A letter to the mathematics community.

We are writing to let you know of a series of changes that we are making to how the Elsevier mathematics program will be run. Some of these are new initiatives, and some reflect changes that we have been working on over a longer period.

We have been listening actively to the community and we see a number of issues that we need to address, not least being open to what the community has to say:

Pricing
Mathematics journals published by Elsevier tend to be larger than those of other publishers. On a price-per-article, or price-per-page level, our prices are typically, but not always, lower than those of other mathematics publishers.

Our target is for all of our core mathematics titles to be priced at or below US$11 per article (equivalent to 50-60 cents per normal typeset page) by next year, placing us below most University presses, some societies and other commercial competitors. Where journals are more expensive than this, we will lower our prices, as we already have in recent years for journals such as the Journal of Algebra and Topology and its Applications, among others.

We realize that this is just part of the concerns about pricing -and we will seek to address concerns about the nature and composition of the large discounted agreements, through which most Universities now access journals - but addressing the base line pricing is a necessary first step.

Access and Open Archives
To make clear that we are committed to wider access, we have made the archives of 14 core mathematics journals open, from four years after publication, back to 1995, the year when we started publishing digitally. All current and future papers featured in these journals will become free to read, for subscribers and non subscribers alike. This initiative is part of a number of open access publishing options we have available which give researchers the freedom to choose to open their research beyond the academic community. For more information about Elsevier's open access options, visit www.elsevier.com/openaccess.

We are a founding partner in Research4Life, a public private partnership providing journal content to researchers in the developing world. More than 1600 Elsevier journals, including our mathematics titles, are available in more than 100 developing countries.

Our position on RWA
Elsevier has announced today that we are withdrawing our support for the Research Works Act. In recent weeks, our support for the Act has caused some in the community to question our commitment to serving the global research community and ensuring the best possible access to research publications and data. We have heard concerns from some Elsevier journal authors, editors and reviewers that the Act would be seen as a step backwards for expanding options for free and low cost public access to scholarly literature. That was certainly not the intention of the legislation or our intention in supporting it. Please read our full statement online.

Moving forward
Now that we have explained the steps we have taken so far we want to stress this is just the beginning.

We will create a scientific council for mathematics, to ensure that we are working in tandem with the mathematics community to address feedback and to give greater control and transparency to the community and we will engage actively with leaders in a number of countries to ensure that our mathematics program is meeting the needs of the community, globally and locally.

There are many other issues where we wish to engage with the community, including our efforts to improve digital rendering of mathematics, the use and misuse of citation measures for the discipline and our efforts to ensure high standard across all of our journals.

We welcome your views on these and all our efforts at: mathematics@elsevier.com

Sincerely,

David Clark & Laura Hassink
Senior Vice Presidents, Physical Sciences