

Addressing curriculum transformation and the rising cost of textbooks: Digital open textbook development grants

Deadline for proposal submission: 31 January 2019
Grant award date: 28 February 2019

The University of Cape Town (UCT) is grappling with how to respond meaningfully and creatively to the call for more relevant curricula and pedagogies. Added to the imperative of curriculum transformation, the cost of textbooks is increasingly prohibitive. Open textbook development processes have the potential to facilitate localisation and the decolonisation of teaching and learning materials. It also provides relief to students in terms of cutting textbook expenditure.

The Digital Open Textbooks for Development (DOT4D) project in the Centre for Innovation in Learning and Teaching at UCT is offering grants of up to R80 000 to educators to support the development of digital open textbooks in the UCT teaching and learning context. The grants may be utilised to support existing open textbook authoring and publication activity, or the conceptualisation and production of a new open textbook.

Academic staff at UCT may utilise engagement in open textbook development activities as evidence of teaching innovation as well as social responsibility in formal assessment processes. The potential of open textbooks to promote a more inclusive, socially just approach to knowledge production makes this emerging area of activity a compelling means to contribute towards institutional transformation, demonstrate social responsiveness and experiment with new teaching practices.

A digital open textbook is a book-like form of open educational resource utilised in a teaching and learning context that is released under an open licence and made freely available online to students, teachers and members of the public without any cost to the user. Like traditional textbooks, open textbooks are written by academics and disciplinary experts, and are subject to quality control measures.

The grants are open to UCT staff working in any discipline and can be used to:

- support authoring and collaboration processes;
- source additional capacity and specialist expertise in design and production processes;
- solicit student involvement in content-generation or quality assurance processes; and/or
- undertake the technical work required for optimal access to and dissemination of the work.

Grant proposals which consider the following key aspects will be favoured: transformation of the curriculum, inclusion of marginalised voices, inclusion of student voices, relevance to local context, multilingualism, disability access, interdisciplinarity, and strategies for the sustainability of the proposed open textbook. Grant recipients will

be required to licence materials produced with the aid of the DOT4D grant under a Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) licence.

For resources and research, as well as examples of existing open textbooks, see:

<http://ukopentextbooks.org/resources/>

<https://open.bccampus.ca/projects-completed/>

How to apply

Grant application proposals prepared according to the [Digital Open Textbook Grant Application Form](#) should be submitted to the DOT4D project Principal Investigator Dr Glenda Cox at <glenda.cox@uct.ac.za> by **31 January 2019**.

Staff interested in submitting a proposal for an open textbook development grant are encouraged to discuss their application with Dr Glenda Cox prior to their submission for informal feedback and advice.

The DOT4D team will support open textbook grantees in aspects of open textbook authorship and production activity, particularly as relates to pedagogical approach, content development processes, content licensing and copyright management, technical decision-making, and publishing strategies.

For more information, please contact <glenda.cox@uct.ac.za>.

Terms and conditions

- The grant period is effective for 12 months from 1 March 2019 to 28 February 2020.
- Grant monies may only be paid into an official university fund administered by a UCT department or faculty.
- Grant proposal submissions may only be made by UCT permanent staff members.
- All outputs arising from grant funding will be licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) International 4.0 licence.
- Grant holders will be required to do a short presentation on the process of developing the open textbook for which funds have been sought, and/or on the materials they have created.
- Grant holders will be required to submit a brief report describing the project and its context, as well as challenges experienced and how these were overcome.
- Grant holders will be required to support the DOT4D research process by completing a short survey.

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