

Panel meeting (10) 4.11.2025

Place: Teams

Present: Essi Sarlin (chair), Christian Breyer, Jouni Havukainen, Anne Heponiemi, Krista Koljonen, Marjatta Louhi-Kultanen, Tero Luukkonen, Pasi Peura (from 13.29), Riikka Puurunen, Zaiqing Que

Absent: Jonne Niemi, Minnamari Vippola, Riikka Räisänen, Maria Sinche Gonzalez

Secretariat: Leena Wahlfors and Anna-Kaarina Linna

1. Opening

The Chair opened the meeting at 13.03.

2. Announcements

There were no announcements.

3. Announcement of engagements

It was noted that the panelists must always disclose any potential conflicts of interest, especially when the panel is discussing a publication channel with which the panelist has had – or continues to have – close ties in the form of publication, editorial work, financial interest, or other influence. These ties include, at a minimum, the panelist having, within the last five years:

- published in the channel in question more than once,
- served as an editor or member of the editorial board of the channel,
- owned shares in the publishing company or a comparable organization, or
- held another position that could cause financial or interest conflicts.

Disclosure does not automatically prevent participation in decision-making, but the panel must take the ties into account in the evaluation process.

([Handbook 2025 - 2028.](#))

Please find the list at the end of the document (Appendix 1).

It was noted that it is logical that panelists publish in the same channels that they also evaluate, and that it is not a problem as such. The purpose of the statement is to increase transparency. The Secretariat will bring the item to the steering group meeting in order to get a clarification of which actions does it require from the panels in practice.

4. The Development of JUFO Classification

The development of the Publication Forum classification is part of the Forum's long-term operational and development plan. As part of this work, the

Publication Forum Steering Group decided at its meeting on 8 September 2025 that:

A. Structure of the Classification

- In the Publication Forum (JUFO) classification, the designation “Level 0” will be discontinued. Instead, the category “other identified publication channels” will be used for scholarly publication channels that are not classified at Levels 1, 2, or 3, and that are not designated as professional or popular publication channels.

The new designation is considered to be more neutral way to communicate in different contexts about identified publication channels that have not been approved to level 1. Level 0 channels are generally associated with the perception that they are of poor quality in one way or another, or have characteristics of predatory journals. In fact, the Level 0 is very heterogeneous. It includes channels that are properly peer-reviewed but local, new, or located at the interface between scientific and general audience publishing. Originally, JUFO classification did not have level 0 but this name was introduced by the Ministry in the Universities Act in 2014.

- From the beginning of 2026, evaluation panels will no longer assign publication channels to Level 3. Information on Level 3 will be removed from the JUFO portal at the beginning of 2027, when the updated classification is published.

There has long been a debate for and against maintaining level 3. The following reasons were given by the Steering Group for abandoning the Level 3 and merging it with the Level 2:

- Originally, JUFO classification had only levels 1 and 2. Level 3 was introduced in 2011 because level quotas were based on number journal titles, wherefore in some fields it was felt that level 2 was too broad and further differentiation was needed in form of level 3. Since 2014, level quotas have been calculated based on publication volume, which made levels 2 and 3 more exclusive and difficult to balance with journal quality and size across various subfields. This means that in many panels level 3 involves unhappy compromises.
- From the perspective of panelists and stakeholders, the distinction between levels 2 and 3 is the least important and credible according to surveys of panelists and stakeholders.
- Level 3 treats main field more unequally than combined level 2 and 3.
- Level 3 plays an important role when JUFO classification is misused for assessing individuals, which is not appropriate. In that sense it has been well-founded to reduce the hierarchy of the structure to reduce anxiety related to producing level 3 publications.

- Abandoning level 3 will reduce the work of the panels in the four-yearly update assessment, so more effort can be put on assessment on levels 1 and 2.

The removal of level 3 will not effect the current universities' funding model for 2025-2028. Funding for the year 2028 will be calculated in June 2027 based on the combined results of the previous three publication years (2024–2026).

Implementation:

- Update the website and the Panel Member's Handbook by the end of 2025.
- Apply the necessary changes to the panel-specific Excel templates used in the evaluation update at the beginning of 2026.
- Apply the necessary changes to the publication channel database and JUFO portal by the end of 2026.

