

# Panel meeting (22)

**Place: 16.4.2026 House of Sciences and Letters, Kirkkokatu 6 (Helsinki) and 18.5.2026 in Teams**

**Present 16.4.2026:** Sofia Pantouvaki (chair), Pia Fricker, Ilona Hongisto, Hanna Johansson, Tuulikki Laes, Fernando Nieto Fernández, Riikka Rossi, Max Ryyänen, Pauliina Syrjälä, Jarkko Toikkanen

**Absent 16.4.2026:** Jopi Nyman, Hanna Korsberg, Jyri Vaahtera, Antonio Sciacovelli, Tero Nauha

**Present 18.5.2026:** Sofia Pantouvaki (chair), Pia Fricker, Jopi Nyman, Hanna Korsberg, Fernando Nieto Fernández

**Secretariat:** Janne Pölönen (16.4.2026), Leena Wahlfors (16.4. and 18.5.2026)

## 1. Opening

The Chair opened the meeting 16.4.2026 at 10.00, and 18.5.2026 at 13.30.

## 2. Announcements (16.4.2026)

### **Notes and feedback on the panel's complementary evaluation process:**

The Chair reminded the panelists that participation in the most recent evaluation round (Levels 1 and "other") has been somewhat limited. The number of reviews has been relatively low and, in some cases, less detailed than expected. A more extensive and consistent level of participation across the panel would be highly appreciated.

The secretariat noted that, in complementary evaluations, the panelists' justifications also support the secretariat in its work. It is also very important that both the panelists and the panel chairs complete their evaluation work within the given timelines.

## 3. The Evaluation of level 2 Publication Channels (16.4.2026)

The Panel identified the needs for revising the level classifications and prepared a preliminary proposal for the new Level 2 classification.

It was decided that the channel ID 68779 will be handled in the fall's Panel Meeting. The panel will finalize the update evaluation at its autumn meeting.

## 4. Complementary evaluation: the level "other identified publication channels" (16.4.2026 and 18.5.2026)

In complementary evaluation, upgrades in level classification take effect immediately once the panel chair has confirmed the evaluation (“other identified evaluation channels” -> 1).

By contrast, downgrades from level 1 (or level 2) to the category “other identified evaluation channels” are decided at the spring panel meetings on the basis of the evaluations made in the JUFO portal by the chair and the panel members. Channels whose level the panel has decided to lower at its meeting are confirmed after the meeting by the secretariat. This is because the lowered level will only take effect at the beginning of the following year (2027).

The panel decides on proposals to lower the levels of publication channels. List of channels under consideration:

Jufo_ID	Level	Name	Grounds	Decision
84080	1	Strategic design research journal	The publication channel has been removed from DOAJ in 2025, reason: journal not adhering to best practice.	other identified publication channels
89037	1	Agalma	Lehti on merkittävä mannermaisessa filosofiassa, mutta vertaisarviointikäytäntöä sillä ei ole.	other identified publication channels
91613	1	Journal of ecohumanism	The publication channel has been removed from Scopus in 2025, reason: discontinuation.	other identified publication channels
87011	1	The European journal of philosophy in arts education	The publication channel has been removed from DOAJ in 2025, reason: journal not adhering to best practice.	other identified publication channels
84464	1	Approaches	The publication channel has been removed from DOAJ in 2025, reason: journal not adhering to best practice),	other identified publication channels
65275	1	Ponte	The publication channel has been removed from Scopus in 2017, reason: discontinuation, however, the journal states on its website that it is indexed in the Scopus database	other identified publication channels

Key indicators that a journal is not adhering to DOAJ best practices include:

- Weak Peer Review: Signs of poor or non-existent peer review processes.
- Transparency Issues: Opaque or unclear information regarding the editorial board, article processing charges (APCs), or copyright/licensing terms.
- Editorial Misconduct: Suspected misconduct, such as plagiarism, citation manipulation, or data falsification.
- Operational Failure: Lack of a clear digital archiving policy or failure to comply with DOAJ guidelines during reapplications.

- Misleading Information: Claiming to be in DOAJ or using its logo when they are not, or for journals that have been removed.

Scopus re-evaluation criteria are identical to the Scopus content selection criteria for newly suggested titles. Titles can be flagged for re-evaluation in different ways: concerns about the journal's publication standards or the journal shows outlier or unexpected publishing performance. Journal change policy include, but are not limited to, changes to the title name, ISSN, ownership, or editorial oversight of the journal.

