

Elsevier Seeks Millions from Sci-Hub for Copyright Infringement

Author

Enago Academy

Post Url

<https://www.enago.com/academy/elsevier-seeks-millions-from-sci-hub-for-copyright-infringement/>



In the ongoing battle between scientific publisher and websites with a guerilla open access policy, a [New York court](#) has ruled that these pirate websites owe Elsevier \$15 million. Sci-Hub and LibGen (the Library of Genesis) were specifically named in the lawsuit. An injunction was issued ordering Sci-Hub to cease offering access to Elsevier content. However, the website continues to operate. It is unlikely that Elsevier will receive any money since Sci-Hub is not within the court's jurisdiction and Sci-Hub has no assets in America.

The Sci-Hub controversy is at the forefront of the tension between the need for open access and the importance of avoiding copyright infringement activities. Sci-Hub is a website that supports guerilla open access. It was founded by neuroscientist Alexandra Elbakyan in 2011. She operates Sci-Hub from Russia using a variety of domain names and IP addresses. Millions of copyrighted works are freely available on Sci-Hub. About [69,000 users](#) download more than 200,000 papers per day from Sci-Hub, free of cost.

Elsevier's legal team referred to this as an egregious copyright violation and the court agreed, awarding \$15 million for piracy damage. Sci-Hub and LibGen are undeniably guilty of infringement of copyright. This type of academic piracy exists because there is a need for information that is currently behind the paywall. Sites offering guerilla open access tend to receive heavy traffic from developing nations where the cost of journal

subscriptions is prohibitive. The problem is that the [guerilla open access model](#) is unsustainable—it can not ensure that published works will be permanently available and cannot undertake peer-review of new data.

Even though Elbakyan has faced copyright cases, she is motivated to keep Sci-Hub going in a bid to [change the academic publishing industry](#). It is clear that Sci-Hub represents copyright infringement on an unprecedented scale. Large scientific publishers like Elsevier, Springer Nature and Wiley-Blackwell own the copyright to about half of the papers freely available on Sci-Hub. This is obviously an important copyright case which has been successfully argued by Elsevier's legal team. Guerilla open access may be helpful to those who are restricted by the paywall; however, it still is an infringement of copyright.

Cite this article

Enago Academy, Elsevier Seeks Millions from Sci-Hub for Copyright Infringement. Enago Academy. 2017/07/03. <https://www.enago.com/academy/elsevier-seeks-millions-from-sci-hub-for-copyright-infringement/>