

The Elsevier Impasse

Author

Enago Academy

Post Url

<https://www.enago.com/academy/the-elsevier-impasse/>

This is a follow-up post to our feature article on the [boycott of Elsevier journals by German Institutions](#).

A German consortium, Projekt DEAL, had entered into negotiations with Elsevier to secure access to its academic journals on behalf of German universities and research institutes. DEAL is a new endeavor and is seeking to secure national licensing agreements with all major publishers of academic research for 2017. At present, DEAL and Elsevier have not arrived at any favorable terms. As of the beginning of 2017, approximately 60 research institutions no longer had licensing arrangements in place with the Dutch publisher. These institutions had allowed their current licences to lapse with the expectation that the new national licence agreement would be in place by the start of the new year, however, this has not happened. [Projekt DEAL](#) has expressed dissatisfaction with the proposed cost of the national licence. DEAL is also pushing for greater levels of open access, requesting that all papers with a corresponding author based in Germany be made freely available. Dr. Ralf Schimmer, deputy director of the Max Planck Digital Library and a member of Projekt DEAL's working group, expressed a desire to see [the current subscriptions system collapse](#).

The impact on the institutions that lost access to Elsevier's academic journals [has varied](#). Senior researchers tend to have larger networks of colleagues and can simply ask their fellow researchers in other countries to send them articles they might need. Inter-library loans of articles are another way in which researchers have been able to obtain access to Elsevier journal articles during this phase. Sharing networks such as [ResearchGate](#) also provide an avenue to contact authors directly to ask for a copy of their paper. Some academics might even download the articles they need from SciHub.

As of February 13, Elsevier has restored access to the affected German institutions. [In its statement](#), Elsevier said that it will continue making its journals available to these research institutions since they canceled their subscriptions fully expecting that DEAL would have completed negotiations in time for the start of the new year. The ability to access journal content will remain in place for as long as negotiations continue in good faith. Elsevier's director of corporate relations for science and technology, Harald Boersma, has stated that [it is typical for Elsevier to continue to give institutions access](#) to its journals after their subscriptions have lapsed given that the institution and Elsevier

are in discussions concerning a renewed contract. The [academic publishing](#) company reiterated its support for German science and [believes that an agreement](#) will eventually be signed.

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