

Date: 20th March 2017

Letter to Librarians from President and Editor-In-Chief of Annual Reviews

Dear Colleagues,

Annual Reviews is implementing a one-off restructuring of prices for 2018 subscriptions for our academic customers. I am writing to you to give you early information about these changes and explain why they are being introduced.

We are an independent nonprofit publisher dedicated to synthesizing and integrating knowledge for the progress of science and the benefit of society. Our reviews:

- Capture the current understanding of a topic, including what is well supported and what is controversial;
- Set the work in historical context;
- Highlight the major questions that remain to be addressed and the likely course of research in upcoming years;
- Outline the practical applications and general significance of the research to society.

The articles we publish are among the most highly cited publications in the scholarly literature.

At Annual Reviews we have advanced our mission by setting subscription prices to maximize the availability of this treasury of articles. Our prices are dramatically below industry averages for scholarly journals, despite the fact that commissioning and producing reviews is editorially intensive and therefore more expensive than primary research publishing. We will continue to strive to provide value for money and widest availability of our products. The price restructure adds two further objectives: (1) increased clarity and fairness, through the introduction of customer tiers that reflect different needs of customers and (2) protection of the long-term financial viability of Annual Reviews.

The tiered pricing uses recognized classification systems, such as the Carnegie system and JISC banding, to categorize institutions in line with industry practices. The system is broadly reflective of demand for content. Our current site license pricing model has remained unchanged for two decades and has created some anomalies. For example, many large research-intensive institutions with high usage are paying the same, or even less, than smaller institutions that have lower usage.

Pricing of the new tiers, especially the top two categories, will result in large increases, in percentage terms, for many institutions. I appreciate that librarians are faced with complex

stewardship decisions and that this will be unwelcome news. As you consider our restructured pricing I ask that you assess your institution's total spend with Annual Reviews rather than the percentage increase. I believe that you will continue to view our publications as an outstanding investment.

An explanation for the price increases is warranted. For many years Annual Reviews made a small operating surplus, as befitting of a nonprofit organization run by and for the research community. In the last three years this has become an operating loss, by design: the organization maintained low prices rather than recover the costs of a substantial investment in our products. The Board of Directors and I believe that now is the time to reintroduce a balanced budget for the organization. To that end, we have examined our procedures and policies to identify savings, in addition to instituting the revised pricing.

Your Annual Reviews Sales Representative will be in contact with you during the first half of 2017 with 2018 pricing model information as it applies to your collection. They will work with you if your organization needs to adjust to increased prices over time.

I believe that the new prices are fair and, given the effort that goes into producing each Annual Reviews article, that our journals continue to provide remarkable value. I greatly appreciate the strong relationship that we have with the librarian community and we hope to receive your support as I seek to preserve and expand the impact of Annual Reviews.

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