

Contribution from the Association of Swedish Higher Education (the Swedish Rectors Conference) concerning the

Study on the Economic and Technical Evolution of the Scientific Publication Markets in Europe. Final Report - January 2006. ISBN: 92-79-01029-8

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http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/science-society/pdf/scientific-publication-study_en.pdf

Contribution given in accordance with the press release:

http://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/pdf/pr_scientific_publication_study_en.pdf

The Association of Swedish Higher Education (SUHF) is taking an active interest in the development of scientific and scholarly publishing. In a study, "Pathways for Knowledge - the need for a common new strategic orientation for universities and their libraries" from 2003 a support for changes in the current publishing system was expressed. Among the motives mentioned were the restrictions of access to scientific publications and the excessive costs for higher education institutions. A working group for information provision to higher education and research was then appointed, and it further developed SUHF standpoints and activities on scientific publishing. The SUHF in October 2004 signed the Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities. In July 2005 the board of the SUHF also recommended its member institutions to take the following steps to implement the Berlin Declaration.

1. Implement a policy that strongly recommends their researchers to deposit a copy of their published articles in an open access repository.
2. Encourage their researchers to publish their research articles in open access journals where a suitable journal exists and provide the support to enable that to happen.

The SUHF therefore welcomes the initiative from the Commission to study the development of the scientific publication markets in Europe. The study overall demonstrates a thorough knowledge of the whole problem area. The SUHF will however restrict its contributions to specific issues where it can build on earlier statements from the association.

The SUHF supports Recommendation A1. Guarantee public access to publicly-funded research results shortly after publication, both action (i) and (ii). It wants to stress that the ideal solution is immediate public access. Even a shorter embargo period should be seen as an exception to a rule. However, it would be acceptable to use the solution proposed in the Federal Research Public Access Act recently introduced to the US Senate by Senators Cornyn and Lieberman, which would mandate free online access to the final version of the author's peer-

reviewed manuscript "as soon as practicable, but not later than 6 months after publication in peer-reviewed journals".

The SUHF supports Recommendation A2. Aim at a 'level playing field' in terms of business models in publishing. The SUHF supports the general intention of the recommendation but also realizes that it will take some further analysis and discussions to find the most suitable models in each country.

The SUHF supports Recommendation A3. 'Extended quality' rankings of scientific journals.

The SUHF is in general sympathetic to the ambitions expressed in recommendations A4, A5, B1 and B2 but also realizes that the concrete proposals here are outside the area of competence of the SUHF.

The SUHF supports the recommendation B 3, noting that Sweden does not have the VAT problem and also noting that the situation of Swedish Social Science and Humanities journals have been investigated in a recent Nordic study which points to the need of support to make these journals easily accessible on the web.

The SUHF also supports the recommendations C1 and C2.

This contribution was prepared by the SUHF working group for information provision to higher education and research and taken by the Board of the SUHF at its meeting May 31, 2006.