



# No deal!

## Schweden kündigt Elsevier-Verträge, um sich für Open Science einzusetzen

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# Outline

- **Background**
- **Some facts on usage and costs**
- **Methodology**
- **Some results...**
- **...and some conclusions**



# Swedish context and background

- LIBER-2019-Keynote  
**Astrid Söderberg Widding (Stockholm University):**  
**”In Transition to Open Science – A Perspective from a President’s Point of View”**  
<https://youtu.be/vxFuOjV7wD0>
- LIBER-2019-Vortrag  
**Lisa Olsson (Schwedische Nationalbibliothek):**  
**”Consequences of Sweden Cancelling Elsevier”**  
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3259809>



# Kungliga Tekniska högskolan (KTH) – Royal Institute of Technology

- Largest in Sweden
- 1722 active researchers (70 % male – 30 % female)
- 308 professors (83 % male – 17 % female)
- Approx. 3000 research publications annually (WoS)



# National **transformative Publish & Read** agreements

- Springer Compact
- Institute of Physics – IoP
- De Gruyter
- Royal Society of Chemistry
- Taylor & Francis
- Cambridge University Press
- Oxford University Press
- AIP
- SCOAP3
- *Springer Nature Fully OA › from July 15, 2019*
- *MDPI*

<https://www.kth.se/en/biblioteket/publicera-analysera/vagledning-for-publicering/open-access-avtal-for-kth-forskare-1.859196> (Sept. 9)



## Benefits national OA-agreements


- More transparent & controlled financial flows
- No double dipping!
- List price APC = expensive for the institutions
- Lessen the administration for researchers
- Hybrid publishing in a transitional stage (Plan S)



# Agreement with Elsevier

The agreement with Elsevier was cancelled from June 30th 2018 as the publisher were unable to meet the demands of the Bibsam Consortium.

The Steering Committee of the Bibsam Consortium has set up an evaluation group in order to analyse the consequences of the Elsevier cancellation. A separate agreement for 2018–2020 is in place for the databases Compendex, Reaxys and Scopus.

 [Directive for the evaluation of Elsevier cancellation \(pdf\)](#)