Scopus content selection criteria

- Journal policy: Convincing editorial policy, type of peer review, broad geographical distribution of editors, broad geographical distribution of authors
- Content: Academic contribution to the field; clarity of abstracts, quality of and conformity to the stated aims and scope of the journal, readability of articles
- Journal standing: citedness of journal articles in Scopus, editor standing
- Publishing regularity: no delays or interruptions in the publication schedule
- Online availability: full journal content available online, english language journal home page available, quality of journal home page

### **Discussion:**

The panel discussed in both meetings (16.4.2026 and 18.5.2026) the proposed level changes and the grounds for them.

**Decision:** The panel decided (18.5.2026) to lower the classification of the channels as listed above. In the cases regarding downgrades based on DOAJ indicators, the Panel recommended a downgrade to all related channels as a fair decision. The Panel will reconsider the channels if the scientific community provides indications warranting a reassessment.

## **5. Reform of the JUFO evaluation process (18.5.2026)**

On 13 February 2026, the secretariat proposed to the JUFO Steering Group for consideration that, beginning in 2027, some of the panels' complementary evaluation tasks should be transferred to the secretariat, following the Norwegian JUFO model. The criteria for level 1 are very clear, which would make it possible for the secretariat as well to carry out high-quality evaluation work.

The panels would continue to be responsible for:

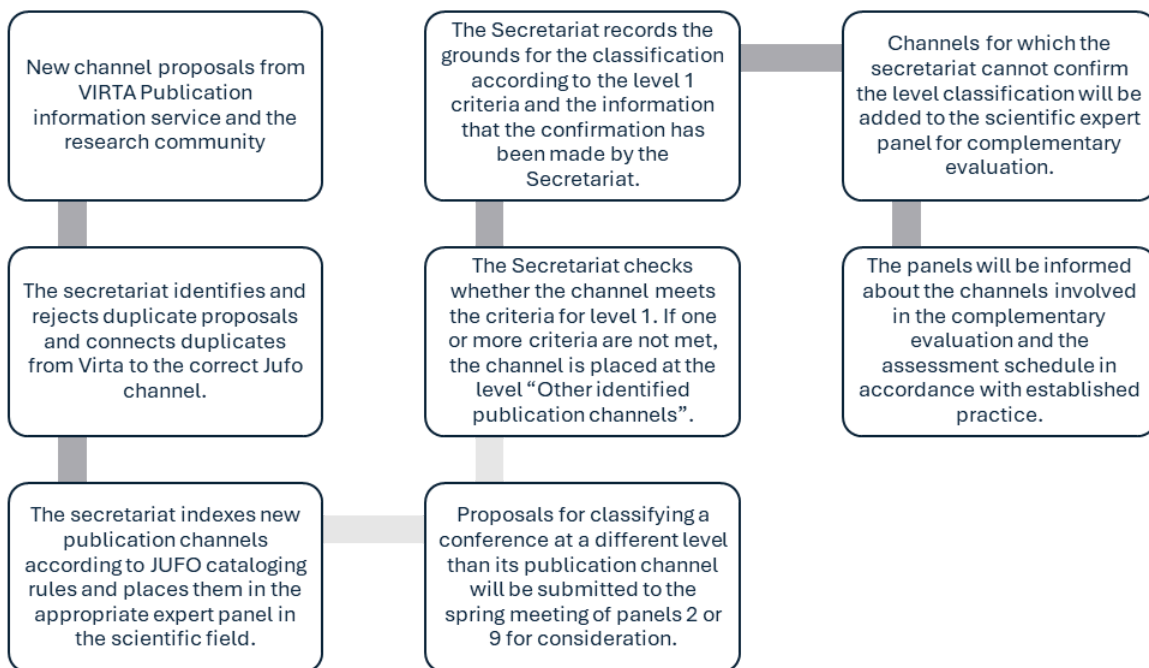
- channels that are already indexed and for which the scholarly community proposes a change in level, either upward or downward; and
- cases which, in the secretariat's view, require in-depth knowledge of a specific field of science and its publishing practices (including update evaluations)

every four years).

Each year, Publication Forum carries out four supplementary evaluations in which the panels assess channels to be added to level 1 or lowered from level 1 to the category “other identified publication channels.” In 2025, the panels evaluated a total of 658 publication channels that had not previously been classified in JUFO. Of these, 312 journals/series and four book publishers were accepted at level 1. In addition, the panels considered 145 justified proposals for level changes submitted by the scholarly community through the JUFO portal (proposals to raise channels from the category “other identified publication channels” to level 1, or proposals to lower channels from level 1 to the category “other identified publication channels”).

Transferring routine and technical tasks to the secretariat would save a significant amount of panel working time. The panels could then focus on identifying the highest-level publication channels and devote more attention to other tasks requiring particular scholarly expertise. As a result of the change, from 2027 onward panel meetings would be held only once a year instead of twice. This would reduce the workload of panel members. Correspondingly, secretariat time would be freed up from one annual round of panel meetings. This time could instead be used for evaluating level 1 channels and channels in the category “other identified publication channels,” for developing the new JUFO evaluation portal that is to be introduced, for identifying so-called grey-zone journals, and for the further development of the JUFO classification. In addition, it would make it possible to implement separate development projects, including measures to develop the assessment of the societal impact of publishing activities and to support the publishing activities of learned societies.

