

## OPEN ACCESS TO NOBEL PRIZE AWARDED WORK – A PILOT PROJECT

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### Background

The main purpose of making the Nobel Prize awarded work available as open access is to make the important research behind the Nobel Prizes publicly available and also to highlight open access and show that it is not equal to research of low quality, as some have claimed. A pilot project was initiated in November 2008 and lasted until March 31, 2010 to identify potential problems regarding copyright issues and digitalization of the publications. Workflows and methods had to be created, i.e. an infrastructure which also could be used in a full scale project including all Nobel Laureates with 1-20 key publications each.

For the pilot project, nine Nobel Laureates were randomly selected and a total of 44 key publications of these were identified by experts within each research field. The list of key publications were then approved by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences and the Nobel Assembly at Karolinska Institutet, the Nobel Prize awarding institutions responsible for the nomination- and selection processes of the Nobel Laureates in Physics, Chemistry and Physiology or Medicine.

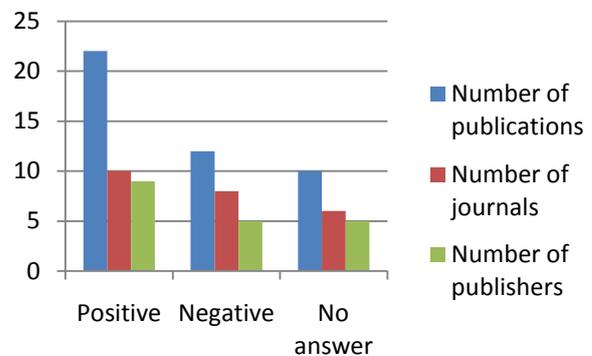
### Activities and results

A copyright agreement between Nobel Web AB and the copyright owner as well as a cover letter were prepared before the publishers were contacted. In the agreement, the BOAI (Budapest Open Access Initiative) definition of Open Access was used, i.e. the user should be allowed to: "read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of these articles".

Contacting mainly the departments of Permission & Copyright resulted in more or less "automatic" answers and all the major publishers like Elsevier, Springer, Wiley, Nature said no at first. Springer and Wiley would not allow for us to publish anything but the abstracts. The full text will not be open access though; the user will have to pay.

The importance of contacting the right person, who can make this kind of decisions, became obvious in the process. OASPA board members Caroline Sutton (Co-Action Publishing) and Mark Patterson (PLoS) helped us to identify these actors at Elsevier, Nature and Wiley. Wiley didn't answer but Elsevier and Nature changed their minds and were interested in participating in the project. Regarding the prospect of a full scale project, this was a major step since these publishers most likely will be the copyright owners of many Nobel Laureates' publications.

The 44 selected publications were divided among 19 publishers and 24 different journals. The result of the answer frequency is shown below.



Out of 19 publishers, 14 answered. 9 publishers were positive and wanted to participate and 5 were negative. Except in one case, where the publisher was not sure of being the single copyright holder, the publisher was the copyright owner in all cases where the copyright still applied. 7 publishers signed the copyright agreement; the remaining two couldn't do that. One of them was not able to sign agreements with a third part and didn't agree fully with the BOAI definition, since they didn't allow distribution of the material.

### Digitalization and technical solutions

In most cases, the publications are available in full text from the publishers' sites and we were able to download them there directly when the copyright agreement had been signed. Some of the publications selected for the pilot project are not available in a digital format but the managing archive scanned the publications and sent them to us in PDF-format. The technical infrastructure necessary for the project has been tested and is in place. It's a simple cataloguing tool with the possibility to upload full text documents. The records are available to Nobelprize.org via the Lund University FTP-server.

### Future

As a result of the pilot project, at least two of the main publishers are positive, which provides a hopeful future for a full scale project. Having them involved will reduce the time spent on publication acquisition. Several steps prepared in the pilot project can be used in the full scale project, i.e. copyright agreement, cover letter, database and the cataloguing tool. Firstly, the

permission to republish the key publications on Nobelprize.org has to be obtained and secondly, if that is not possible, the permission to link to the key publications made available on the publishers' site. Lund University Libraries, Head Office and Nobel Web AB intend to seek funding for a full scale project as soon as possible.



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