

**12 October 2017****Researchers resign editorship of Elsevier journals**

As the dispute between German research organisations and the academic publisher Elsevier continues, the first researchers have resigned from their positions as editors and members of the editorial and advisory boards for the publisher's journals. They are adopting this stance in response to negotiations with the publisher on nationwide agreements for access to electronic journals that have so far proved unsuccessful.

The President of the German Rectors' Conference, Prof Dr Horst Hippler, who is conducting the negotiations on behalf of German research organisations, also announced that the names of further researchers who are likewise resigning their editorship of Elsevier journals will be published in the coming weeks.

Editors who have now been named include the Chair of Forschungszentrum Jülich, Prof Dr Ing. Wolfgang Marquardt, and Prof Dr Kurt Mehlhorn, a director at the Max Planck Institute for Informatics, Saarbrücken.

"Across the world, more and more researchers are standing up for open access and fair cost models," says Marquardt. "What seem to be arbitrarily high prices are placing a strain on the acceptance of the division of labour between research and publishers. Research libraries are increasingly forced to restrict their services. This poses a growing danger for scientific discourse in the various disciplines."

"An unrestricted open access component is indispensable to research," Kurt Mehlhorn adds. "This is the only way to ensure that current research results are completely accessible. Publishers must adapt their business models to these digital publishing options."

Background

German research organisations have now been negotiating with publishers Elsevier, Wiley and Springer Nature under the umbrella of the DEAL project for over a year on nationwide agreements for the entire portfolio of electronic journals (e-journals). The aim is for articles to be published in open access mode in future. This would make it possible to read scientific papers free of charge and without restriction. Costs would be incurred only once, for publication. Given that in the negotiation rounds up to now, Elsevier has not made any offers that meet the demands made by DEAL, discussions have been discontinued until further notice. To date, almost 200 universities, universities of applied science and research institutions have cancelled their Elsevier subscriptions.