

We would like to thank the organizers of this meeting for inviting us to attend and actively participate in the SCOAP3 open access discussions. This is, in a way, the culmination of our participation in this process since the very beginnings, when Jan Velterop, then with Springer, was a delegate in the committee that led to the formation of this sponsoring initiative in the first place. Let us also recall that as early as 2007 the *European Physical Journal C* officially announced that "In anticipation of successful negotiations with interested Open Access funding agencies, as of today and until such negotiations have taken place, all experimental papers submitted to and accepted by *The European Physical Journal C - Particles and Fields* will be published with full, online open access without any fees being incurred by the authors." Let us further recall that in 2010 Springer took over the publication of the *Journal of High Energy Physics*, based on the pledge to its owners, SISSA, that - besides guaranteeing the journal's present financial stability in times of economic turmoil - we would eventually and permanently turn the journal into a fully open access publication.

These pledges obviously call for our commitment *a priori*, just as they require our careful assessment with respect to the best approach to achieve these long-term goals. SpringerOpen, our fast growing portfolio of fully OA journals under the liberal Creative Commons Attribution license, underlines this commitment.

Today, we are formally asked to comment on the ultimate feasibility of the SCOAP3 approach, from the publisher's point of view.

Clearly, the SCOAP3 context is not the first one in which Springer has been led to assess risks, challenges and opportunities in the framework of open access and the related changes in business models. Eventually, the publisher has always addressed issues and concerns with the motto that while it is evident that change induces risks, so does continued inertia. As such, Springer was the first major publisher to endorse hybrid open access for all of its journals back in 2004, then acquired open access publisher BioMedCentral in 2008 and subsequently extended the BMC scheme by launching SpringerOpen last year. Further, Springer has been involved in all major initiatives studying the impact of open access STM publishing on a large scale, such as SOAP, the result of which suggests that scientists see the benefits of open access but mention in particular funding as a major obstacle.

Springer now has considerable experience with a whole range of open access models: hybrid, fully sponsored, and via individual article publication charges, more and more of which are partially or fully covered by a growing network of institutional OA memberships - which also include some of the SCOAP3 member institutions.

By and large, the publisher has to date concluded that OA, while still a niche, definitively has the potential to gain a larger fraction of market share in the future. At its core there would have to be, as the most sustainable model, a global OA membership network, operating across all disciplines, a scheme which would adequately mirror today's well distributed risk in the subscription world. Provided such a basis exists, this does not have to rule out selected fully sponsored models - either to stand out as valid solutions or as a transitional phase towards other models. Precisely because Springer has started building up such a sound basis in view of the future role of sustainable open access, it can assess and mitigate the risks entailed by more specific approaches, such as that advocated by SCOAP3.

In summary, our specific statement on SCOAP3 can thus be expressed very concisely: we understand what is at stake, what the associated risks are, and we will participate in the tendering process if launched. Obviously we expect the tendering process to be transparent for all participants, and to be organized according to all relevant legal conditions.

Our participation would include core HEP journals, that is *JHEP* - managed on behalf of and in close collaboration with SISSA - and *EPJ C*, but also a number of other non-core yet relevant journals we will propose to be included in the list of journals SCOAP3 allows to remain hybrid while entering the tendering process.

Last but not least, we also interpret the SCOAP3 initiative as a reiterated and firm commitment to "biodiversity" in the field: a commitment to the concept of journals in the first place, but also to a reasonable amount of healthy competition. Indeed, even (or particularly) for a relatively small and well networked community like high-energy physics, a range of well managed and independent journals is a vital ingredient to keeping the field "alive and well."