

OERu Progress Report - June 2015

Strategic Planning Working Group



Executive summary: This OERu mid-term report documents outputs derived from the submission of [Institutional Action Plans](#), and provides an update on the current capacity development status and associated fiscal position of the OERu.

Background: The [OERu](#) is distinctively open, subscribes to open planning models and shared open source technology infrastructure to support the development, hosting and delivery of open online courses for the benefit of the network. This is a strategic point of difference and strength of our international innovation partnership. To expedite progress, the [3rd meeting of OERu partners](#) (November 2014) recommended the implementation of Institutional Action Plans to guide partner contributions to the key performance indicators of the [OERu Strategic Plan](#) (2015 - 2017) approved by the [OERu Council of Chief Executive Officers](#).

Mid-year OERu network progress report

- 1. Institutional Action Plans (IAPs)** 60% of the OERu partners have [submitted](#) or have confirmed their intention to submit their IAP. Outcomes of this process to date include the following:
 - 28 full-course equivalents are listed for development, representing a 104% achievement against the target of 25 courses for 2015.
 - OERu partners report an average of a 0.429 FTE contribution which is above the agreed 0.2FTE contribution. Further, it is worth noting that the average FTE contribution is amplified by “front-loading”, that is a number of partners nominating their full (or additional) course contributions plus 5 partners that have agreed to contribute to a shared technology position.
 - *Recommendation:* During this first round of implementing the IAP process, it is clear that the time required for internal approvals at some partner institutions was underestimated. In future, it is proposed that the call for IAPs will be issued at least three months in advance of the annual OERu partners meeting for activities planned for the forthcoming year. It will then be possible to discuss IAPs at the annual partners meeting to assist with calibration of KPIs for the strategic plan.
 - Performance outputs reported will likely improve as outstanding IAPs are received.

2. Active participation in OERu planning in working groups has improved with wider representation from the network: The OERu is characterised by open and transparent planning organised around seven [working groups](#). The convenors of each working group serve on the OERu [Management Committee](#), which aims to coordinate the implementation of the 2015 operational priorities. Analysis of the IAPs submitted to date demonstrates that:

- 76+ staff members from partner institutions have signed up to participate in the working groups, representing a 130% increase in participation when compared to the previous year.
- 61% of OERu teaching institutions have at least one staff member [participating](#) in a working group, which is on track to achieving the 2015 KPI of 80% of partners having at least one representative actively engaged in a planning group.
- *Recommendation:* Proactively recruit nominations from partner institutions to join one or more of the planning groups to achieve the target.

3. OER professional development prototype mOOC successfully completed:

OERu partners expressed the need to develop capacity in the design for open online courses. With funding support from the New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO, the OER Foundation successfully completed the development of a mOOC on [Digital Skills for Collaborative OER Development](#).

- The recent successful offer of the prototype course generated 12,000 pageviews from 1300 unique visitors.
- 20% of the learners who indicated intent to engage actively in this intensive skills development mOOC completed the course.
- *Recommendation:* Offer the course again during the 2nd half of 2015 to support partners actively engaged in OERu course development.

4. Open community source model exceeding anticipated targets. Following the recommendation from the 2014 partners meeting, an [open source survey](#) was administered with 52% of the teaching partners responding to the survey. As a result:

- Five partners, including the OER Foundation, have agreed to contribute to a shared *Open Source Technologist* position to promote technical integration of OERu courses with local technologies and to foster technology innovation.
- This contribution has exceeded the 0.5 FTE shared contribution for the current strategic plan. As an open source position, it is worth noting that all partners will benefit from this investment.

- *Recommendation:* To increase output and improve strategic advantage of the network for the benefit of its members, explore opportunities for additional shared positions or contributions in kind in other priority areas.

5. The network is moving into the consolidation phase of the OERu implementation from a strong fiscal foundation for future success.

- 70% of the revenue required to support the central infrastructure for the OERu collaboration is generated from sustainable membership fee contributions from partner institutions rather than from reliance on third party donor funding.
- The OERu is moving into the consolidation phase without the burden of accumulated debt, unlike the commercial xMOOC providers which need to recoup millions of dollars of venture capital investment.
- The OER Foundation is forecasting a nominal surplus for the 2015 fiscal year. This signals the opportunity to commence investment in the commissioned development of one or two OERu courses for the benefit of its partners in 2016.
- *Recommendation:* Continue efforts to recruit an additional 15 partner institutions so that the donor funding received by the OER Foundation can be redirected into funding to expedite course development for the OERu rather than contributing to operational expenditure of the network.

Maintaining the rigour of the OERu open planning process will continue to ensure a solid foundation for sustainable operations in support of our philanthropic mission of widening opportunity to more affordable education for all.