B. Classification Criteria

Changes to level 1 criteria:

- Criterion 2 (Transparency):
Current wording: "The publication channel's website provides a transparent description of the editorial board and the peer review process. (A book publisher may meet Level 1 criteria even if the editorial board and peer review process are not described on the website.)" -> Revised wording: "The publication channel's website provides a transparent description of the editorial board and the peer review process. This applies also to book publishers."
- Criterion 7 (Relevance) will be divided into two separate criteria:
 - 7. Relevance: The publication channel is central from the perspective of its discipline's international or Finnish research community.
 - 8. Thoroughness: The primary objective of the publication channel is to promote and ensure scholarly quality, and its editorial and peer review practices are careful and reliable. A [checklist](#) of practices identified as problematic may be used as a support tool in the assessment.

Changes to Level 2 criteria:

- A new (fourth) criterion will be added: The publication channel enables immediate open access (either via the service itself or through self-archiving).
- Finnish- and Swedish-language publication channels, the criterion "Research questions are strongly contextualised within Finnish society or Finnish- and Swedish-language culture" will be removed.

Implementation: Update the website and the Panel Member's Handbook by the end of 2025.

C. Quotas and Calculation of Publication Volume

Quotas for publication series and book publishers will no longer take Level 3 into account. Consequently:

- The combined publication volume of series classified at Level 2 may amount to no more than 25% of the total publication volume of all series within the panel (Levels 1–2 combined).
- The list of book publishers is shared across all panels. Selections for Level 2 are made jointly by the panel chairs. Approximately 100 publishers across all fields may be classified at Level 2. Quotas are thus determined by the number of publishers, not by their publication output.

The new level 2, panels may not include so many series that their combined number of publications (publication volume) would exceed 25 % of the total (number) volume of publications of all level 1 and 2 series in the panel's list. This level quota restriction ensures that level 2 represents only the top of the field, and that not too large a share of publications can be placed on level 2 compared to other panels.

Implementation: Update the website and the Panel Member's Handbook by the end of 2025.

D. Aspects to be Considered in Evaluation

In the Panel Member's Handbook, Chapter 3.6 *Aspects to be considered in evaluation* will be updated as follows when there are equally influential and respected publication channels in the same field under consideration for level 2:

3.6.6 Publication channels of scholarly societies (formerly "Closed society publication channels"):

- The title will be changed to "*Publication channels of scholarly societies*".
- If there are equally influential and respected publication channels under consideration for Level 2, preference will be given to those published by scholarly societies. Publication channels that require society membership in order to publish (closed society journals) cannot be accepted at Level 2.

Implementation: Update the website and the Panel Member's Handbook by the end of 2025.

Discussion:

The panel found the reasons for abandoning the level category to be justified. However, the Panel noted that abandoning level 3 will result in the loss of information on the highest-level publications and the opportunity to encourage publication at the highest level. It was also pointed out that the difference

between level 2 and 3 has sometimes been quite arbitrary so the evaluation work for the panel will be easier without the level 3.

It was pointed out that the relevance for the Finnish research community is often very difficult to define but the panel may assess the criterion more inclusive than exclusive. It was discussed that affiliations are important when assessing the editorial board and its internationality. It was pointed out that in this panel the internationality is one of the most important criteria. Related to this, it was asked whether it would be possible for the Secretariat, to produce statistics on the distribution of authors' affiliations in each journal because it could help in assessing level 1 criteria. The Chair reminded panellists to make a proposal if they find out that some of the previous level 1 or 2 channels don't fulfil new criteria anymore.

Particular attention was also paid to the new (fourth) criterion in level 2: "The publication channel allows immediate open access." It was clarified that self-archiving should be allowed or that the article could be made openly available – if necessary, by paying an article processing charge (APC). The panel highlighted that immediate open access often refers super expensive open access payments and it is difficult to define when an APC is too high and not acceptable.

It was noted that this criterion should, however, be brought up for discussion at the steering group meeting and, if necessary, further clarified. This applies in particular to the meaning of immediacy. The panel's view was that the open access criterion should not be applied to books and book publishers, and for them open access could be more indicative than mandatory criterion. It could also be discussed, whether this criterion could be included to section "Aspects to be Considered in Evaluation" rather than a mandatory requirement.

Related to quotas, it was discussed about panel specific excels, where, for example, indicators such as SNIP and SciteScore have previously been found to be useful. It was also asked if the review journal could be identified beforehand by the secretariat.

5. Preparation for the Spring 2026 evaluation round

In the Spring evaluation round, the panels can classify leading publication channels in different fields into level 2. This level is reassessed every four years.

