UM OER Grant Application Guideline

Background

The University of Manitoba (UM) is committed to facilitating student learning and enhancing the student experience. One avenue to achieve this mission is through making education affordable and accessible. While the cost of course materials can be a barrier to accessing courses for some students, Open Education Resources (OER) are being created, adopted, and/or adapted in some UM courses by faculty members to help reduce barriers for students by minimizing the cost of learning materials.

OER are teaching materials that have an open copyright license that allow them to be used, adapted, and shared by instructors and students at no cost. Information about OER can be found on the [UM Libraries' OER webpage](#).

UM students have expressed a strong interest in using OER in their courses. In a survey conducted by UMSU of their student body in 2021, respondents indicated that supporting the adoption of OER in courses was their highest priority. First-year students in a full course load report spending an average of over $1700 on textbooks and the use of OER in courses could provide significant relief to students.

Recognizing the importance OER can have on student learning and in response to UMSU's advocacy, we have committed funding to enhance the awareness and use of OER at UM. A portion of the funding is allocated to encourage and support professors, instructors, and librarians to create, adopt, and/or adapt OER for courses by creating at least ten UM OER Grants. Visit [Advance Open Ed 2023-24](#) to learn more about financial and practical support opportunities.

Financial assistance and support

OER Grant

Full-time tenure track/tenured faculty, probationary/continuing instructors, and librarians are invited to submit proposals for UM OER Grants, to a maximum of $10,000, to help facilitate the use of OER in courses.

The grant may be used to cover expenditures such as:

- UM student research/teaching assistants to help create, adapt, and/or adopt OER in a course
- Honoraria for external consultants, such as artists, editors, proofreaders, inclusivity and accessibility reviewers, and peer reviewers not covered by the OER Lab

- Equipment, such as computers, for student research/teaching assistants may be considered (Computers will remain the property of the UM Libraries and will be returned to the Libraries after completion of the project.)

The grants may not be used for:

- Material costs (e.g., books)
- Infrastructure upgrades
- Travel
- Workshop and conference registration
- Memberships to organizations
- Stipends for salaried UM employees

Faculty interested in applying for the grant should first discuss their proposal with their dean/director before submission. Deans/directors will be asked to prioritize proposals from their faculty.

OER Lab

To help cover some of the cost of creating, adapting, and/or adopting an OER outside of the awarded grant, successful grant recipients will have access to the OER Lab. The OER Lab will have supports in place including:

- OER coordinator
- Copy editor(s)
- Course and curriculum developer
- Student content developers
- Copyright specialist
- Support with using software such as Pressbooks
- Additional support positions, such as designers, multi-media specialists, GIS specialists, can be hired as needed

Potential projects

The following are examples of projects that could be funded. These are provided to help applicants generate ideas for projects and are not an exhaustive list of projects which could be funded. All applications will be considered based on how well they meet the goals of the grant and evaluation criteria listed below.

- Creating a set of slide decks, interactive activities, or other supplemental content, to be used in teaching with an OER textbook at UM in the instructor's own courses
- Adapting a relevant OER to make it a better fit for teaching in the instructor's own courses

- Creating a new module or set of modules (text-based, video, or otherwise) to use in teaching at UM courses
- Editing and publishing an Open Pedagogy project created with UM students

To find existing OER in your discipline that you can adapt, and to learn about the software available through UM to support OER, please see the UM Libraries website or contact your subject librarian.

Timeline

Application deadline - September 29, 2023
(Applications will be accepted until all funds have been dispersed.)

Notification of successful grant applications and fund allocation - Beginning October 16, 2023

Final report and majority of funds expended - March 31, 2024

OER deliverables implemented - 2024-2025 academic year

Deliverables

Successful applicants will be expected to:

- Submit a final report of no more than 250 words explaining how project goals were accomplished and funds were or will be expended by March 31, 2024.
- Share information about the project with the university community in at least one venue of your preference (e.g., by being interviewed for an article in UM Today or by participating in a panel discussion) during the 2024-2025 fiscal year.
- Share any applicable resulting OER adaptations or new creations with a Creative Commons or equivalent license (CC BY or CC BY-NC preferred) on a relevant website or repository of your choosing. For text-based content Pressbooks or MSpace are preferred but not required.
  Note: Criteria relating to Creative Commons or equivalent licensing may not be applicable to OER or portions of OER containing Indigenous Knowledge.

Evaluation criteria

Project scope and impact - The application clearly outlines the project's scope, beneficiaries, and potential impact. It aligns with the UM OER Grant purpose and objectives.

Feasibility (organization and timeline) - The application provides timelines and milestones appropriate to the project and makes allowances for unforeseen challenges.

Budget and resources - The application presents a budget and identifies needed resources appropriately. It also demonstrates a cost-effective use of grant funding.

Inclusivity and accessibility - The application outlines plans for creating OER that are inclusive and accessible to a diverse range of learners.

To apply

Applicants should complete the application form, including a short description of the project, highlighting how the project meets the goals of the grant and the evaluation criteria. A budget and timeline should be included.

The OER Project Board will start reviewing beginning October 10, 2023.