OERu Business Model Canvas

OERu is improving collective knowledge globally, one mind at a time, by facilitating access to open online courses and an international network of credible, innovative higher education partners.

Through effective partnerships with socially-focused institutions, we remove the limits on learning; creating affordable opportunities for anyone to gain internationally recognised qualifications from partner institutions through the collaborative use of open source technologies and Creative Commons licensing.

OERu

KEY PARTNERS

Existing partners
- OERu Partner institutions
- OER Foundation
- UNESCO/COL and ICDE OER Chair network
- Donor organisations and corporate citizenship

Potential partners to be engaged
- Politicians/government officials responsible for funding higher education, who are increasingly aware of the lack of fiscal sustainability of existing systems

Key suppliers
- All OERu Partners
- OER Foundation
- Open source software projects
- OER and open textbook projects

Resources acquired from partners
- Courseware
- Assessment and credentialing services
- Open source software development contributions
- Associated expertise

Motivations for partnerships
- Access to and acquisition of open source expertise including cloud-based services
- Cost-effective sharing of courseware design, development and delivery activities
- Low cost and low risk innovation
- Cooperative development of innovative open pedagogies
- Development and implementation of new sustainable business models

KEY ACTIVITIES

Core activities
- Open course design and development
- Open planning for implementation of the OERu
- Sharing of technological and pedagogical expertise
- Peer review
- Assessment services

Value added activities
- Shared professional academic development for open design
- Optional joint delivery of courses

KEY RESOURCES

Core resources
- OER and open access materials used to assemble OERu courses
- Open source software technology infrastructure provided by the OER Foundation

Human resources
- Subject matter experts
- Learning design and multimedia professionals
- Library professionals
- Graphic artists
- Technologists and developers
- Administrators
- Volunteers and open community contributions

VALUE PROPOSITIONS

- Free access to high quality courses for learners traditionally excluded from the formal education sector
- Low cost, low barrier pathways to formal academic credit for "non-traditional" learners
- Pathways to transition to higher education
- Low cost, low risk but high impact innovation in open education
- Developing learning literacies for a digital age
- International and intercultural open online course experience

CHANNELS

Learning channels
Open online courses designed for independent study with peer-learning support offered at no cost to OERu learners.

Assessment channels (fee for service)
- Challenge examinations (proctored)
- 3rd party testing centres (automated assessment)
- Recognition of prior learning
- Graded assignments
- Credit transfer

CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS

Self-service
The OERu develops high-quality open online courses designed for independent study which are mapped to the learning outcomes of courses available for formal academic credit at accredited partner institutions.

The courses are:
- Offered at no-cost to OERu learners
- Do not require the purchase of any proprietary resources (e.g. textbooks)
- Do not require password access to view the materials

Support
The OERu model does not provide tutorial support services from academic staff, however the following support options are available:
- Courses are designed to integrate peer-learning support through social media
- Communication and interaction technologies accessible on the open web and selected support technologies hosted by the OER Foundation
- Self-study help tutorials for core technologies

CUSTOMER SEGMENTS

Adult independent learners
(Studying for formal credit)

- Degree completion learners
- Mature learners studying for their first degree
- Reskilling for new career
- Second-chance learners
- Foreign students preparing for local national study
- Recognition of prior learning (RPL) learners filling skills gaps
- Socio-economic disadvantaged learners
- Refugees and migrants

"Try before you buy" learners
(May convert to formal credit)

- Trialling higher learning (e.g. first in family or secondary school learners)
- Marginalised populations (can fail anonymously or take extra time before attempting assessment)

Professional development learners
(Micro-credentials)

- Credentialed learners updating / expanding skills

Informal learners
(Self-motivated learners)

- Learners participating out of self-interest
- Learning for learning's sake

International brand promotion

Promoting international visibility through collaboration with the OERu international network of partners.

COST STRUCTURE

Direct cost

- Annual membership fees to support shared central infrastructure (Gold partners contribute $4000 per annum after multi-year discount; platinum partners contribute $10,000 or more)
- Staff-time contribution towards collective planning and assembly of two courses (Gold partners contribute 0.2 Full-time equivalent per year)

No "new money" approach

OERu partners assemble two courses from OER and open access materials. There is no increase in costs when applying an open license to the development of an OERu course when it is designed and developed as part of the normal organisational workflow.

Recurrent cost for assessment is recouped through fee for service.

Reducing local development cost

Partners can diversify local curriculum offerings and reduce costs by reusing existing OERu courses without incurring local development costs. This is particularly attractive for low-enrolment courses which are too expensive to produce locally in a cost-effective way.

CC LICENSES

Creative Commons licenses are not an alternative to copyright. They work alongside copyright and enable you to modify your copyright terms to best suit your needs.

Creative Commons develops, supports, and stewards legal and technical infrastructure that maximizes digital creativity, sharing, and innovation.

Categories for OERu courses

- Public Domain dedication
- CC0
- CC BY
- CC BY-SA

External resources

OERu courses may link to external resources

- CC BY-ND
- CC BY-NC
- CC BY-NC-SA
- CC BY-NC-ND
- Open access "all rights reserved"

REVENUE STREAMS

Cost recovery model (and potential transfer-to-study benefit)

Most partners are contributing to OERu as community service on the basis that "no new money" is required

- Fees for assessment-only services (to cover administration and staff costs for grading)
- New students who transfer for full-fee study

Value added services. Some OERu partners are planning to better serve the community through value added services which may include new revenue streams

- Optional "pay as you go" tutorial support services
- Fees for micro-credentialing / professional development certifications

Note

1. OERu partners are autonomous and retain decision-making over all aspects of assessment, including the price for services
2. The OER Foundation is an independent charity, and thus does not share in any revenue generated from partners for services arising from the OERu collaboration

SOCIAL GOOD

- The OERu provides affordable access to quality higher education for learners excluded from tertiary education for financial or physical access reasons
- Philanthropic contribution to building more sustainable education systems using OER
- Modelling open governance and open management approaches in education

Leverage network models for "open sourcing" education for all without compromising the fiscal sustainability of the public funded tertiary sector.

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