Suffolk University Law School, United States
214. Julie McKenna, Canadian Federation of Library Associations/Fédération Canadienne des Associations de Bibliothèques, Canada
215. Juan Medino, Hospital Universitario de Fuenlabrada, Spain
216. Remedios Melero, CSIC, Spain
217. Bartolomeo Meletti, CREATE, University of Glasgow, United Kingdom
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220. Jose Luis Mendoza, Creative Commons Venezuela
221. Axel Metzger, Humboldt Universität, Berlin, Germany
222. Salomé Meyer, Cancer Alliance, South Africa
223. Itziar Mikeleiz, Universidad Pública de Navarra, España
224. Timo Minssen, Center for Advanced Studies in Biomedical Innovation Law, Faculty of Law, University of Copenhagen, Denmark
225. John T. Mitchell, Interaction Law, USA
226. Isela María Mo Amavet, Biblioteca del Congreso de la Nación / Oficina Regional de IFLA para América Latina y el Caribe, Argentina
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234. Alberto Muñoz, BPM Mislata, Spain
235. Peter Murray-Rust, ContentMine, UK
236. Hyder Abbas Musavi, Mehran University of Engineering and Technology, Pakistan
237. Perpetua Mwangi, Head of IP, Simba & Simba Advocates, Kenya
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