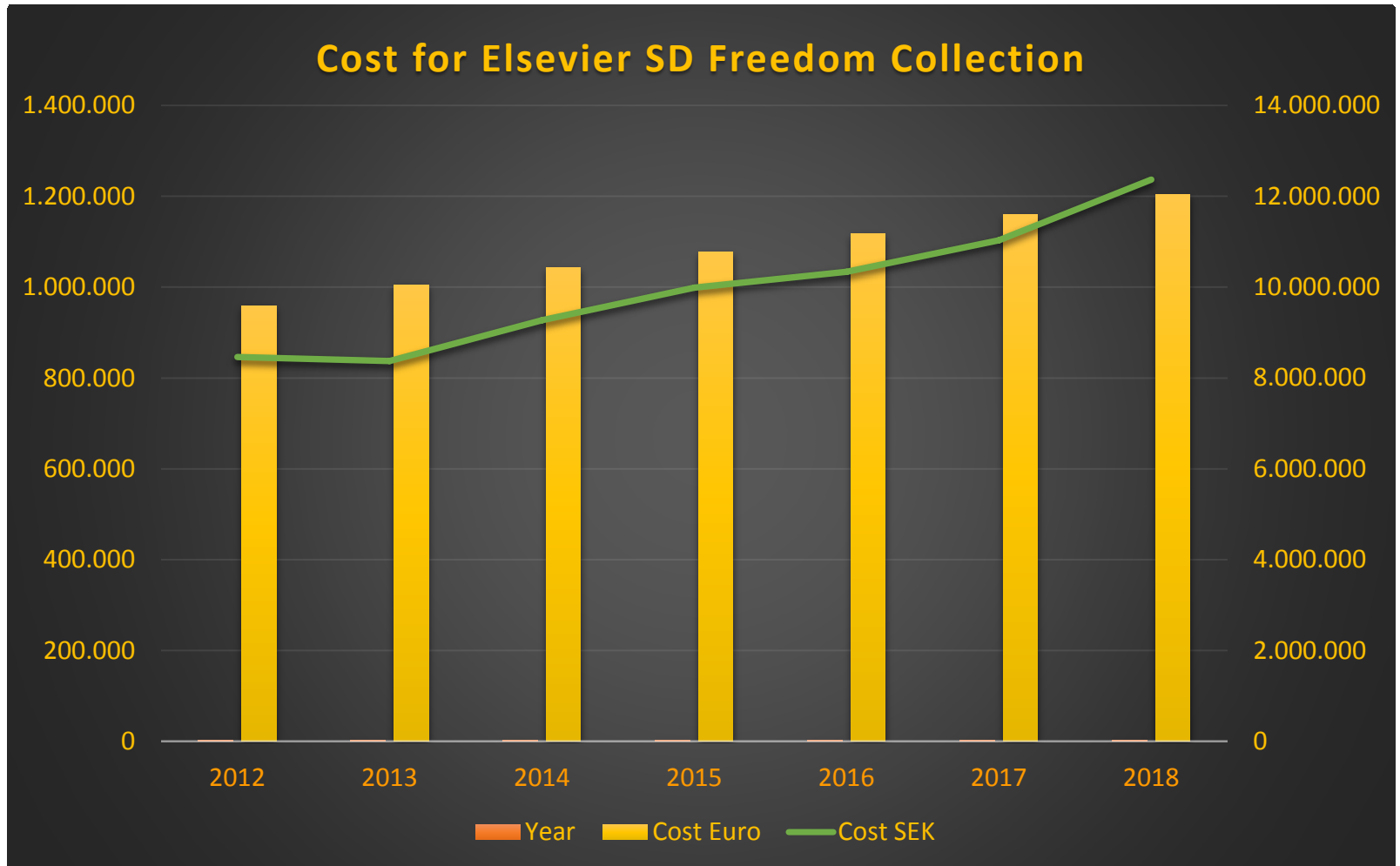
## Q&A about the cancellation

### Why was the agreement not renewed?

The agreement with Elsevier was cancelled from June 30th 2018 as the publisher were unable to meet the demands of the Bibsam Consortium:

- immediate open access to all articles published in Elsevier's journals by researchers affiliated to one of the consortium's participating organisations
- reading access to Elsevier's 1 900 journals for participating organisations
- a sustainable price model which makes a transition to open access possible

<https://www.kb.se/samverkan-och-utveckling/oppen-tillgang-och-bibsamkonsortiet/open-access-and-bibsam-consortium/bibsam-consortium/agreement-with-elsevier.html>

