

The Teachers' View on OER: Promises and Barriers

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Education International

About Education International

- Founded in 1993 as a global federation of teacher unions and associations
- Represents over 30 million teachers and education workers from early childhood to university in 171 countries and territories
- Focus on advocacy, research, and development cooperation

Why are we interested in OER?

- Sustainable Development Goal: Access to free, equitable, quality education
- Key building blocks of quality education are:
 - Quality teachers
 - Quality teaching and learning environments
 - Quality teaching and learning tools
- Educators are major users and producers of educational material

The promise of OER

- Pedagogical innovations, empowering teachers and students
- Public knowledge creation and dissemination
- Cost-savings that can be reinvested in improving the quality and accessibility of public education

Making education more affordable

- BCcampus Open Textbook Project saved students over \$CDN 350,000 in its first two years of operation
- Introductory Physics students at the University of British Columbia saved \$CDN 90,000 in one year
- In its first year, the UC Davis ChemWiki replaced traditional textbooks to save students \$US 500,000 across four US campuses

Reinvesting savings

- Any savings from decreased textbook and journal costs should be fully re-invested into education, including staff development and training, rewards and incentives for educators, maintenance of OER repositories and sites, library acquisitions etc.

Key barriers facing educators from adopting OER

- Accessing and locating OER material
- Financial and legal
- Incentives and support (including time)
- Quality and relevance
- Ownership

Not available or difficult to find

- Teachers report challenges in knowing where to find relevant course materials, as well as concerns about the time involved in finding them – need incentives and library support
- Digital divide – IT infrastructure, cost of access, demographic differences, social and economic capital inequities

Financial and legal barriers

- Cost barriers – “gold access” fees passed on to authors
- Legal barriers – copyright often held by publishers, not authors
- Contractual barriers – publishers imposing OER embargo period on authors

Need for incentives and support

- Often, the choice of which educational materials to use is made by ministries, education authorities, or departments -- not individual teachers
- In higher education, production of non peer-reviewed OER materials often not recognized in career and performance decisions
- Work and time involved in the use and production of OERs often not compensated or rewarded

OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
GRANTS

HOW TO APPLY

FUNDED PROJECTS

Open Educational Resources Grants

The Open Educational Resources (OER) Grants provide funding and staff support to SFU faculty members who wish to integrate open educational resources into their courses.

The grants were established with funding from the Office of the Vice-President, Academic, and Provost and are administered jointly by the SFU Library and the Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC). Faculty members may receive up to \$5,000 to help them redesign a course to use OER as their primary course material, and to help them adopt and/or adapt open textbooks and other OER for that purpose.

In addition to the funding provided by these grants, staff from the SFU Library and the TLC will be available to assist recipients in locating, evaluating and adapting high-quality open resources as an alternative to commercial course materials.

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- The extent to which they include curation and customization of open educational resources that will be freely and openly shared throughout and beyond SFU
- Their potential impact on student experience in the form of high-quality materials, maximum access (e.g., Creative Commons licenses), open and innovative pedagogy, and cost savings to students
- The inclusion of plans to re-use open educational resources in courses in subsequent semesters

[HOW TO APPLY >>](#)

Next application deadline

EXTENDED

Monday, February 6, 2017

Contact us

For more information, please email us at oyer-grants@sfu.ca

For additional OER resources, see the [SFU Library's OER webpages](#)

Open educational resources (OER) are "teaching, learning, and research resources that are created with the intention of being freely available to users anywhere. They may include, but are not limited to, textbooks, readings, multi-media

Quality and relevance

- Teachers are used to using traditionally published resources, and may be hesitant to adopt OER when they don't know if they can trust their quality
- Traditional textbooks provide helpful resources like online homework platforms or banks of exam questions
- OER materials may not always be relevant – not just a question of language translation

Ownership and access

- Concerns about respect for IP rights and unwanted use or altering
- Need to better explain how OER can simultaneously protect ownership while encouraging sharing and editing opportunities
- Teachers need information and resources about copyright and licensing (including fair dealing/fair use rights)

Conclusion

- Many barriers (real and perceived) remain preventing teachers from producing and using OER
- Barriers can be mitigated if governments and institutions invest in infrastructure, incentives, professional development and supports for teachers
- Include teachers and their representatives in policy development
- Goal should be to support equitable access to cost-free public education – educational, not commercial, imperatives should guide policy