

The ISI® Grant Program—
Assistance for Smaller Colleges and
Departmental Libraries

February 4, 1970

Rapid growth in all subject sectors of scientific and technical literature threatens to swamp the librarian, the library, and the library user. Every year it becomes more difficult to do a background search, check out a particular piece of information, and keep up with the current literature.

Since no one has seriously proposed that scientists stop research and cease publishing research results, there is no doubt that this situation will become worse. The increased difficulty of searching for information may even strengthen the tendency of many scientists to bypass the traditional library or information center.

On the brighter side we have seen the development of many innovative, useful, and powerful methods of organizing the published literature for retrieval, including coordinate, permuted, citation, and other methods of indexing. ISI's pioneer basic research in citation indexing culminated in the publication of the *Science Citation Index*®. ISI's development of the simplest and most widely used current awareness tool of all, *Current Contents*®, provides access to information by putting together contents pages of journals in a compact, readable form. *Current Contents* is published by ISI in seven editions, covering life, physical, chemical, behavioral/social, educational, agricultural, and engineering sciences.

More "sophisticated" methods of storing and retrieving massive compilations of scientific and technical data on magnetic tape are represented by ISI's ASCA service, the magnetic tape *Source Index* and *Citation Index*, and in the chemical field by the *Index Chemicus Registry System*®. The *Index Chemicus Registry System* makes largescale rapid substructure searching of chemical compounds a practical reality for the first time.

In recent years, Federal grant support has been cut drastically in many fields, with a resulting tightening of both Federal and State funds for libraries and information centers. This has prevented all but the minority of better endowed libraries from acquiring these powerful new information tools. There are many small technical and academic libraries in four-year colleges that grant few, if any, graduate degrees; in small medical research organizations; and in hospitals of less than 600 beds engaged in clinical research. In addition, departmental libraries of large universities are generally too restricted financially to acquire sophisticated reference and search systems.

All these libraries have one thing in common: a library budget inadequate for purchase of even the minimum information tools required for effective library service. As a result, 40 percent of college

graduates entering graduate school are never exposed to the *Science Citation Index* during their undergraduate years, impeding their ability to function effectively as researchers. Such deficiencies cannot help but affect the quality, effectiveness, and progress of American scientific research.

Scientists and other research personnel are also quite concerned about the adequacy of available library resources when they consider a new employment situation. If the library is too small, is deficient in reference capability, or even too distant from a major reference collection, the researcher will opt, other things being equal, for an alternative appointment where bibliographic resources will meet his high professional requirements and standards.

We at ISI have considered the implications of these library-weakening budget cuts, and instead of merely complaining about the situation we decided to do something about it by instituting a matching grant program for one of the most important standard reference tools we produce, the *Science Citation Index*.

Under the grant program, ISI will provide eligible organizations with matching funds to subscribe to all or part of the *Science Citation Index*. Current list prices are \$1,500 per year for the combined *Citation* and *Source Index*; \$1,500 per year for the combined *Permuterm*[®] *Subject Index* and *Source Index*, and \$2,250

for both the *Science Citation Index* and *Permuterm Subject Index*. ISI will provide grants covering up to 50 percent of the purchase costs to two- and four-year colleges, colleges with small, masters-level graduate programs, departmental libraries in large universities, and hospital libraries in institutions with 600 beds or less.

This is a big and important step for a commercial scientific publisher. We are taking it because we are particularly sensitive to the magnitude of information problems in the research field, and because we feel a special sense of responsibility to the entire scholarly community, not just the affluent scholarly community. Naturally, we also hope to expand the use of our services.

We think this program will help make modern information services broadly available. We urge those of you whose past budgetary limitations have prevented your acquiring *SCI*[®] and *PSI* to write for more details. The *SCI* system is now recognized as an essential standard reference work in every effective research library. The very gratifying response to the initial announcement in the press that we would provide matching grants for the *Science Citation Index* is the best evidence that librarians and university administrators are aware of the need to provide their research personnel the best information resources available. What has been lacking before was the financial resources to do the whole job. The ISI grant program addresses itself to that problem.