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## bepress and SSRN Announce Integration Pilot with Columbia and University of Georgia Law Schools

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Bepress and SSRN are pleased to announce a joint pilot to explore integration between their two platforms. The four-month pilot launches today with the participation of Columbia Law School's Arthur W. Diamond Law Library and University of Georgia School of Law's Library.

Both bepress and SSRN are eager to explore potential solutions to the obstacles that professional schools and their libraries face in promoting their open access scholarship. The initial pilot offers one possible model for demonstrating the increased reach of legal scholarship when work is available through an open access repository as well as a specialized network of peers, by simplifying population of and aggregating research impact from both platforms.

"We are incredibly excited to launch this project," stated Jean-Gabriel Bankier, Managing Director at bepress. "It is the first step in our vision to work together with others in the Elsevier ecosystem in order to better support our community with their open access initiatives." Columbia Law School Library Director Kent McKeever noted, "this is exactly the kind of synergy that I was hoping to see now that both products are under the Elsevier umbrella." With Elsevier's acquisition of bepress in August 2017, both platforms are now part of the Elsevier portfolio.

One goal of the pilot is to support open access initiatives by helping libraries quickly populate their institutional repositories. SSRN and bepress will explore ways to easily transfer research articles, enabling this scholarship to become part of an institution's open access collections. "Integrating these two platforms will reduce some of the hurdles to making law faculties' scholarship freely available through open access," states Carol Watson, Director of the Law Library at the University of Georgia.

The pilot also tests potential benefits for authors. Bankier states, "we believe that authors should be able to get credit for their readership, regardless of whether an article is downloaded from bepress's Digital Commons or SSRN." As Watson puts it, the integration will lead to a "more accurate assessment of the true impact of their legal scholarship" by harnessing the discovery power that is at the heart of both platforms. SSRN and bepress are leading names in the law scholarship, with thousands of authors and readers who interact with both platforms; as such, the pilot has the potential to have a significant impact in the law sector.

Finally, the pilot explores ways to make life easier for libraries and staff who use both systems. SSRN and bepress will work with library staff at both campuses to obtain faculty permission and experiment with various submission models, including single submission, toward the goal of discovering solutions that help researchers and institutions simplify their processes.

Gregg Gordon, the Managing Director for SSRN, notes, "we look forward to the results of this work; if our community finds this kind of integration with institutional repositories valuable, and if the pilot is replicable at scale, we will explore expanding pilots with other institutional repository platforms beyond Digital Commons."

The pilot is slated to run from March to June of 2018; bepress and SSRN plan to share their findings at the American Association of Law Libraries in July as well as in other public forums following the conference. For further information about the pilots, please contact Promita Chatterji at [pchatterji@bepress.com](mailto:pchatterji@bepress.com).