

**4 August 2016****DEAL – nationwide licensing of the products offered by major science publishers: start of negotiations with Elsevier**

“We need significant improvements in the provision of information to academia. Now for the first time, the major German research institutions are entering into negotiations with one of the most important science publishers to obtain fairer terms for the purchasing of literature”, says Prof. Dr. Horst Hippler, President of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK), in Berlin today.

The negotiations were prepared as part of the DEAL project – nationwide licensing of the products offered by major science publishers which was launched by the Alliance of Science Organisations in Germany at the initiative of the HRK. Upon conclusion of the preparatory work, negotiations headed by the HRK President started with Elsevier on a nationwide licence agreement. The objective is to sign an agreement with a term beginning on 1 January 2017. Initial exploratory talks are being held with Springer Nature and Wiley publishers.

Safeguarding adequate provision of up-to-date literature for research and teaching has been an issue at most research locations in Germany for many years. The ongoing consolidation among major international science publishers has continued to reinforce the market power of providers and has caused prices to rise dramatically. Scientific libraries' budgets for acquisitions have not been able to keep up for many years, it is a long time since they were able to provide researchers and students alike with everything they need.

The objective of the DEAL project is to conclude licence agreements for the entire range of electronic journals offered by the major science publishers. At the same time, plans are to implement an open access component which means that the costs of open access publications born by the research institutions will be taken into consideration within the scope of such licences. There are potentially several hundred institutions (such as universities, universities of applied sciences, research institutions, state and regional libraries) that would come into question as participants.

“In an age of increasing digitalization, research depends to a great extent on prompt, comprehensive and, to the greatest extent possible, barrier-free access to literature and information. I am convinced that we now have a great opportunity to work together to achieve significantly better conditions”, says Hippler.