

swissuniversities
Effingerstrasse 15, Postfach
3001 Bern
www.swissuniversities.ch

Factsheet on the negotiating strategy of swissuniversities

The goal of the negotiating strategy is to revise the national contracts on access to academic journals with the major publishers *Springer Nature*, *Wiley* and *Elsevier* to include open access components. The negotiations are to take place in a staggered manner and will begin with *Springer Nature* in 2018 (see schedule). The negotiations with *Wiley* and *Elsevier* are scheduled from 2019 onwards.



Fig.1: Time scale

The negotiating strategy is based on an approach already used in numerous other European countries, e.g. Germany, and corresponds to the general principles of the European network LIBER. The strategy foresees that Switzerland expressly heeds its demands regarding licensing to achieve **appropriate, transparent pricing for access to academic information** and **greater accessibility to publications in accordance with the open access standard**. A “read & publish” approach is favoured, aimed at compensating publishing houses for the articles published from Swiss universities plus a fee for access to the complete content in lieu of the classic subscriptions for accessing journals. The main idea is to transform publishing and establish a new business and price model geared towards the publications. The negotiation goals are based on the principles of LIBER¹ and are being finalised by the negotiating team:

1. Licences and open access are closely linked:

No institution should pay licence fees for access to the contents and additional article processing charges (APCs; “double-dipping”). The payment of APCs should lead to a proportional reduction of the licence fees. This is to be regulated in the new licence contracts.

¹ Ligue des Bibliothèques Européennes de Recherche (<http://libereurope.eu/blog/2017/09/07/open-access-five-principles-for-negotiations-with-publishers/>).

2. No open access, no price increase:
 Overall, the universities invest a lot of money in journal subscriptions, which are subject to annual price increases. On the academic publication market, however, the demand for open access publication models is on the increase. Providers must meet these needs. Therefore, price increases are no longer acceptable.
3. Transparency of the licence contracts:
 The licence contracts are paid from public funds. Accordingly, their contents should also be open access. Socially, confidentiality clauses are no longer accepted.
4. Guaranteeing long-term access to content that is already licensed:
 In order to prevent libraries from spending more money on licences and boost open access, some libraries have relinquished long-term access to licensed content in the past. However, this access is crucial in a rapidly developing market and must be guaranteed.
5. Usage data should contain open access:
 Although APC payments are becoming increasingly important, the quality of the reports on publications and paid services is unsatisfactory. Alongside usage figures with accesses and downloads, libraries should also be able to access automated reports on open access publications at any time.
6. Cost neutrality:
 Open access should not lead to higher costs in the medium and long term, even though additional costs may be incurred in the conversion phase.
7. Minimising administrative burden
 While switching to a new model, the necessary administrative burden for researchers and libraries should be kept to a minimum.

The clients for the new negotiating strategy are swissuniversities, represented by the chamber of universities, and the Conference of Swiss University Libraries. A new negotiating organisation is being formed to implement the negotiating strategy. The new negotiating team was mandated by the universities in February 2018.



Fig. 2: Negotiating organisation

Negotiating team:

Representing the Rectors:

- Yves Flückiger, Rector of the University of Geneva
- Michael O. Hengartner, Rector of the University of Zurich

Representing the researchers:

- Michael Ambühl, Chair of Negotiation and Conflict Management, ETH Zurich
- Marc Robinson-Rechavi, Associate Chair of Bioinformatics, Université de Lausanne

Representing the libraries:

- Niklaus Landolt, Director of University Library Bern
- Wilfried Lochbühler, Director of the University of Zurich Main Library

Representing the Consortium of Swiss Academic Libraries:

- Pascalia Boutsouci, Head of the Consortium of Swiss Academic Libraries
- Fabian Felder, Deputy Head of the Consortium of Swiss Academic Libraries