



Open Education Resource Foundation (Ltd.)

*OER is a sustainable and renewable resource*

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## Open Education Resources Backgrounder

### A Sustainable Business Model for Education

Open Education Resources can **reduce your costs, improve quality and build connections** with the OER Foundation's experience in developing OER strategy, and extensive network of international partners in 120 countries. The [2010 Horizon Report](#) identifies open content as a significant technology on the near-term horizon that will affect the practice of teaching, learning, and creative enquiry at your institution.

Higher education governance officials, particularly boards of trustees and senior academic leaders, have a tremendous opportunity to harness the advantages of OER for their institutions.

By using and promoting OER, educational organizations can offer higher education governance leaders a cost-efficient method of improving the quality of teaching and learning while at the same time reducing costs imposed on students related to the purchase of expensive commercial textbooks and learning materials," says Hal Plotkin, a long-time OER advocate. Adapted from abstract, [Free to Learn: An Open Educational Resources Policy Development Guidebook for Community College Governance Officials](#).

### Open Education Resources (OER) Foundation

The [OER Foundation](#) is an independent, not-for-profit organization that provides leadership, international networking and support for educators and educational institutions to achieve their objectives through Open Education.

We help organizations reduce cost and save time - by adopting and using OERs in projects that make sense; improving the quality of teaching and learning; and broadening curriculum diversity through strategic investment in open education approaches. We also design OER services and interventions including:

- **Developing an OER strategy and implementation plan**
- **Conducting an OER needs assessment / gap analysis** -- to identify critical opportunities, barriers and interventions required to support meaningful integration of OERs
- **Integrating OER into existing projects** -- to educate stakeholders and build readiness, buy-in and engagement for current projects and interdisciplinary opportunities
- **Launching OER Pilot Projects**, including a [wiki-publishing](#) component;
- **Professional development support, coaching and mentoring** - to support management and faculty in OER use, adoption and implementation.

## OER at-a-Glance

- [OER Foundation & Annual Report](#)
- [2010 Horizon Report](#) -- Open content a technology which will impact organizations on the near-term horizon.
- [Washington's 2-year colleges out to beat high cost of textbooks](#), Seattle Times, Nov. 7, 2010
- [Educause - OER links](#)

## Highlights & Benefits

The OER Foundation administers [WikiEducator.org](#) one of the world's largest and most productive OER collaborations in the formal education sector. The OER Foundation also oversees the world's largest training initiative to build capacity for collaborative OER development (see [OER Foundation annual report](#)).

- **Achieving Global Influence, Local Relevance** --- [WikiEducator.org](#), is our flagship project: a 16,000 strong community of educators in 120 countries, collaborating on the development, remix and reuse of free digital teaching materials in support of all national curricula by 2015, aligned to the UN's Millennium Development Goals.
- **Adopting New Business Models** -- We have developed new business models for the scalable and sustainable distance learning via the [Learning4Content](#) OER/wiki skills training project (funded by a \$200K grant from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation); and [WikiPublishing](#)
- **Participating in Joint-Ventures** -- [National OER Commons in NZ](#), supported by the Ministry of Education; [OpenCourseWare Consortium](#), [UNESCO](#) and [Creative Commons](#); joint-proposal development for US Department of Labor grants; Bill & Melinda Gates and Hewlett Foundation Funding.
- **Leveraging Strategic Relationships** -- [Community College Consortium for Open Education Resources \(CCCOER\)](#); [Commonwealth of Learning](#); [Connexions](#); [Monterey Institute for Technology and Education](#); [OER Africa](#)
- **Institutional leadership in a globally connected world** --- Join leading OER institutions for example, [Athabasca University](#) and [BCcampus](#), CANADA; [Otago Polytechnic](#), NZ; and [Community College Consortium for Open Education Resources \(CCCOER\)](#), USA;

Regarding CCCOER, it has led the identification, development and re-use of high quality, accessible and culturally-relevant OERs including Open Textbooks, making them available for use by community college students and faculty. CCCOER received \$1.5M in seed funding from the [the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation](#) to provide Open Textbook training at community colleges, and explore sustainable production models (i.e., [Collaborative Statistics](#)). CCCOER is a project of [Foothill-De Anza Community College District, California](#), [the League for Innovation in the Community College](#), universities and other partners. CCCOER has [200+ members](#) in the US and Canada.

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