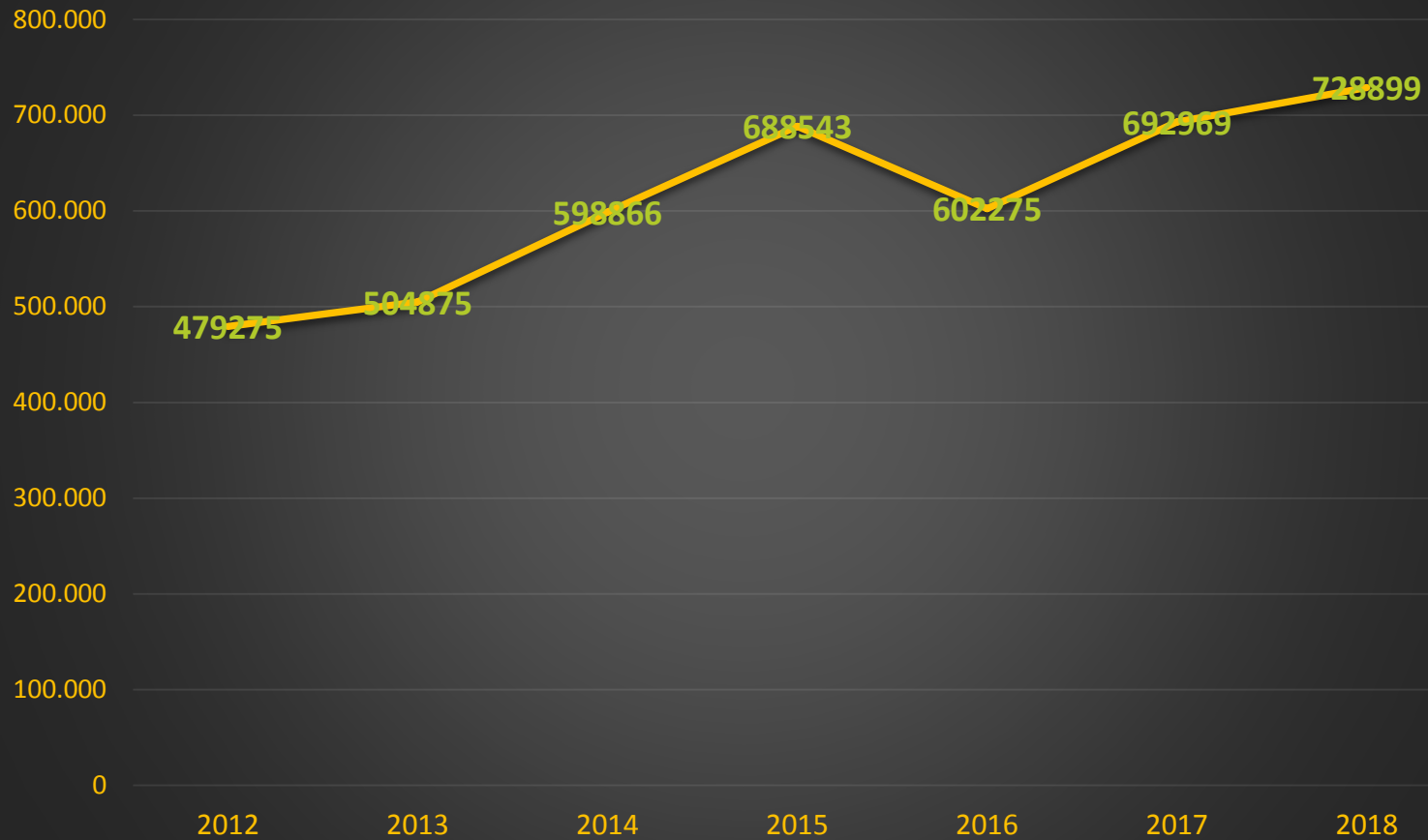


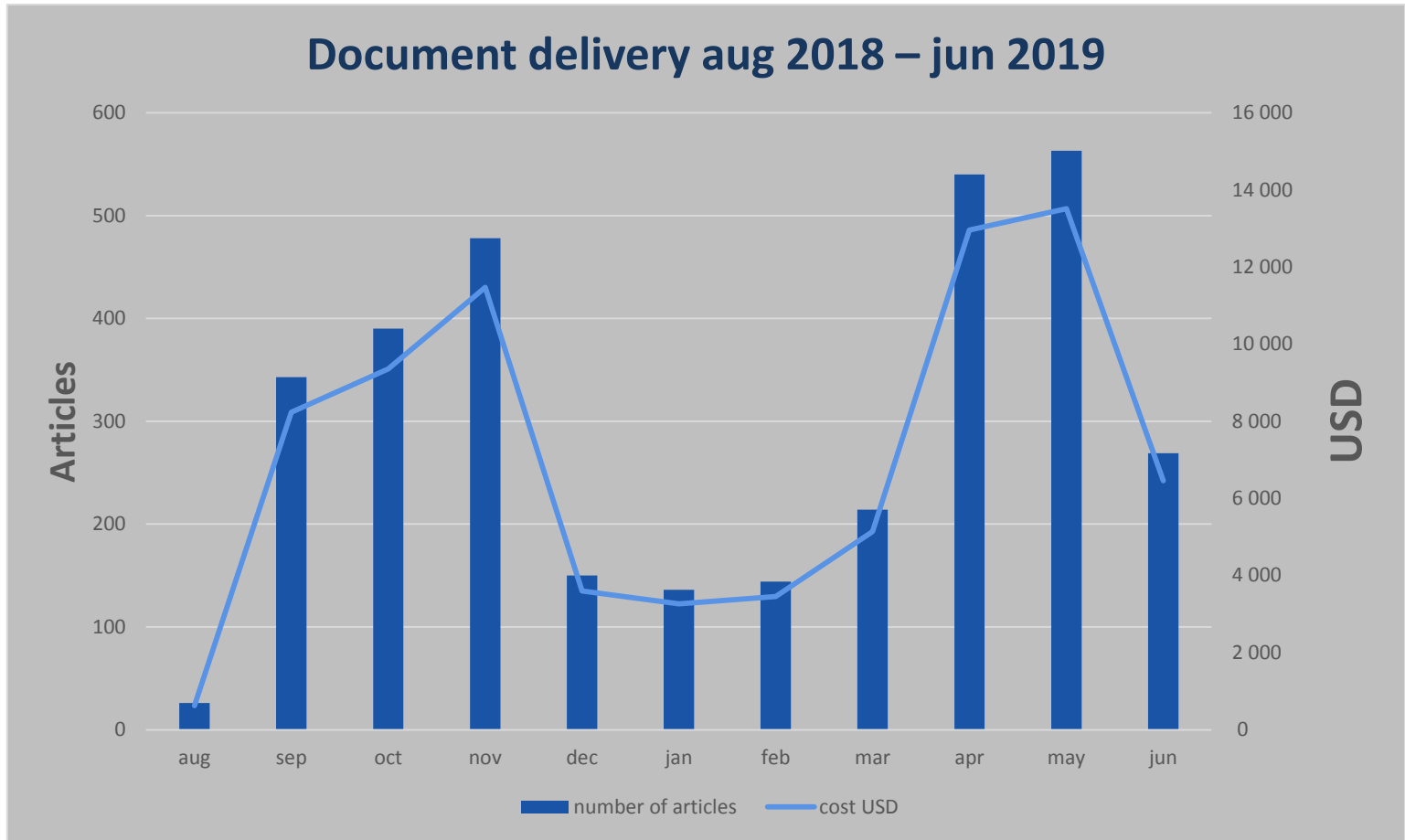
Cost is roughly 1/3 of KTH Library budget for information resources





## Article downloads





- Total number of articles: 3253 – Cost approx. € 70 000+
- 2018 approx. 47 OA publications with Elsevier (hybrid/gold)
- APC cost approx. € 113 000



# Method: Interviews

- Identified approx. 916 KTH-researchers who made article requests 2018/08 – 2019/03
- E-mail asking for a 30-minute interview
- Selected respondents by “convenience sampling”
- Performed 31 interviews (“fairly unstructured”) April 29 – June 4
- Interviews done F2F or web conference + four cases via email
- All interviews recorded (with consent), manual transcription



# Three respondent groups

- **10 Juniors** (MSc & PhD-candidates, incl. industry)
- **13 Middles** (Post-docs, Ass. Professors, "researchers")
- **8 Seniors** (Professors: tenured/full/senior/"retired")



# Stuck in a paywall?

- **1 time:** few respondents
- **10 times:** most respondents
- **100 times:** some respondents (from Chemistry & Life sciences)

*“This is a [big] problem.”*

*– Seniors #19, #21, #25, #26, some Middles and Juniors*



# Alternative routes to access

## Get-it-Now (or Library services):

“Wait one hour is ok, wait one day is not ok.”  
– *most respondents*

## Asking author/colleagues/Research Gate:

Mixed comments, but works ok

**Sci-Hub:** Rarely used

**Browser plug-ins/OA-versions/preprints:** Rarely used



Elsevier is dominant, but alternatives exist in some fields.”

