

# 7 things you should know about OERu



The Open Education Resource universitas (OERu) is improving collective knowledge globally through a scalable and sustainable international ecosystem. With support from our global network of credible, innovative higher education partners, we are facilitating access to open, online courses for everyone and anyone with access to the Internet. OERu provides affordable pathways for learners to earn academic credit towards globally recognised qualifications.

## 1. What is OER?

There are many definitions for Open Educational Resources (OER), but what they all share is the concept that in a digital world, teaching, learning, and research resources made available under an open license or dedicated to the public domain can provide value to learners around the world. OER can include full courses, course materials, videos, tests, and more.

Supporting OER is not an all-or-nothing scenario; institutions can offer courses through traditional channels, integrating OER resources where appropriate, while creating opportunities to provide selected courses through the open access model. OER is a sustainable and renewable resource; the cost of replicating these resources is negligible, with no unnecessary duplication of effort, and OER delivers significant value to the supporting institutions as well as the end users.

### Who benefits from OERu?

- **Learners** looking for globally recognised qualifications, but lacking the means – financial or geographical – to access higher education
- **Institutions** interested in community service and social good, while building brand awareness by opening up a previously unreachable income stream audience willing to pay for assessments
- **Philanthropists** working towards creating educational opportunities to make higher education more broadly available across the world

## 2. What is OERu?

OERu is an international network of significant, respected institutions working together to provide first-class, accessible, and affordable education to everyone, no matter where they live or what their background.

The current post-secondary education delivery models don't have the capacity to satisfy the global demand, which is why now is the right time to offer selected open online courses through a distribution network like OERu.

## 3. How will your institution benefit?

There are many benefits available to innovative institutions through a partnership with OERu, but the majority of our anchor partners have opted in for a combination of the following reasons:

- Active participation in an international network of like-minded institutions
- To promote their philanthropic mission of improving access to affordable education, specifically for learners excluded from the traditional formal education sector
- To demonstrate their innovative nature; understanding that open education approaches are the future
- 100% decision-making + No policy changes required = Much easier implementation

## 4. Who is actively involved in OERu?

There are nearly 40 active and engaged teaching and non-teaching institutions around the world that have opted to join the OERu as partners and contributors.

*"OERu makes affordable education accessible to everyone"*  
~ Dr. Wayne Mackintosh, Director OER Foundation and OERu facilitator

## 5. What is the business model?

The OERu model is similar to the Freemium model offered through many popular mobile applications in use today - but better because you have the freedom to adapt and modify the “free” components to suit your own institutional needs. The content component of the course is given for free, and those looking for globally recognised qualifications pay a fee to your institution.

The OERu’s shared infrastructure costs for developing and hosting courses are funded from institutional membership fees paid through the OER Foundation<sup>1</sup>. Learners pay assessment fees to OERu partners to cover recurrent operational costs for credentialing services.

As a non-profit organisation, any surplus revenue is invested back into charitable activities for the benefit of the network, which can include the commissioned development of new OERu courses.

### BUSINESS MODEL CANVAS



OERu partner institutions retain sole decision-making authority for all aspects of assessment, including pricing and credit transfer.

## 6. What are the expectations for partner institutions?

There are three things OERu members contribute to our innovation partnership:

1. A nominal financial commitment (\$4000USD per annum for membership – includes multi-year discount)
2. Two courses to be added to the OERu course catalogue – courses created specifically for OER, courses assembled from existing open access resources or existing courses converted to the OER model
3. Assessment/credentialing services for the supplied courses - (contact us if this is not possible at your institution)

Involvement with OERu does not require any new money from your institution. Instead, a reallocation of existing staff time can be used to assemble two new courses or convert existing courses to OER. This can be done as part of your normal course development and revision cycle. Active participation is encouraged to gain the most value from this association.

## 7. How can you become an active member of OERu?

If you’re ready to support our charitable mission of widening access to affordable education while serving a previously unreachable market, and would like to know the next steps in the application process, please visit [OERu.org/Invite](https://oeru.org/invite) to schedule a web meeting with a member of the OERu executive team.

# Visit [OERu.org/Invite](https://oeru.org/invite)



<sup>1</sup> The OERu is coordinated through the OER Foundation, an independent charitable organisation that provides leadership, networking, and support to educational institutions around the world to help them achieve their strategic objectives using open education approaches.