

**5 July 2018****DEAL and Elsevier negotiations:****Elsevier demands unacceptable for the academic community**

"The excessive demands put forward by Elsevier have left us with no choice but to suspend negotiations between the publisher and the DEAL project set up by the Alliance of Science Organisations in Germany." That was the verdict of the lead negotiator and spokesperson for the DEAL Project Steering Committee, Prof Dr Horst Hippler, the President of the German Rectors' Conference, speaking in Bonn, where the last discussion took place this week.

"As far as we're concerned, the aim of the ongoing negotiations with the three biggest academic publishers is to develop a future-oriented model for the publishing and reading of scientific literature. What we want is to bring an end to the pricing trend for academic journals that has the potential to prove disastrous for libraries as it stands. We are also working to promote open access, with a view to essentially making the results of publicly funded research freely accessible. The publishers should play a crucial role in achieving this. We have our sights set on a sustainable publish and read model, which means fair payment for publication and unrestricted availability for readers afterwards. Elsevier, however, is still not willing to offer a deal in the form of a nationwide agreement in Germany that responds to the needs of the academic community in line with the principles of open access and that is financially sustainable," said Hippler.

For many months now the negotiations addressing the implementation of a nationwide publish and read licence in Germany have attracted a lot of attention all around the world¹. Since October 2017, a number of renowned researchers have resigned their editorship of Elsevier journals² as a way of showing their solidarity with the DEAL discussions. In addition, some 200 scientific institutions chose not to extend their licensing agreements with Elsevier at the end of 2016/2017³. The publisher wanted to enter into discussions to carry on with the agreements with these institutions to try and secure at least some of their lost income.

"Finding an interim solution for the second half of 2018 is only worthwhile for scientific institutions in Germany if a fundamental agreement can be made with Elsevier regarding the framework conditions for a publish and read contract for the future. But we haven't seen any evidence of this to date," said Hippler.

¹ <https://www.projekt-deal.de/about-deal/>

² <https://www.hrk.de/press/press-releases/press-release/meldung/researchers-resign-editorship-of-elsevier-journals-4237/>

³ <https://www.projekt-deal.de/vertragskundigungen-elsevier-2017/> (available only in German)

The DEAL Group is still looking ahead to the future with composure. It has taken the necessary precautions in case Elsevier now cuts off access for those institutions that no longer have agreements. The negotiation group will keep the scientific institutions fully updated with any progress.

The DEAL project was set up by the Alliance of Science Organisations in Germany. As part of the project, national licensing agreements are to be implemented for the entire portfolio of electronic journals of large academic publishers. Further information on the project is available here: www.projekt-deal.de/about-deal