The scientific community is invited to submit proposals for classification to support the evaluation work of the panels. Members of the scientific community can influence the evaluation of publication channels by submitting proposals for changes to the current levels of publication channels. Proposals should be submitted via the JUFO portal.

The JUFO panelists evaluate the channels within their area of expertise and submit their key proposals for changes (downgrades and upgrades) to level 2 in the JUFO portal by the end of February.

Proposals made by the end of February 2026 will be taken into account in the first phase of the evaluation. In April 13 the panel will prepare a new preliminary level classification proposal, which will be finalized during the fall.

The required data materials for the panels are produced before the panel evaluations, including panel-specific Excel sheets that contain the channels to be evaluated, publication volume data, and statistics by scientific discipline classification.

More information at latest after Panel Chair Meeting of 27.11.2025

The matter was recorded for information.

6. Evaluation of grey area publication channels in the Publication Forum

Within the Publication Forum, there has long been discussion about so-called grey zone journals, which are not outright predatory journals, but which seek to maximise publication output with the least possible investment in editorial work and quality assurance. This business model is designed to maximise financial returns from article processing charges (APCs).

Current practice in identifying gray area and predatory journals:

- For new journals, the secretariat will add information to the journal's details if it appears to be a predatory publication.
- For journals that have already been indexed and evaluated, the secretariat uses the lists of removed journals from DOAJ, Scopus, and WOS as a basis for adding journals to the supplementary evaluation (from level 1 to level 0).
- Panelists can also make level change proposals through the portal: a proposal for a new level and the reasons for it. The secretariat will include these proposals in the supplementary evaluations in the spring.
- If the journal appears to be a predatory or gray area journal, the panelist can add a comment to the publication channel information in the Jufo portal, information to be stored in the database.
- In addition, messages on this matter can be sent to saalistajat@tsv.fi, but their processing is not (at least yet systematic)

The Secretariat has continued work on clarifying assessment of grey zone channels by developing the [Checklist](#) to support the documentation and coherent consideration of problematic practices.

In line with a decision of the Steering Group, **panels are asked to give their views on whether there is a need to establish an Ethics Expert Group of the Publication Forum to promote coherent identification and treatment of grey zone and predatory journals across panels.** The group would be composed primarily of panel members, but external domestic and international experts could also be invited if needed.

The task of the Expert Group, in collaboration with the JUFO Secretariat and the panels, would be to:

- Develop the checklist of problematic publishing practices and the documentation of such practices,
- Clarify how problematic practices should be considered in the assessment of channels and in the justifications for decisions, and
- Compile and provide information on problematic practices in publication channels for the panels, the Steering Group, and the research community.

The Expert Group would not evaluate individual publication channels assigned to the panels, but the panels could, if necessary, consult the group on individual cases. The responsibility for classification decisions would remain with the panels.

The JUFO Secretariat would coordinate and facilitate the group's work by providing background information and by relaying observations and experiences received from the research community, for example through the address saalistajat@julkaisufoorumi.fi.

Discussion:

The panel saw that there is no urgent need to establish an ethical expert group, even if it could be good as a platform for sharing ideas. Instead, there could be a project established to get the Check list more useful. It was noted that the Check list needs improvements, special attention was paid to the points 10 and 11.

7. The use of AI in scientific publishing

In its meeting on May 5, 2025, the Publication Forum Steering Group decided that the secretariat will prepare a study on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in the scientific publication process. Based on this decision, a [survey](#) has been sent to panelists to assess the utilization of AI in scientific publishing, including related practices, experiences, and perspectives.

Panel members had the opportunity to pose questions and share comments on the topic. The study, which will be based on survey responses, panel discussions, and a literature review, is scheduled for completion in early 2026.

All data used in the study, including the content of panel discussions, will be anonymized.

8. Other

The final supplementary assessment for 2025 is ongoing. The deadline for the panel members is 20.11.2025, and the panel chair should confirm the evaluations by 30.11.2025.

9. Closing

The Chair closed the meeting at 15.21.

Appendix 1.

List of engagements

The panel members are asked to disclose their engagements with publication channels in which they have been an editor or a member of the editorial board in the past five years.

