

Editor Briefings

## Update on UC renewal negotiations

Dear xxx,

We are writing to you in your capacity as a UC-based editor of an Elsevier journal. You might be following the University of California's (UC) ScienceDirect renewal discussions, and as such, we would like to provide you with an update regarding the latest developments.

Over the last several months we have been in close and productive discussions with the California Digital Library (CDL). CDL asked Elsevier to partner with the UC to pilot an agreement that they said should advance a "shared understanding of the promises and pitfalls of open access nationally." We listened carefully to CDL's request to pilot a "multi-payer" (i.e. library, author, grant or other funder) model for open access at UC, to continue to provide access to all of Elsevier's journal articles and to create a way to reduce costs for the libraries.

Reflecting on CDL's requests, Elsevier proposed a unique model that supports CDL's multi-payer open access request, provides a clear path that allows every researcher to choose to publish for free or open access and provides a scaled path to reduce the costs for each campus library. The proposal also provides every UC student and researcher with access to all journal articles published by Elsevier; articles they download nearly one million times every month.

Elsevier is working hard to reach an agreement that supports CDL's objectives and offers the means to ensure that the UC system remains at the forefront of global research and teaching. We thought it would be helpful to share the following with you:

- **Elsevier's latest offer provides access to 2,500+ journal titles, totaling 17% of the world's scholarly literature and over 25% of global citations.** This high-quality content is provided to more than 340,000 UC faculty and students for less than 4% of the library's total budget of \$309 million. Our annual price increase percentages are lower than the annual increases in articles delivered, equating to more value each year.
- **The offer also provides a clear path to facilitate substantially more open access publishing by UC authors.** The offer supports a multi payer model, provides for CDL's requested repurposing of funds towards open access article publishing charges (APCs) and transition-based cost savings to improve the library budget.
- **We believe in author choice and researchers still prefer to publish for free.** In fact, subscription content still comprises 85% of scholarly output globally and

continues to grow. Last year Elsevier published over 435,000 subscription articles, significantly more than in 2017. While we want to help CDL advance its open access ambitions, it is only fair that CDL pays a reasonable amount to access subscribed content published by researchers outside of the UC system.

Despite our best efforts, it is still possible we may not reach an agreement. Given the flexibility and uniqueness of our offer this would be disappointing and not the outcome we want. We are making every effort to prevent a scenario where the UC loses access to new Elsevier content. We know how important scholarly content is to the UC research community and we are concerned about the impact a loss of access would have on UC researchers' effectiveness and the UC's overall research competitiveness.

Thank you for allowing us to share our point of view. We welcome your feedback and remain open to a collaborative discussion on these critical issues. Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to reach out to your publisher at Elsevier.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to thank you sincerely for your work and support, which all of us at Elsevier honor every day as part of an unwavering partnership and commitment to advancing the communication of science.

Sincerely,

Philippe Terheggen  
Managing Director, Elsevier Journals