Proposed new evaluation process:



The secretariat requests the panel's view on the following proposal:

From the beginning of 2027, the secretariat will assume responsibility for checking whether new publication channels received from the VIRTAPublication information service and proposed by the scholarly community for inclusion meet the criteria for level 1, and will confirm them either at level 1 or place them in the group "other identified publication channels." The panels will continue to be responsible for channels that are already indexed and for which the scholarly community proposes a change in level, either upward or downward, as well as cases which, in the secretariat's view, require in-depth knowledge of a specific field of science and its publishing practices (including update evaluations every four years).

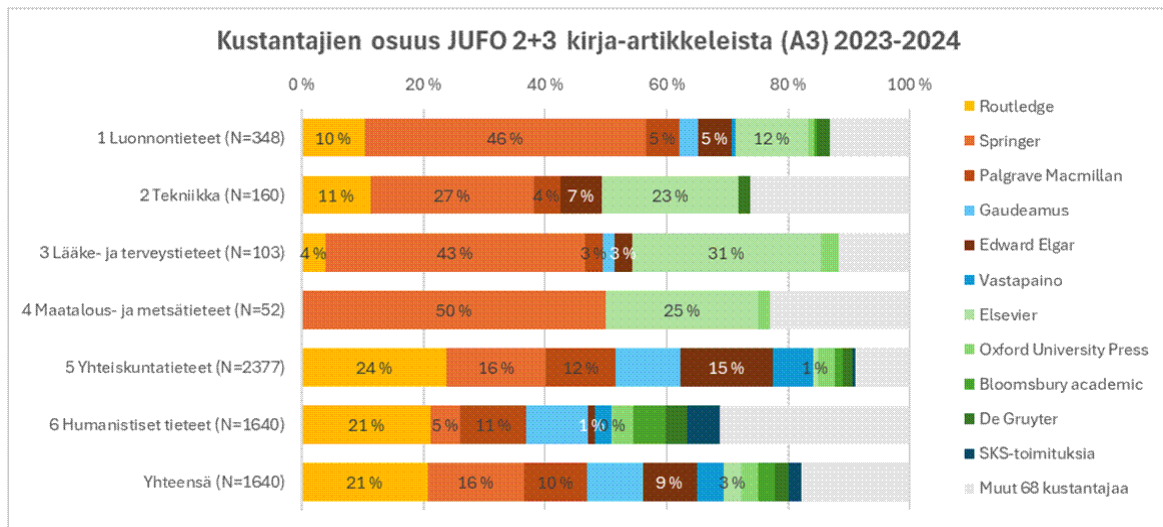
The matter will be brought to the Steering Group meeting of 7 September 2026 for decision. Feedback received from the panels will be taken into account in the decision-making.

Discussion: The Panel did not have time to discuss the matter.

## **6. Book publishers (18.5.2026)**

### **6a. Steering Group Proposal on the Reclassification of Book Publishers**

At its meeting on September 8, 2025 the Jufo steering group drew attention to the fact that the majority of level 2+3 book articles are published by a few very large international publishers. These channels should be examined in light of the updated level 1 criteria (Figure 1 in Finnish).



It is to be discussed whether the Panel considers that:

- a) Book publishers Springer and Elsevier should be downgraded to level 1; or
- b) All book publishers should be downgraded to level 1, but they can be proposed again on a case-by-case basis for level 2 (panels reassess channels based on documented evidence and feedback from the research community).

**Discussion:** The Panel did not support either alternative. It considered option b particularly problematic, as reassessing all channels individually would be highly labor-intensive, and would affect in a radical way the research framework and related funding for all researchers. The Panel noted that the issue primarily concerns the natural sciences as well as agricultural and forestry sciences, where the number of book articles is relatively small.

### 6b. Channels for potential upgrade to level 2 (imprints)

The following book publishers have been evaluated at level 1. If the panel considers that they should be upgraded to level 2, they must be submitted for evaluation to the meeting of the SSH panel Chairs, which will be held in June.

- Bloomsbury Visual Arts (JUFO ID: 10347)
- Methuen Drama (JUFO ID: 5685)

**Decision:** Both channels are to be submitted for evaluation to the meeting of the SSH panel Chairs, which will be held on 24 June.

## 7. Closing (16.4.2026 and 18.5.2026)

The Chair closed the meeting at 13.00 on 16.4.2026 and at 14.02 on 18.5.2026.