



Project Agreement Number: 519138-LLP-1-2011-1-UK-KA3-KA3MP
 Project funded by the European Commission

Deliverable D3.2

How to power-up and sustain networks behind the production of Open Educational Practices: Recommendations

Document information		
Due date of deliverable	November 2013	
Actual submission date (final version)	April 2014	
Organisation name of lead contractor for this deliverable	OUNL	
Revision	Version 1.0 – April 2014	
Dissemination Level		
PU	Public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
PP	Restricted to other programme participants (including the Commission Services)	<input type="checkbox"/>
RE	Restricted to a group specified by the consortium (including the Commission Services)	<input type="checkbox"/>
CO	Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Contents

1	Introduction and the aims and objectives of this document	3
2	Organisational models of (Inter)national open educational practices ...	3
3.	Support	6
4.	Quality and time	7

1 Introduction and the aims and objectives of this document

This is Deliverable 3.2 of Work Package 3 of POERUP. The Deliverable Title from the proposal is:

Recommendations

This has been expanded to include 'How to power-up and sustain networks behind the production of Open Educational Practices' in the title.

The Work Package title is:

The role of Community in OER

The brief for the Deliverable states:

This online Deliverable has RdMC-OUNL as lead author, with help from other partners. The recommendations ... will be more than the regular "tips and tricks" found elsewhere – instead they will be based on strong research gathered through the Social Network analysis conducted within the 7 case studies.... The recommendations will be written for policy advisors, stakeholders and managers of OER initiatives, for general use in all educational sectors.

This study is conducted within the frame of the POERUP project, funded by the lifelong learning program of the European Commission (POERUP, 2013). The POERUP project aims to enable the development of policies to stimulate the uptake of open educational practices. Within the POERUP project, partners from the Open University of the Netherlands, Sero Consulting, the University of Leicester and the University of Athabasca collaborated to gather all the data with help from the OEP under investigation. The study resulted in this list of recommendations on how to power up and sustain the networks behind the production of open educational resources.

The recommendations are grouped under three headings:

- Organisational models of (Inter)national open educational practices
- Support
- Quality and time

2 Organisational models of (Inter)national open educational practices

R.1. Open Educational Practices need (OEP) different social configurations to serve different goals. The initiatives investigated are or aim for the following organizational model: a combination of strong institutional teams, open networks of practice and a stable community.

R.1.1. Having a shared practice (working together) is needed to share and build up knowledge and expertise about the actual local production, use and implementation of open educational resources; therefore it is recommended to have institutional teams involved in the production of OEP within the institutional context.

R.1.2. CoPs provided a relatively stable social environment, providing access to a shared repertoire and history. Within CoPs new knowledge is being shared, built and created on a regular basis via different media.

R.1.3. At the same time, participation in open networks is increasingly seen by professionals as a requirement for professional developing. These open practices offer professionals a more dynamic 'platform' than CoPs do, to stay abreast in a rapidly changing profession by connecting with relevant peers that can help them further. Such CoPs exemplify open practices as they are dispersed across geographical and organizational boundaries, informal and self-directed by nature, and disentangled from hierarchy. These open practices behave on a more fluid basis, providing a (temporal) space for collaboration, where professionals come and go, based on their needs.

To establish this organisational model we recommend:

R.2. Strong links with the educational institutions adds to the sustainability of OEP.

R.3. Even if the network is completely online and not connected with institutions formally, we do recommend that the network seeks connections with institutional partners.

R.4. Creating links with educational institutions could be established by asking membership fees or create selective networks where partner institutions are invited to participate based on a common denominator.

R.5. Institutional members of the institutional teams could serve as a bridge to the (inter)national OEP initiative: translating knowledge from the wider (inter)national OEP initiative to the institutional team, along with the practical implications, and vice-versa.

R.6. The (inter)national OEP initiative should be driven by a central and a highly charismatic and energetic coordinator or a strong core team.

R.7. Try to build further on, or seek support from an already existing international, national, or regional strong community in the field of e-learning, blended learning, CSCS or other.

These strong communities are often the driver for innovation and already established relationships make it easier to share knowledge, organize events. The wider open network will have the opportunity to leverage on expertise from a longer lasting research group.

3. Support

R.8. School Boards in primary and secondary education or institutional management in higher education or vocational education should encourage the development of OEP within the regular teaching practice.

R.9. the core team of the (inter)national OEP initiative should have excellent expertise in the creation of open educational resources to have the ability to apply their expertise to local problems.

R.10. Teachers and academic staff are still reluctant to share because of lack of knowledge about copyright issues. Clear guidelines and the organization of training workshops around copyright and licensing are crucial.

R.11. Organize face-to-face workshops or conferences at least once a year to bring partner institutions together. It is during these face-to-face workshops that participants build up a shared identity and share their practices. When the network is established and personal relations are created participants will use technology to share knowledge about the use of open educational resources.

R.12. If institutional support is not possible, think about incentives for individual contributors.

4. Quality and time

R.13. Invest in models for Quality Assurance. Evaluation of OEP's was done in some form in all the cases examined; e.g. in an interactive fashion (quality tagging), and in another this was done through implementation of a centralized, procedure (course evaluation). But some cases still have difficulties with finding a good quality assurance model.

R.14 Do not underestimate the issue of time. Creating online learning materials takes time. This will stay the biggest constraint for teachers and academic staff.

R.15 The complexity and multi-level organization of OER initiatives require more time to develop deeper learning and knowledge sharing to the wider community.