

# National negotiations with publishers – Read & publish reorganised

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swissuniversities' negotiations with publishing powerhouses Elsevier and Springer Nature regarding open access to publicly financed publications has resulted in read & publish agreements. For Wiley no agreement could be found yet. Negotiations will continue in 2021.

## Results

- **Wiley:** In spring 2021, an agreement was reached with Wiley. This enables access to all Wiley journals. In addition, authors of ETH Zurich can publish open access in almost all journals of Wiley without incurring any costs. Further information on the agreement with Wiley can be found in the [news item of 29 April 2021](#).
- **Elsevier:** A read & publish agreement was concluded with Elsevier in Spring 2020. Members of ETH Zurich not only have access to almost all [journals](#) on ScienceDirect but have also been able to publish free of charge with open access in all journals of Elsevier since spring 2020. For more information on the agreement with Elsevier, see the [news item of 15 April 2020](#).
- **Springer Nature:** A read & publish agreement was also concluded with Springer Nature this summer, enabling members of ETH Zurich to publish free of charge in almost all Springer Nature journals with open access since 1 July 2020. In addition, the ETH Zurich community is also given access to almost all of the publisher's [journals](#). Further details of the agreement with Springer Nature are reported in the [news item of 1 July 2020](#). A separate agreement allows authors affiliated with ETH Zurich to publish free of charge [through ETH Library](#) in the Gold Open Access journals of the Springer imprints BioMed Central and SpringerOpen.

## Frequently asked questions: About the negotiations

### Why negotiate?

#### Licensing and publishing situation

Licensing: Current agreements for access to the content of major scientific, technical and medical (STM) publishers see high annual fee increases and most often do not comply with national and funder's strategies and policies on open access.

Publishing: More and more researchers are publishing their results open access. Meanwhile, hybrid journals practice double-dipping (charging separately for subscription access and [gold open access publishing](#)), and fees for this publishing model are high and continue to rise.

### What are the key aspects of the recent negotiations?

The negotiating team has clear objectives that they want to reach on behalf of all Swiss institutions of higher education.

#### Objectives

Licensing and open access go hand in hand: Articles published by Swiss university researchers in journals belonging to the aforementioned three publishers must be immediately released in open access format.

Publishers must grant ongoing access to all of their journal content as part of the deal.

Cost neutrality: No open access = no price increase. If a contractual agreement with publishers on open access cannot be reached, future price increases should not be accepted.

Transparency for licensing deals: No non-disclosure clauses in the agreements.

#### Subscriptions and current expenses

Number of journals: Elsevier (approx. 1,900 titles), Springer Nature (approx. 2,190 titles) and Wiley (approx. 1,500 titles)

2019 expenditure: EUR 22.4 million (excluding tax) for all of Switzerland

2019 expenditure: EUR 6.4 million (excluding tax) for ETH Zurich

### Can you explain the different licensing models?

**Traditional licensing models** for accessing scientific publications are often based on the size of the subscribing institution (number of full-time employees) and historical print subscription expenses. These agreements do not take into account the institution's expenses for gold open access publishing (article processing charges, or APCs). Annual fee increases on these agreements vary on average from 3% to 6% or even higher.

**Transformative agreements** aim to bundle negotiated pricing conditions for accessing scientific publications and publishing services in a single agreement in order to streamline expenses and prevent double-dipping.

- **Read & publish agreement**

This type of contract bundles a fixed-sum payment for reading (providing access to a publisher's journal portfolio for the subscribing institution) and publishing (allowing the authors affiliated with the institution to publish open access without paying individual APCs).

- **Publish & read agreement**

In this agreement model, institutions pay the publishers only for their open access publishing services. The price is determined based on the institution's publishing activity, and the authors affiliated with the institution can choose to publish open access without paying individual APCs. Access to the journal portfolio is included at no additional cost.

## What is the mandate of swissuniversities?

A team commissioned by swissuniversities has been negotiating since January 2019 with the three major publishers Elsevier, Springer Nature and Wiley to find a satisfactory agreement for the Swiss scientific community based on the read & publish principle.

The team negotiates on behalf of all Swiss institutions of higher education, including EPF Lausanne and ETH Zurich.

Individual institutions have agreed not to run parallel negotiations with these three publishers until the objectives of the current negotiations have been met.

Solidarity with this initiative implies acceptance of a no-deal situation (no subscriptions, no access) after current agreements lapse if the negotiation objectives are not achieved.

[More information about the swissuniversities negotiation strategy and goals](#)