

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

PROJECT TITLE

Washington Open Educational Resources Grant Pilot Program

AGENCY

Washington Student Achievement Council

IMPORTANT DATES

Call for Proposals Posted	November 7, 2018
Proposals Due	December 7, 2018 at 5:00 PM Pacific Standard Time
Grant Award Notice/Interagency Agreement Negotiation	December 17, 2018
Projects Begin/Grant Funds Distributed	January 2, 2019
Projects End	August 31, 2019
Final Reports Due	September 30, 2019

STATUTE REFERENCE

Open educational resources grant pilot program
Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 28B.10.819
<http://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=28B.10.819>

ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Eligible applicants are public, four-year institutions of higher education (IHE) in Washington State. The eligible IHE in Washington State include:

- Central Washington University
- Eastern Washington University
- The Evergreen State College
- University of Washington
- Washington State University
- Western Washington University

An eligible IHE may submit multiple applications, each of which may focus on one or more campuses. However, WSAC will award only one grant to a successful IHE.

AWARD INFORMATION

Type of Award: Grant via Interagency Agreement
Available Funds: \$72,000
Anticipated Number of Awards: 2
Anticipated Size of Awards: \$36,000
Project Period: Up to eight months

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION | ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Grant Administrator

Ellen Matheny
Assistant Director of Operations | Policy and Planning Unit
Washington Student Achievement Council
Office Phone: (360) 753-7824
Email: ellenm@wsac.wa.gov

Applicant may submit proposal as a PDF file attached to email (preferred) or via mail, delivery service, or in person.

Email: ellenm@wsac.wa.gov

Mail:

Washington Student Achievement Council
ATTN: Ellen Matheny
PO BOX 43430
Olympia, WA 98504-3430

Delivery Services or In Person:

Washington Student Achievement Council
ATTN: Ellen Matheny
917 Lakeridge Way SW
Olympia, WA 98502
Office Hours: Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM

AMENDMENTS TO CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Check the [WSAC website](#) for updates to the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ). The FAQ is an addendum to this call for proposals. It contains responses to inquiries and amends the call for proposals.

WASHINGTON OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES PILOT GRANT PROGRAM

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Washington State Legislature provided funds to the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) to administer an open educational resources (OER) grant pilot program exclusively for the public four-year institutions of higher education (IHE) in the State of Washington.

A grant received under the pilot program may be used to fund a campus coordinator or provide support to faculty, or both, as described here:

- 1) **Campus Coordinator:** Create a designated campus coordinator who will be the campus lead and centralized contact regarding OER.
- 2) **Faculty Support:** Support faculty to adopt and modify, or create new, OER for the purpose of reducing students' cost of attendance. Faculty may not use grant funding to duplicate OER that are already free and publicly available.

WSAC will prioritize applications that estimate the highest cost-reduction to students.

WSAC will award grants within 30 days of execution of an interagency agreement between WSAC and the two successful IHE. WSAC will issue the grant award payment in conjunction with a fully executed interagency agreement. WSAC anticipates awarding up to two grants for \$36,000 each to the selected IHE applicants.

Grantees will submit a final report to WSAC summarizing grant project activities, outcomes, and student textbook cost savings on or before September 30, 2019.

PURPOSE

The Legislature's goal for this pilot grant program is to expand the use of open educational resources (OER) and thus reduce the cost of curriculum materials and textbooks for students.

This pilot grant program aims to reduce the cost of education for postsecondary students by supporting Washington's public, four-year institutions of higher education (IHE) in their efforts to replace high-cost textbooks with high-quality OER.

The Legislature established this pilot program to take a first step in ensuring more affordable learning materials and to find the best value for students in textbooks and course materials. The desired outcome is to expand textbook savings to all students attending public universities across the state.

BACKGROUND

The ultimate goal of this pilot grant program is to make college more affordable for students attending the six public universities in Washington State. Several facts underscore the importance of this initiative.

Course material prices are too high and create a barrier for low-income students.