”We may have to choose between publishing OA and letting our PhD student go to a conference.”

Choice of publication venue comes first – publication, reading and citations!  
Economy, OA, publishers, licenses come second or third.

”Citations are more important than journals, so we have alternative channels that are not Elsevier.”

”We choose any/the cheaper option [than Gold OA] when we can and if needed, since we do not need to get citations fast.”

”Tight budget without publishing costs covered means changes in publication practice.”

”I will be going to industry after graduation, so I do not care about where I publish.”

”One paper costs one million SEK.”  
[100,000 €]

# “Science without publication paywalls”

## Plan S : Strong principles

- ⊙ **No** publication should be locked behind a **paywall**
- ⊙ OA must be immediate, *i.e.* **no embargo periods**
- ⊙ Publication under an **open license**; no transfer/licensing of copyright
- ⊙ **Transparency** about pricing and contracts
- ⊙ **No hybrid** model of publication, except as a transitional arrangement with a clearly defined endpoint





Plan S: Most respondents agreed with  
(most) principles stated

“This looks  
like the ideal  
situation.”

“Research should  
be free for  
everyone to read.”

“This looks  
utopian.”

But: too short time frame for Plan S –  
“What about the hybrid journals?”



"Many [Gold] OA journals are bad."

"We try to not care about regulations concerning OA."

"OA is not a big thing. Reading everything is the most important thing."

"The system for promotions (the impact hysteria) go against the movement for OA."

"OA is good for industry [collaborations]."

"OA is good for citations."

"OA is good for re-using figures."



## Working for Elsevier?

- **As a reviewer:** No change in attitude after cancellation
- **As an editor:** Few respondents worked as editors
- **As an author:** Some respondents gave it a thought:  
*“I have actually changed publication venues. Nature and Springer work also. And when I can get relieved of the invoice also – that is nice!”* – Middle #18
- “Science is an international enterprise, so initiatives should be an international effort [for change]. One country alone cannot say to its scientists: ‘Do not publish with E!’” – Middle #23



## Information and communication

- "I think it is fantastic that you take the initiative to investigate this question and want to talk to us about our experiences." – Junior #27
- "This decision to cancel came from nowhere. [---] It is still the case that we do not choose publication venue according to some regulation or plan. I cannot think that our choice of publication channel will be affected at the moment." – Senior #26
- "You should make hard negotiations with Elsevier." – Middle #23
- "It is stupid to pay twice. [---] I would never pay to Elsevier, because there are alternatives with better review process." – Senior #21
- "We have to go all the way, not only negotiate deals. We have to stop participating in the current model completely. As long as my professors only ask for my publications, they will not understand if I 'take one bullet for the team!'" – Middle #7



## Main takeaways

- That the cancellation has created a big problem.
- That we have saved some (a lot of) money by not subscribing to E.
- That we can give very good service with the money saved by providing Get-it-now and negotiated transformative deals for OA publishing with other publishers.
- That top-class researchers at KTH have limited insights into the Bibsam consortium's (and the Coalition S') arguments for cancellation and the aggregated economics on national level.



## Additional lessons learned

- Do not be afraid to go and talk to researchers, even if it concerns a “big” problem.
- Allocate time for interviews wisely.
- Be prepared with data and statistics, if you talk to quantitative researchers.
- Behave like you are interested in their research (special tips can be given outside the talk 😊).
- Make sure to have at least one Unique Selling Point in order to make them happy.



# Danke schön! Fragen?

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