

## **OpenAccess.se Statement: Concern about Elsevier's Open Access Policy**

**Approved by the steering committee at its meeting on May 23, 2011**

Elsevier recently changed its policy concerning authors' rights to self-archive articles. This change will seriously hinder universities and research funders in their attempts to increase dissemination and availability of research results - open access.

Elsevier has a general policy concerning self-archiving which implies that authors can post a copy of an article on a personal web page or deposit it in an open archive. However, according to the new policy, Elsevier requires specific agreements with universities or research funders if there is an open access mandate to deposit and disseminate articles in a specific open archive (e.g. PubMed Central or in an institutional repository). These agreements may involve long embargo periods and restrict availability of research results.<sup>1</sup>

The national programme OpenAccess.se promotes free access on the Internet to research results produced by Swedish researchers. The steering committee of OpenAccess.se is deeply concerned about every action to restrict availability of scientific outputs. The committee is also concerned by the confusion Elsevier is creating with regard to an author's right to self-archive.

The committee's interpretation of Elsevier's new policy is that it is only universities with a mandate to deposit research publications in a specific repository that are affected. The open access mandates of the Swedish research funders are not affected since these mandates do not include directives for systematic distribution via a specific open archive. As such, Elsevier's general policy concerning self-archiving applies.

SPARC, SPARC Europe and COAR have issued a joint statement with an aim to clearly recommend that universities and others avoid concluding individual agreements with Elsevier.<sup>2</sup> The question has been discussed within the steering committee of OpenAccess.se and the committee has agreed upon the following statements:

- We strongly object to Elsevier's new policy, which requires separate agreements for author's rights, and we urge Elsevier to withdraw the new clause.
- We recommend that Swedish universities with open access mandates refrain from concluding separate agreements with Elsevier. Instead, this issue should be managed along with negotiations over national license agreements with Elsevier.

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<sup>1</sup> "Elsevier believes that individual authors should be able to distribute their AAMs for their personal voluntary needs and interests, e.g. posting to their websites or their institution's repository, e-mailing to colleagues. However, our policies differ regarding the systematic aggregation or distribution of AAMs to ensure the sustainability of the journals to which AAMs are submitted. Therefore, deposit in, or posting to, subject-oriented or centralised repositories (such as PubMed Central), or institutional repositories with systematic posting mandates is permitted only under specific agreements between Elsevier and the repository, agency or institution, and only consistent with the Publisher's policies concerning such repositories."

<http://www.elsevier.com/wps/find/authorsview.authors/postingpolicy>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.sparceurope.org/news/public-response-on-behalf-of-sparc-sparc-europe-and-coar-regarding-publishers-self-deposit-policies>