Increasing textbook costs introduces an additional barrier to college access and completion, particularly for low-income students. The cost of textbooks is quite high, and often students struggle to afford them. In some cases, a student may not buy the required textbook, severely influencing the student's ability to be successful academically. Further, a student with limited resources may choose not to register for courses that require expensive textbooks or end up withdrawing or failing courses because the materials are unaffordable. These patterns can increase the time it takes to complete a degree, reduce the likelihood a student will complete a degree, and increase the total cost of attendance.

The United States Department of Education wrote in a recent open textbook grant program solicitation that the growth in college textbook costs is a key component of the overall increase in the cost of attending college. Nationally, the cost of college textbooks increased 88 percent between 2006 and 2016.^[1] In the 2016-17 academic year, the budget for the average college student for books and supplies was \$1,263 for students attending four-year institutions.^[2] It also concluded that the development of OER has emerged as a potential solution to the ever-increasing college textbook costs.

Several students who attend public IHE expressed their concerns to legislators about the high cost of textbooks during public testimony in support of this legislation, some highlights of which follow.

- University of Washington (UW) undergraduate students reported they spend up to \$900 per year on textbook and learning material fees. They noted that publishers move learning materials online, making them hidden behind access codes that expire after the quarter and resulting in course materials being inaccessible after the expiration date.

- Associated Students of Washington State University (WSU) Vancouver estimate that WSU Vancouver students spend an average of \$900 per year on textbooks per year with, some students spending \$700 per semester, or \$1,400 per year. They noted that students have experienced positive learning outcomes in courses where faculty successfully wrote their own OER textbooks and used articles from scholarly resources as required reading.
- University of Washington Tacoma (UWT) students estimate their fellow students spend \$1,206 annually on textbooks. This is particularly burdensome for the non-traditional students at UWT, with the “sticker shock” of textbook prices taking away funds needed for daily living expenses. Access codes raise the price of textbooks, as professors mandate that the students purchase online access codes with textbooks. The students provided the example of a 300/400-level biology textbook requiring a textbook costing \$150 plus \$100 access code, for a total curriculum materials cost of \$250 for one course.

In Washington’s community college system, in response to growing concerns about the high cost of textbooks, the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges in 2011 launched the Open Course Library (OCL), a project to outfit 81 of the state's largest-enrolled courses with high-quality, low-cost educational materials. Funded jointly by the Washington State Legislature and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the project sought to offer faculty and students a more affordable alternative to expensive textbooks. Its findings from a cost analysis conducted in 2013 included:

- **Lower Prices:** OCL materials cost 90 percent less than the materials that faculty members used prior to adopting OCL, saving students \$96 per class. The average OCL material costs \$12, while the average traditional textbook replaced was \$135.
- **Massive Savings:** The OCL has saved students \$5.5 million in textbook costs to date, including \$2.9 million during the 2012-2013 academic year alone. The vast majority of these savings (\$5.1 million) are within the Washington community and technical colleges.^[3]

OER improves student achievement, access, and relevance of course materials.

A large-scale study at the University of Georgia found that college students provided with free course materials at the beginning of class get significantly better academic results than those who do not. This is because, in part, they have the course materials available to them right from the start and are less likely to fall behind in their coursework due to not having access to course materials.^[4]

Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC), a global coalition supportive of OER, presents on its website these compelling images: “Imagine an American History textbook with the latest news from the run-up to the 2018 election, or a math tutorial that incorporates local landmarks into word problems.”^[5]

It states that the systems for sharing information in education have not caught up with the potential of 21st century technology, presenting the following facts about the current state of course material offerings:

- Legacy publishing models restrict the dissemination and innovative use of resources, while textbook prices continue to rise rapidly. This leaves students without access to their required materials. Using OER solves this problem because the material is free online, affordable in print, and forever available through archiving the online materials.
- Digital offerings from traditional publishers come laced with access restrictions and expiration dates with little savings in return, and print editions are too often out of date by the time they hit the shelves.

