

**ROBERT PLAGA**

náměstek ministryně školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy

Praha, 11. května 2016

Č. j.: MSMT-14909/2016-1

Příloha (5 listů)

Vážený pane náměstkú,

z pověření paní ministryně Mgr. Kateřiny Valachové, Ph.D. se na Vás obracím ve věci podnětu profesora Carlose A. Brebbii, ředitele Wessex Institute of Technology z Velké Británie. V dopise, kterým ji oslovil a který Vám s ohledem na kompetence Vašeho úřadu tímto postupuji, vyslovuje vážné obavy ze stále sílícího vlivu nejbohatších vydavatelů a producentů vědecké literatury a zejména elektronických informačních zdrojů. Pan profesor též mapuje jeho nejzávažnější dopady jak na ostatní středně velká a malá vydavatelství odborné literatury, tak zejména na vývojové trendy vědy samotné. Sílící pozice nejbohatších producentů umožňuje dle jeho zjištění postupnou kontrolu a následnou deformaci přirozených vývojových trendů ve vědě. Jednu z hlavních příčin spatřuje v preferovaném a všeobecně rozšířeném způsobu hodnocení výsledku vědy, založeném na hodnocení podle citační indexů zaváděných právě těmito velkými producenty. Současně pan profesor ve svém dopise nastínil konkrétní možnosti, jak by bylo možné negativní dopady současného trendu zmírnit a dává podnět ke změnám ve způsobech hodnocení vědy, které by vedly k nezávislosti na komerčních zájmech. K dopisu jsou připojeny i potřebné informace potvrzující kvalifikaci a oprávněnost pisatele se k tématu daným způsobem vyjadřovat.

Věřím, že zmíněný podnět zvážíte, neboť uvedená rizika se dle našeho názoru dotýkají i české akademické obce a též drobných vysokoškolských vydavatelství vědeckých časopisů a odborné literatury, která působí na většině českých univerzit. V této souvislosti si Vás dovoluji požádat o zpětnou vazbu, pokud byste se rozhodl tento podnět předat k projednání Radě pro výzkum, vývoj a inovace nebo popřípadě předložit meziresortní komisi pro hodnocení výsledků výzkumných organizací a ukončených programů.

Předem Vám děkuji za vstřícnost a spolupráci.

S pozdravem

Vážený pan
Mgr. Arnošt Marks, Ph.D.
náměstek místopředsedy vlády
pro vědu, výzkum a inovace
Úřad vlády ČR
Praha 1



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Blazková A.

WESSEX INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Ashurst Lodge, Ashurst, Southampton, SO40 7AA, UK

Tel: 44 (0) 238 029 3223 Fax: 44 (0) 238 029 2853 EMail: wit@wessex.ac.uk Web: www.wessex.ac.uk

Director: Professor C.A. Brebbia

Dr Katerina Valachová
Minister of Education, Youth and Sports
Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
Karmelitska 529/5
118 12 Praha 1
CZECH Republic

18th April 2016

Dear Dr Valachová

RE: THE METRIC TIDE

I am writing to you regarding the widespread use of "metrics" to evaluate research and academic performance in most institutions. It is a problem that worries me as an academic, a researcher and director of a scientific publishing company. I am particularly concerned with the acceptance of listings and rankings prepared by commercial publishers such as Elsevier rather than independent institutions.

I appreciate that you may not be directly involved in this matter and would be grateful if you could refer this letter to the appropriate member of your staff.

Please find attached a brief CV describing my career, so that you may appreciate that I have sufficient experience regarding the evaluation of scientific papers.

As you are aware, Elsevier is the largest publisher of scientific and technical literature in the world. The danger we all face is that they are placing themselves in a position that will allow them to control the future of research.

Their policy of offering universities and research institutions bundles of large numbers of journals at special prices has put them in a position of dominance. This practice is detrimental to the small and medium sized publishers, who are traditionally the originators of new ideas in publishing.

This dominance has been further extended by the Elsevier SCOPUS indexing and ranking system. The major problem with this system, is that it is controlled by Elsevier, of whom other publishers need to ask for approval to be listed.

For journals, SCOPUS requires a minimum period of two years for a publication to be eligible for inclusion in the database and, in many cases, it can take significantly longer before a decision is made. These practices effectively prevent new journals and series from being established as academics do not want to engage with publications which are not listed in SCOPUS, given that the SCOPUS rankings are being used to assess their personal performance.

What makes the situation with SCOPUS even more dangerous is that many institutions have adopted this indexing and ranking system as the norm, ie if the publication is not in SCOPUS, it does not count for research credits, which has serious implications in terms of support, including financially. It appears to me that the academic community has found itself in a disadvantaged position through a series of incremental steps, each of which seemed innocuous at the time.

The inherent conflict represented by the leading scientific and technical publishing company in the world evaluating its own and its competitors' publications is obvious. Elsevier has positioned themselves in such a way that they can control the flow of scientific information, indirectly becoming the arbiter of research.

The danger is that the present system perpetuates the current publishing model and favours the continuation of obsolete lines of research. It is encouraging the National Research Councils and other authorities to finance research evaluated by a system controlled by a major publisher, stifling the development of new ideas


I would suggest that the best way to remedy this situation, given the difficulty of starting a new indexing and ranking system is to rely on databases which are independent of commercial interests.

Perhaps we should focus on open systems such as Google Scholar where all published material can, in principle, be found, in which the ranking is simply the result of an algorithm based on the number of citations. Not only is Google Scholar unbiased but it is also free to the user. Its statistics and indexing are very similar to SCOPUS. Similar arguments apply to MICROSOFT Academic although this system is not as widespread as Google Scholar.