Panellist	Publication channel
Zaiqing Que	Journal of Materials Science & Technology; Material Research Letter; Corrosion Communication
Riikka Puurunen	Guest editor of special issue, Topics in Catalysis Joint publications within 5 years in the in the channels more than once: Catalysis Science and Technology, Catalysis Today, Chemical Engineering Science, Chemistry of Materials, Journal of Vacuum Science and Technology A, Topics in Catalysis, Physical Chemistry Chemical Physics
Maria Sinche Gonzalez	Minerals and Mineral Materials
Marjatta Louhi-Kultanen	Guest editor of special issue 2023, Chemical Engineering & Technology; Joint publications within 5 years in the in the channels more than once: Crystal Growth and Design, European Journal of Pharmaceutical Sciences , Powder Technology, .Separation and Purification Technology, Chemical Engineering & Technology, Hydrometallurgy, JOM
Tero Luukkonen	Hybrid Advances (guest editor), Cleaner Engineering and Technology (associate editor), PLOS Sustainability and Transformation (editorial board member), published more than once during the last 5 years: Materials & Design, Journal of

	Cleaner Production, Journal of Environmental Chemical Engineering, Ceramics International, Journal of American Ceramic Society, International Journal of Environmental Science and Technology, Water Research, Construction and Building Materials, Environmental Science and Pollution Research, RSC Advances, Waste Management.
Jonne Niemi	Guest editor of special issue, Energy & Fuels
Riikka Räisänen	Colouration Technology, guest editor, editorial team member
Essi Sarlin	Joint publications within 5 years in the in the channels more than once: ACS Omega, BioResources, Composites Part A, Composites Part C, Environmental Pollution, International Journal of Adhesion and Adhesives, IOP Conference Series: Materials Science and Engineering, Journal of Applied Polymer Science, Materials Advances, Microorganisms, Polymers, Science of the Total Environment
Anne Heponiemi	Joint publications within 5 years in the in the channels more than once: Applied Clay Science, Bioresource Technology, Chemical Engineering Journal, Environmental Technology, Topics in Catalysis
Jouni Havukainen	Joint publications within 5 years in the channels more than once: Journal of Cleaner Production, Waste Management, Applied Energy, Energy

Meeting minutes 20.1.2025

Place: House of Science and Letters, room 207 and Teams

Present: Essi Sarlin (chair), Christian Breyer (until 14.05), Jouni Havukainen, Anne Heponiemi, Krista Koljonen, Marjatta Louhi-Kultanen, Tero Luukkonen, Jonne Niemi, Pasi Peura, Riikka Puurunen, Zaiqing Que, Riikka Räisänen, Minnamari Vippola, Maria Sinche Gonzalez (from 13.20)

Absent:

Secretariat: Elina Pylvänäinen and Anna-Kaarina Linna

1. Opening

The panel chair opened the meeting at 13.00.

2. Introductions

3. Panel

a. Panel composition

The fields covered in this panel are listed in appendix 1. The panel went through the list and discussed if there is a need to supplement the panel composition.

Discussion:

- There is no need to complement the panel composition at this point. There are some subfields where panel members' communities can be consulted if needed.

b. Selecting the vice-chair of the panel

A vice-chair was selected for the panel. The vice-chair stands in for the panel chair when they are absent. The vice-chair also has a right to confirm evaluations in the JUFO portal on behalf of the panel chair.

Decision:

- Christian Breyer was selected as a vice-chair of the panel.

4. Orientation to the panel work

The secretariat introduced the Publication Forum, its aims and purpose as well as the evaluation criteria.

5. Level 1 and 0 evaluations in the JUFO portal

The deadline for the first set of level 1 and 0 evaluations is 26.3.2025 for the panel members and the panel chair needs to confirm evaluations at latest on 1.4.2025. More information will be sent by email.

6. Conflicts of interest

The panel members were asked to disclose their engagements with publication channels in which they have been an editor or a member of the editorial board in the past five years.

7. Other

No other business.

8. Closing

The panel chair closed the meeting at 15.47.

Appendix 1

Panel's MinEdu fields

215 Chemical engineering, chemical process engineering

- Chemical engineering
- Chemical process engineering
- Biomass refinery technology

- Instrument technology
- Process control and control engineering

216 Materials engineering

- Materials engineering
- Ceramics
- Coating and films
- Composites
- Paper and wood
- Textiles, synthetic dyes, colours, fibres
- Functional materials, semiconductors
- Metals
- Biomaterials

218 Environmental engineering

- Environmental and geological engineering
- Geotechnics
- Petroleum engineering
- Energy and fuels
- Industrial processes
- Electric power engineering
- Mining and mineral processing