Faculty support the OER initiatives.

University faculty expressed support to the Legislature regarding the creation of OER and making them available in a variety of courses. They anticipate faculty will continue to include traditional published materials, as well as newer online resources, depending on the level and topic of the course.

A staff member from WSU reported to the Legislature that WSU has experienced success in deploying small OER grants. WSU identified small sums of money over the past several years at three of its campuses to fund small faculty grants to adapt already-available OER textbooks that meet its standards for quality. He said that meant, in practice, the faculty would marry those textbooks with assorted faculty-developed tools that otherwise would be packaged with modern textbooks—videos, online quizzes and homework, and other instructional materials.

DEFINITIONS

CAMPUS COORDINATOR means a designated facilitator to promote, assist, and support the creation of OER by establishing and coordinating training seminars, creating workshops, helping faculty and staff identify available resources and funding, and cataloging and evaluating OER used or created by an IHE's faculty.

HIGH-ENROLLMENT COURSES means courses that have student enrollments above the average enrollment of undergraduate courses at the same level (e.g., lower division [100-200 level] or upper division [300-400 level]) and that count toward a bachelor's degree.

OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES means freely accessible, openly licensed educational textbooks, documents, materials, and media that reside in the public domain for free use and repurposing for the intention of teaching, learning, assessing, and researching. OER are educational materials and resources that are free and available for use by anyone. Some resources are under license to remix, improve, and redistribute. OER include full courses, course materials, learning objectives, software, and intellectual property licenses, among other things.

APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Applications are welcome from any eligible IHE as listed on the cover page. Project directors may be any IHE employee, including but not limited to faculty, librarians, technologists, administrators, university staff, and bookstore staff. Each grant application must be endorsed and submitted by the IHE, signed by a person authorized to legally bind the IHE to a contractual relationship.

Projects must involve the creation, adaption, or innovative use of currently available OER—educational materials openly licensed to the public to freely use, adapt, modify, and share. WSAC encourages applicants to consider projects that support already-established programs due to the small award amounts and short duration of the grant program. Adoptions and/or adaptations of existing OER are the anticipated focus of these grant projects.

PRIORITY OUTCOMES

1. Highest estimated reduction in textbook costs for students.
2. Collaboration amongst colleagues teaching same curriculum.

APPLICATION INFORMATION

Applicants must submit clearly written applications with documentation of estimated cost reduction in textbook costs for students, with sufficient detail to allow proposal evaluators to determine how the IHE calculated the estimated cost reduction.

Page Limits and Formatting Requirements

(1) Page limits for application sections:

<i>Section</i>	<i>Page limit</i>
Cover Page	1
Application Narrative, including references	5
Estimate of Textbook Cost Reduction	1
Budget & Budget Narrative	2
Letter of Support from IHE Leadership	1
Faculty/Staff Curriculum Vitae	1 for each person

(2) Formatting requirements:

<i>Description</i>	<i>Requirements</i>
Page Size	8.5" by 11"
Printing	One side only
Page Margins	1" top, bottom, and both sides
Spacing	Double-space all text <u>in the application narrative section</u> , including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions. Single line-spacing is acceptable in all other sections.
Font Type and Size	Readable 12-point font such as Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial

Deadline for Submission

The WSAC grant administrator must receive your application no later than December 7, 2018, at 5:00 PM (Pacific Standard Time). WSAC will not consider late applications.

Cover Page

Project title, project description (100 words or less), IHE name, address, and name and contact information for the project director.

Narrative

Describe the proposed project and address the following required information in the proposal.

Project Objectives

What are the objectives of your proposed work? How do they reflect the goal of the legislation to reduce student textbook costs?

Project Intent

Tell us why you are applying for this grant. Show research and/or previous experience at your IHE to support whatever plan you propose.

Project Design

What will you do? Provide enough detail for reviewers to understand the scope of what you propose and how you will apply it at your IHE.