I trust that you will find these comments useful and hope that you might consider using your influence to lessen the reliance on this unsatisfactory state of affairs. If this situation is to be remedied, then surely only open-databases should be used to identify metrics and rankings.

I am at your disposal for any further information that you may require.

With my best wishes



Carlos A. Brebbia
Director
(www.wessex.ac.uk)

SHORT CURRICULUM VITAE



Professor Carlos Brebbia is the Director of the Wessex Institute of Technology. He was born in Argentina where he completed his first engineering degree. He spent two stimulating years after graduation as part of a small team setting up an Institute of Applied Mechanics. Following this, he registered at Southampton University in England for a higher degree, arranging to carry out his research partly at MIT.

After obtaining his PhD at Southampton, he worked at a major UK Research Laboratory before taking an academic appointment at Southampton University where he rose from Lecturer to Senior Lecturer and Reader. During his time at Southampton he took leave to become Visiting Professor at many other universities, including Princeton.

After having been appointed full Professor of Engineering at the University of California, Irvine, he decided to return to the UK to set up the Wessex Institute in the New Forest.

Professor Brebbia is renowned throughout the world as the originator of the Boundary Element Method, a technique that continues to generate important research work at the Wessex Institute. He has written numerous scientific papers and is author or co-author of 14 technical books and editor or co-editor of more than 400 volumes. He has also written two other non technical books, ie "The New Forest. A Personal View" and "Patagonia, the forgotten land".

He is Editor of several journals including the International Journal of Safety and Security Engineering and the International Journal of Computational Methods and Experimental Measurements. His interest in ecological and environmental topics has led him to become co-editor of the International Journal of Design and Nature with Ecodynamics and International Journal of Sustainable Development and Planning.

He is also the founder and Chairman of the Computational Mechanics International Group, which comprises the software development and industrial consulting company which produced the BEASY (Boundary Element Analysis System) code. The other company in the group is WIT Press, which publishes scientific and engineering books and journals. Computational Mechanics International has its own office in Boston Massachusetts as well as numerous distributors and agents across the world.

Carlos' interests span from the analysis of advanced structures such as shells to the modelling of environmental problems, dealing with a wide variety of methodologies. His most recent efforts have been concentrated on the development of Wessex Institute as an international centre of excellence.

CURRENT POSITIONS

- Director of Wessex Institute of Technology, New Forest
- Chairman of Computational Mechanics International Group of companies
- Professor of Computational Engineering, University of Portsmouth

SPECIAL HONOURS

Medaille de la Ville de Paris, Echelon Argent.

Medaille of the Massonnet Foundation, University of Liege, Belgium.

George Green Medal, University of Mississippi, USA.

Visiting Professor for Special Lecture Series at the Free University of Brussels, Belgium.

Visiting Professor for Special Lecture Series at the University of Florence, Italy.

Founding President - ASCE-UK Group.

Honorary PhD at University of Bucharest.

Permanent Member of the Prize Committee for the Prigogine Medal.

FELLOWSHIPS

Fellow of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers (FIMECHE)

Fellow of the American Society of Civil Engineers (FASCE)

Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts

MEMBERSHIPS

European Academy of Sciences and Arts

FREEDOMS

Freedom of the City of London

Liveryman to the Worshipful Company of Scientific Instrument Makers

JOURNALS & SERIES PUBLICATIONS

Professor Brebbia is member of the Board of numerous book series and has launched 14 international journals, some of which have been assigned to Elsevier, including the Journal on "Engineering Analysis with Boundary Elements", of which he is Founding Editor.

At present he is an active main Editor, Co-Editor or scientific Coordinator of the following journals:

- Coordinator of the "International Journal of Sustainable Development and Planning".
- Joint Editor of the "International Journal of Design & Nature and Ecodynamics".
- Main Editor of the Transactions of Wessex Institute.
- Co-Editor of the "International Journal of Safety and Security Engineering".

- Co-Editor of the “International Journal of Computational Methods and Experimental Engineering”.
- Co-Editor of the “International Journal of Energy Production and Management”.

TRAINING VIDEOS

- “Finite Elements”. This video was produced by Rutherford Computing Laboratory with computer animations provided by Professor Brebbia.
- “Boundary Elements”. This video was produced by Professor Brebbia demonstrating the technique he developed.

PAPERS

Numerous papers published in scientific journals and conference proceedings.

BOOKS WRITTEN

TECHNICAL BOOKS

14 technical books produced by different Publishers – among them McGraw Hill, Wiley, Springer Verlag, Computational Mechanics Publications, WIT Press – several of them translated into major languages.

NON-TECHNICAL BOOKS

- “The New Forest. A Personal View”. WIT Press, Southampton and Boston, Seventh Edition 2014.
- “Patagonia. The Forgotten Land. From Magellan to Peron”. WIT Press, Southampton and Boston, Second Edition, 2008.

BOOKS EDITED

Professor Brebbia has edited numerous books on a variety of topics. They include series for Springer Verlag, Elsevier, Pentech Press, WIT Press and other publishing houses. His output can be estimated at no less than 500 such volumes.

MAIN RESEARCH INTERESTS

Computational Methods in Engineering, including Boundary Elements; Environmental Simulation; Ecological Modelling; Sustainable Development, Eco-Architecture and Heritage Buildings.

CLUBS

Royal Southampton Yacht Club

The Carlton Club, London