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Big Deal Negotiations: Aims, Governance and Mandate

Publisher negotiations are included as action line #4 in the implementation plan for the Swiss national Open Access strategy. The first round of negotiations with the major publishers Elsevier, Springer Nature and Wiley was conducted by a negotiation team headed by swissuniversities between 2018–2021. The negotiation aims were inspired by the LIBER principles for Open Access negotiations. The first set of transformative agreements delivered successfully on the defined aims.

The second round of Big Deal negotiations started in 2022 with Springer Nature, continued 2023 with Elsevier and continues 2024 with Wiley.

The aims for the second round of Big Deal negotiations were derived from the evaluation matrix from an external assessment[1] of the aims and governance of the first round. This maturity matrix was adapted to cover the aspects required for the mandate. It shows the different levels per considered aspect, lists the respective (dis-)advantages and indicates the proposed level for the next round of negotiations.

The negotiation aims for the second round mark a clear advancement from the aims in the first round of negotiations and are another step forward towards the goal of full Open Access in Switzerland.

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[1] Review and assessment of Swiss negotiations with publishers, Robert van der Vooren, March 2020. Unpublished internal report, commissioned by Swiss National Science Foundation.

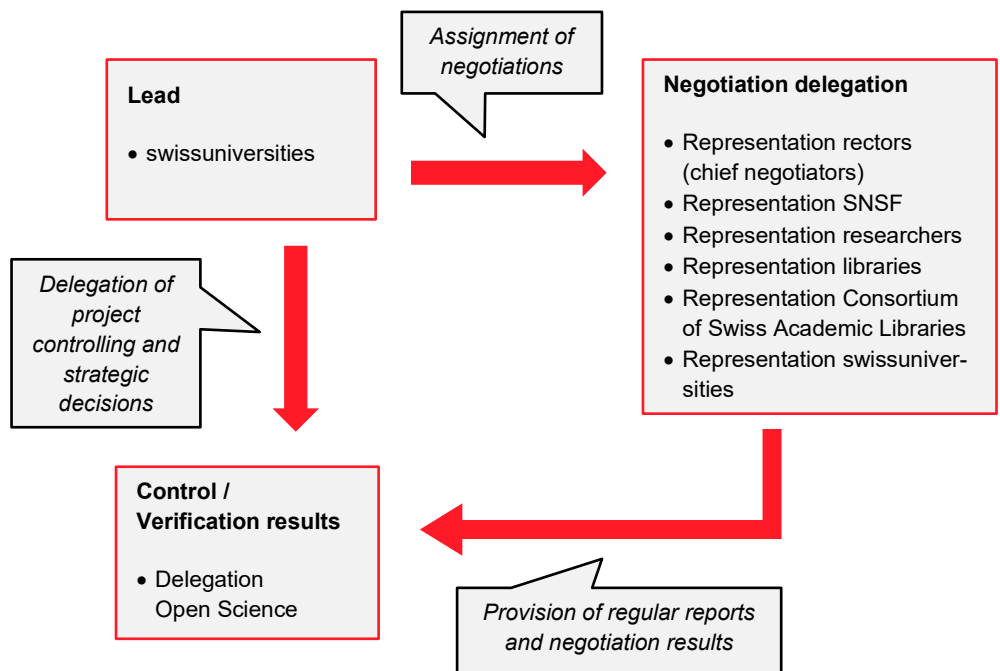**Negotiation aims**

Core provision	• Read access rights to journal titles requested by mandating parties. Continuing read access to licensed titles after termination of the agreement (post cancellation rights).
	• Open Access publishing rights for all journal publications, i.e. full publisher portfolio[2] including prestigious high impact titles (e.g. Nature, Cell, Lancet, etc.) and Gold OA titles and brands (e.g. BioMed Central).
Pricing	• Cost neutrality on national level for entire publisher journal portfolio, based on existing spend for transformative agreements, additional licences (Nature journals) and Gold OA. Inflation may have to be accounted for. Cost control mechanism for Gold Open Access, mandating institutions define their level of central investment.
	• Price Model for transformative part (Hybrid Open Access) which includes a price point(s) for reading and publishing (Read fee, Publishing fee, or Publish and Read (PAR) fee). • Price Model for publication in Gold Open Access Journals which allows for central and decentral payment of Gold Open Access Article Processing Charges (APCs).
Legal	• CC BY licence required as default solution for Open Access publishing, other CC licence types upon request from the author.
	• Transformative agreements to be published on conclusion with pricing information on national level only.
Workflow	• Institutional and author workflows to follow ESAC-recommendations. If technically feasible for publisher, access via application programming interfaces (API) to resulting publications and publication metadata.

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[2] Exceptions may be accepted for society owned titles hosted on publisher platforms if the agreement between publisher and society does not allow for Open Access publishing.

Governance

Mandating institutions are required to complete and submit the form to swissuniversities. By signing the mandate, institutions commit not to conduct parallel negotiations, to not prolong bilateral agreements between institutions and publishers for Gold Open Access publications and to accept a "no deal" state if the negotiations prove unsuccessful or require more time to produce the required results.

swissuniversities is in the lead for the negotiation strategy. swissuniversities assigns the negotiations to a negotiation delegation and delegates project controlling and strategic decisions to the Delegation Open Science (DelOS). The negotiation delegation will report regularly and deliver negotiation results to the DelOS. The DelOS will verify whether the negotiation results meet the defined negotiation aims.

The staff of the Consortium of Swiss Academic Libraries will prepare, organise, and professionally support the negotiations as well as the decision process. Mandating institutions will receive an offer from the Consortium of Swiss Academic Libraries to join a negotiated agreement. They decide themselves if they accept its terms. The agreements will be signed by the Consortium of Swiss Academic Libraries on behalf of the mandating parties.

Negotiation Delegation 2024

- Luciana Vaccaro, Chief Negotiator and President swissuniversities, Rector HES-SO
- Susanne Aerni, Head Consortial Services, Consortium of Swiss Academic Libraries
- Rafael Ball, Director ETH Library
- Joël Billieux, Associate Professor, Université de Lausanne
- Gilles Dubochet, Head of Open Science EPFL
- Matthias Egger, President of the National Research Council of the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF)
- Alice Keller, Director University Library Basel
- Wilfried Lochbühler, Deputy Director University Library Zurich, President of the Steering Committee of the Consortium of Swiss Academic Libraries
- Tobias Philipp, Open Access Strategy Coordinator SNSF
- Gernot Pruschak, Lecturer, Berner Fachhochschule
- Christian Schwarzenegger, Vice President Delegation Open Science (DelOS), Vice President Faculty Affairs and Scientific Information Universität Zürich
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