The project design must include plans for a campus coordinator and/or faculty support as described in the DEFINITIONS section (above). Faculty may not use grant funding to duplicate OER that are already free and publicly available.

Project Evaluation

How will you measure your success? Please include your methodology for tracking the use of OER in postsecondary courses. Include the "Financial Impact Estimation Template" (below) and any plans to assess the impact of OER on student learning outcomes.

Estimate of Textbook Cost Reduction

Estimate the reduction in textbook and course material costs for students that you anticipate will result from the successful implementation of this project.

The short timeframe of this project may make it challenging to measure the precise student impact. The legislation recognizes this is only an estimate, as the implementation of the project outcomes will occur outside the grant period of performance.

Use the financial impact estimation template below to estimate the student textbook savings.

Financial Impact Estimation Template

Calculation of Total Student Textbook and Course Materials Savings

Course Name	Cost of current course materials (textbook, etc.)	Cost of OER textbook and course materials	Number of course sections	Number of students per course section	Total savings for students

Letter of Commitment from IHE Leadership

Statement of commitment from your IHE leadership (provost, dean, department chair), articulating commitment and continued project support. Include a description of substantive institutional support (financial, in-kind, faculty release time, interdepartmental support such as instructional design, librarian help, technical support, etc.), if any.

Project Budget and Budget Narrative

List your anticipated costs associated with implementing the project. Acceptable costs are faculty and staff salary and benefits, faculty stipends, and meeting and travel costs as allowable under Washington State Administrative & Accounting Manual Chapter 10 – Travel, indirect, and materials. Provide a brief narrative to explain how each budget line item is estimated and the IHE’s underlying assumptions.

Key Personnel Curriculum Vitae (CV)

Include a brief CV for each faculty or staff member who will play a key role in project design, implementation, and/or reporting. Focus on relevant education, research, and experience.

APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

Proposal Review Team

For this grant award, a panel of reviewers will read, comment on, and score all eligible applications using the selection criteria. WSAC will prepare a rank order of applications based on the review team’s evaluation of their quality according to the selection criteria points.

The maximum score for all of the selection criteria is 100 points. The maximum possible score for each selection criterion is included in parentheses following the title of the specific selection criterion. Each selection criterion describes the factors that reviewers will consider in determining the extent to which an applicant meets the selection criterion.

WSAC’s selection decision is final and is not appealable.

Selection Criteria

Reviewers will rate applications that include one or more of these attributes more favorably:

1. Application clearly demonstrates efforts to reduce textbook cost for students.
2. Applicants use funds to adopt and adapt existing free or very low-cost OER course materials.
3. Institutions demonstrate support from campus leadership and key personnel.
4. Project work includes teams of faculty (i.e., all the faculty teaching one course or teaching successive courses within one department, across a campus, between campuses or institutions).
5. Projects work with faculty teaching high-enrollment courses.
6. Application demonstrates substantive institutional support (financial, in-kind, faculty release time, interdepartmental support such as instructional design, librarian help, technical support, etc.).

Student Savings on Textbooks (30 points maximum)

Application clearly demonstrates efforts to reduce textbook cost for students. Project estimates overall cost savings for student savings on textbooks attributed to adoption of OER and reduction in student textbook costs.

Budget (5 points maximum)

Budget narrative is sufficiently detailed for reviewers to understand how budget amounts were calculated. Project costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. Grant dollars do not duplicate OERs that are already free and publicly available.

Faculty Support (15 points maximum)

Project includes funding earmarked for faculty support, either as a line item in the project budget or as a contribution by the institution to the project without charge to the grant.

Project Design (20 points maximum)

Project goals, objectives, and outcomes achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable. Objectives for the project are clearly articulated and thoroughly aligned with legislation by: creating a designated campus coordinator who will be the campus lead and centralized contact regarding OERs; or supporting faculty to adopt, modify, or create new OERs for reducing students' cost of attendance; or both.

