



## Open Education Resource Foundation (Ltd.)

*OER is a sustainable and renewable resource*

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To: Vice Chancellors and Chief Executive Officers of the OERu partner institutions.

### **OERu Council of Chief Executive Officers: OERu progress and membership recruitment**

In 2013 the Board of the OER Foundation established the **OERu Council of Chief Executive Officers** to function as an assembly of senior leaders called together for consultation on strategic OERu futures. During the inaugural meeting, the Council directed the OERu community to commence an open consultative process to develop a strategic plan.

I am pleased to report that the consultative development of the [OERu strategy](#) is on schedule. Constructive feedback has been posted on the first [draft of the plan](#), which was derived from the outputs and decisions during the OERu 2013 series of meetings. The OERu Strategic Planning Working Group will now commence work on compiling the strategic plan, which will be tabled at the forthcoming meeting in Sydney on 10th November, 2014.

Please find attached a brief **progress summary** of OERu operations to date, which augurs well for the future development of our international innovation partnership. Further, as you will see from the attached list of 35 current partners, we have already achieved significant growth, which lays the foundation for sustainable collaboration. To expedite developments, it will be useful to continue to recruit a number of additional partner institutions in 2014, and I therefore request your immediate assistance in identifying **prospective leads** to join the OERu.

If each existing partner could successfully identify one productive lead to join our collaboration, we would exceed our projected three-year target for membership recruitment and become one of the world's **first fiscally sustainable OER projects** without reliance on third party donor funding. Currently, approximately two-thirds of the operational expenditure of the OERu network is funded through our membership contributions. The benefits of increased membership for our network would be considerable, including the opportunity to invest surplus funds for commissioned development for the assembly of OERu courses for reuse by all partners without the need to incur local development costs.

To this end, please forward introductions to prospective partners to Wayne Mackintosh, Director of the OER Foundation and UNESCO, COL and ICDE Chair in OER at [wayne@oerfoundation.org](mailto:wayne@oerfoundation.org) who will action formal letters of invitation.

Our philanthropic collaboration to widen access to education for those who are excluded from the privilege of a tertiary education can make a real difference. The OERu is a low cost, low risk but high impact innovation partnership. Our progress to date attests to realising our bold and ambitious vision. I look forward to receiving your continuing support.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Alan Davis', written in a cursive style.

Alan Davis  
Chair of the OERu Council of Chief Executive Officers  
Vice Chancellor and President, Kwantlen Polytechnic University

## Executive Summary: OERu progress to date - August 2014.

**Introduction:** At the November 2011 founding meeting of OERu anchor partners, we agreed a Bachelor of General Studies as the inaugural credential; and aimed to develop 3 prototype courses during 2012 / 2013 in time for the launch meeting in November 2013. Before the launch, we completed: Regional Relations in Asia and the Pacific (University of Southern Queensland), Open Content Licensing for Educators (Otago Polytechnic), Art Appreciation and Techniques (Thompson Rivers University) plus a bonus micro Open Online Course (mOOC), Scenario Planning for Educators (University of Canterbury) which we were able to run in parallel mode with full fee registered students studying with free OERu learners. In short, we achieved our initial targets.

### Summary of selected project activities currently underway:

The [OERu planning portal](#) keeps a record of all the initiatives and activities in the logic model, including:

- As requested by the OERu Council of CEO's, the open [strategic planning consultation](#) is on schedule.
- Membership recruitment: To date, five new partners have confirmed joining the OERu international partnership. We are lagging a little behind our target to achieve ten new partners by the end of 2014.
- Programme Development: To date [31 full course equivalents](#) have been nominated. We now have two full programmes on the table. (Graduate Diploma in Tertiary Education and a Postgraduate Diploma in Disaster Risk Studies.) This means that the OERu will have two additional credentials and a foundation for streaming, for example the Bachelor of General Studies with a specialisation in Vocational Education.
- Google Summer of Code (GsoC) [peer evaluation project](#) - the alpha release was tested and the beta version was completed by the "pencil down" date of 11 August 2014.
- The OERu technical infrastructure for hosting courses is based entirely on open source software. This offers unique opportunities for the OERu to build a community source model for partners to contribute to technology innovation for the benefit of the network. To date, the University of Southern Queensland is the only partner contributing to our community source effort. We aim to achieve 1 FTE equivalent contribution in kind spread across the network of institutions by the end of 2014.
- Design and development of *Academic Volunteers International* got off to a good start with extensive brainstorming of ideas for the design, but this project is currently stagnant.
- [OERu Management Committee](#) and associated [working groups](#) have been established, and two series of meetings have been completed. More details are available via [Quicklinks](#).
- [Course site design project](#) - to develop a CSS framework for **responsive design** to improve the presentation layer of OERu courses on mobile devices based on the OERu website theme plus the ability for OERu partners to customise the theme for local branding. Project is on track.
- A [course sprint](#) is planned for mid-September so partners can work together in finding out how to develop courses for OERu and to build capability in digital skills for collaborative OER development.

**Conclusion:** Overall, we are making good progress. The strength of the OERu network is in the rigour of our planning combined with a healthy dose of openness.

## OERu International Partners (August 2014)



The [OERu](#) is an international innovation partnership of universities, polytechnics, community colleges and non-teaching agencies who are widening access to more affordable education opportunities for all students worldwide using open education approaches. The OERu is also an official project of the UNESCO-COL OER chair network. The OERu philanthropic network draws its strength from our international diversity with thirty five partner institutions from six global regions.

### Africa

[University of South Africa](#) (South Africa)  
[North-West University](#) (South Africa)

### Asia

[S.N.D.T Women's University](#) (India)

### Europe

[Institute of Technology Sligo](#) (Ireland)  
[Moscow State University of Economics, Statistics and Informatics](#) (Russian Federation)  
[Open University of Catalonia](#) (Spain)  
[The Open University](#) (United Kingdom)  
[University of South Wales](#) (United Kingdom)  
[University of the Highlands and Islands](#) (United Kingdom)

### Middle East

[Hamdan Bin Mohammed Smart University](#) (United Arab Emirates)

### North America

[Athabasca University](#) (Canada)  
[BCcampus](#) (Non teaching partner – Canada)  
[Contact North | Contact Nord](#) (Non teaching partner – Canada)  
[eCampusAlberta](#) (Non teaching partner - Canada)  
[Excelsior College](#) (USA)  
[Kwantlen Polytechnic University](#) (Canada)  
[Portage College](#) (Canada)  
[Southern New Hampshire University](#) (USA)  
[SUNY Empire State College](#) (USA)  
[Thompson Rivers University](#) (Canada)  
[Thomas Edison State College](#) (USA)

### Oceania

[Ako Aotearoa](#) (Non teaching partner – New Zealand)  
[Charles Sturt University](#) (Australia)  
[Lincoln University](#) (New Zealand)  
[Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology](#) (New Zealand)  
[NorthTec](#) (New Zealand)  
[OER Foundation](#) (Non teaching partner - New Zealand)  
[Open Polytechnic](#) (New Zealand)  
[Otago Polytechnic](#) (New Zealand)  
[Unitec Institute of Technology](#) (New Zealand)  
[University of Southern Queensland](#) (Australia)  
[University of the South Pacific](#) (Regional University - 12 Pacific Island States)  
[University of Tasmania](#) (Australia)  
[University of Wollongong](#) (Australia)  
[Waikato Institute of Technology](#) (New Zealand)

### International sponsors

Commonwealth of Learning  
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