

May 4, 2018

Annie Callanan  
CEO, Academic Publishing Division  
Taylor and Francis

Dear Ms. Callanan:

The member libraries of our academic consortia write to oppose the “moving wall” policy that still applies to customers who do not subscribe to the Taylor and Francis “full access” collection. We acknowledge that Taylor and Francis reinstated courtesy access to full collection subscribers in February of this year, as described in your response to the open letter from SCONUL. However, libraries and consortia that maintain title-by-title collections are still penalized for not maintaining a big deal bundle with Taylor and Francis. We think this is a critical misstep and urge Taylor and Francis to restore access to licensees who have already lost access to older data, and remove any such provisions for moving wall access from existing contracts.

In a publishing industry of increased consolidation and an economic reality of diminishing budgets, many libraries are not able to sustain the base costs and price increases associated with mega-journal packages offered by the largest STM publishers. That, along with the increased administrative costs to manage such a complex set of access rights, may result in decreased numbers of subscriptions with libraries relying on alternative solutions for article fulfillment. The monetization of courtesy access fails to acknowledge the long-term commitment that customers such as the undersigned have made to Taylor and Francis since the inception of electronic journal publishing. Additionally, the uncertainty of reliable and ongoing access may drive our users to seek unlicensed mechanisms to access the content.

The institutions represented by this letter are some of the largest academic research engines in the world. This change in access policy directly affects a researcher’s ability to consult source literature for their work and to provide the widest dissemination of their research. In the competition for quality authors and research, publishers whose content is widely available will be able to secure the research that contributes to the impact and reputation of their journals.

The rolling wall policy has already been enacted at many libraries who hold active subscriptions but have not purchased the archive to cover the gap despite assurances that previous years’ subscriptions would be honored. In good faith, many libraries purchased archives that go up to 1996, with the understanding that the 1997-forward content would remain secure. The rolling wall, regardless, is still outside of industry norms, diminishes the value and impact that both libraries and publishers strive to deliver to academic research communities and violates the good faith exercised by libraries in their historic purchases.

Sincerely,

Austrian Academic Library Consortium

Big Ten Academic Alliance

Florida Academic Library Services Cooperative

Greater Western Library Alliance

Midwest Collaborative for Library Services

NorthEast Research Libraries consortium

OhioLINK

Orbis Cascade Alliance

Statewide California Electronic Library Consortium

The Virtual Library of Virginia