Applicant uses funds to adopt and adapt existing free or very low-cost OER course materials in existing courses. Project creates, adapts, or innovatively uses OERs and states IHE will license all educational materials to the public to freely use, adapt, modify, and share.

Project plan contains well-defined and feasible project design with processes and activities that directly link to project objectives.

Project builds on the IHE's capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the student population in terms of course materials. Proposal describes the potential replicability of the proposed project or strategies in other departments, campuses, or IHE.

Project builds capacity and yields results that will extend beyond the period of state funding. It demonstrates strong likelihood the training or provisions of proposed project will lead to improvements in the achievement of students as measured against the IHE's already rigorous academic standards. The project training or professional development services are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.

Project plan will achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

Time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.

Institutional Support (10 points maximum)

Institutions demonstrate support from campus leadership and key personnel. Application contains institutional support for project activities, including financial and in-kind support, faculty release time, interdepartmental support such as instructional design, librarian help, etc. Department chair supports faculty members working on project.

Collaboration With Other Faculty (10 points maximum)

Project plan demonstrates collaborations with other faculty colleagues teaching same curriculum. Project teams include collaborative groups of faculty (i.e., all the faculty teaching one course or teaching successive courses within one department, across a campus, between campuses or institutions). Project plan includes collective commitments to maximize the effectiveness of project services, such as department-wide commitments (for example, redesign all sections of a class or all classes in sequence) or multi-institutional commitments (for example, collaborators on more than one university campus, commitment to implement at more than one campus or other IHE).

Project Evaluation (5 points maximum)

Proposal goals, design, and intent provide comprehensive evidence that the project will be a success. Proposal articulates a clear method for evaluating project success. Project evaluation plan outlined in the proposal demonstrates improved student savings, learning, retention, and success.

Project Personnel Qualifications (5 points maximum)

Project plan includes key project personnel with qualifications that include relevant education, research, and experience in developing OER, as listed in their CV.

AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Open Licensing Requirements

Any new learning materials created with funds from this grant are required to be openly made freely available to the public using a Creative Commons CC-BY license. When the deliverable consists of modifications to pre-existing works, the license extends only to those modifications that can be separately identified and only to the extent that open licensing is permitted under the terms of any licenses or other legal restrictions on the use of pre-existing works.

Final Report

Grant recipients must submit a final report to WSAC, including financial information and a summary of grant project activities, outcomes, and student textbook cost savings, on or before September 30, 2019. WSAC will distribute the format and specific requirements of the final report on June 1, 2019, to grant recipients. The final report will include the following performance measures.

Performance Measures

WSAC will use the following performance measures in assessing the successful performance of the OER pilot program grants.

1. The number of students that the IHE anticipates will enroll in courses in academic year 2019-20 that use OER developed through the grant;
2. The anticipated average cost-savings per student;
3. The anticipated total cost-savings for students who will use OER compared to students in the same course of study who used traditional textbooks;
4. The anticipated number and percentage of courses among project team faculty that adopted the use of OER, where applicable, as opposed to those that continued to use paper or electronic textbooks; and
5. The anticipated number of institutions outside of the project team that adopted the use of the OER produced through the grant.

ENDNOTES

[1] Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, The Economics Daily, College tuition and fees increase 63 percent since January 2006 (<https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2016/college-tuition-and-fees-increase-63-percent-since-january-2006.htm>).

[2] National Center of Education Statistics, 2017 Digest of Education Statistics, (https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d17/tables/dt17_330.40.asp?current=yes).

[3] Allen, Nicole, Textbook Advocate, April 30, 2013. (<https://studentpirgs.org/resources/updated-cost-analysis-open-course-library>)

[4] <https://www.insidehighered.com/digital-learning/article/2018/07/16/measuring-impact-oer-university-georgia>

[5] <https://sparcopen.org/open-education/>

IMPORTANT NOTES FROM WSAC

WSAC used content throughout document from the United States Department of Education Office of Postsecondary Education Open Textbooks Pilot program Federal Register Number (83 FR 36577) without attribution. Source:

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