Open Education Initiative Faculty Grants (2018-19) provide technical and financial assistance to Virginia Tech faculty who create original or adapting existing open educational resources (OER), and share them freely and publicly under an open license which allows free access, distribution, and customization. The publication and free public release of such resources increase the visibility and extend the measurable impact of faculty authored works useful for teaching and learning, provide an authoritative and customizable foundation for increasingly interdisciplinary course approaches, allow diverse instructional approaches and sequences, and address student concerns regarding cost, access, and accessibility of required course materials, ancillary materials, and assessments.

We facilitate this by selecting promising faculty-proposed projects, encouraging the use of existing openly licensed content and technology, leveraging campus expertise including pedagogy, instructional design, accessibility, copyright, and publishing, and by providing referrals to entities outside the University. Selection is competitive and proposals are peer reviewed. Projects are faculty-led and distinguished by their use, adaptation, or creation of resources with Creative Commons licenses. Projects are intended to result in use, adaptation and/or development of a broad array of openly licensed learning resources, such as: open textbooks, online textbook alternatives, lab manuals, course readers, environments with practice problems and solutions, test banks, videos, etc. and a resulting increase in faculty interest in teaching and decrease in direct student costs.

The long-term goal of the Open Education Initiative Grants is to cultivate and support development of a network of faculty who implement, develop, and adapt open educational resources in support of student learning, and to encourage the broad sharing of open educational resources as part of Virginia Tech’s land-grant mission. Additional literature on open educational resources and example projects is available at: [http://guides.lib.vt.edu/oer](http://guides.lib.vt.edu/oer)

Open Education Initiative Faculty Grants are a project of the Virginia Tech Libraries.

**Rationale**

Institutional incentives do not always sufficiently reward faculty who invest in teaching and learning. This initiative provides technical and collaborative support, funding, and a network of referrals for faculty who wish to invest in creative approaches to using or creating Creative Commons licensed works in their courses.

The high cost of commercial print textbooks and learning software is a major concern for students and increasingly for faculty and administrators, who are exploring new ways
to curb increasing costs—e.g. textbook rentals and used textbooks through the University Bookstore and textbook reserves and multi-user eBooks purchased by the University Libraries.

Additional approaches are now possible given development and growth of content licensed with Creative Commons intellectual property licenses, expanded culture of sharing, more readily available publishing, learning, and archival platforms for digital scholarship, teaching, learning, and content dissemination, institutional financial and technical support, and faculty willingness to explore and implement open educational resources as legitimate and effective options.

**Eligibility**
Virginia Tech faculty with teaching responsibilities are eligible to apply. Faculty awardees at non-Blacksburg locations will receive the same level of assistance as faculty located at the Blacksburg campus.

Grant monies are exclusively for the implementation or development and distribution of Open Educational Resources (OER) as defined here by the Hewlett Foundation. Applicants wishing to use for-fee licensed-materials (including library materials), free online materials without a CC-license, or non-transferable works “used with permission” are welcome to request technical support from the Open Education Initiative but projects using such works are not eligible for grant funding.

**Awards for the year FY 2018-19 include grants of up to $3,000 each.**

Proposals submitted must describe how the faculty member or faculty team will use funds to meet project needs.

Applications are accepted November 15, 2018 and February 15, 2019. Awards are anticipated to be announced two weeks after the review period begins. **Projects are expected to be completed within twelve months of initial award or as otherwise agreed upon.**

These awards are funded by University Libraries at Virginia Tech. Project consultations and technical support are offered through a collaborative partnership between Scholarly Communication and VT Publishing. Service referrals are offered by the University Library’s Teaching and Learning Engagement department, in collaboration with Learning Experience Design (LED) and Accessible Technologies (AT), both units of Technology-enhanced Learning and Online Strategies (TLOS), a division of Information Technology, Virginia Tech’s Center for Excellent in Teaching and Learning (formerly known as CIDER), and various non-VT partners of the University Libraries.

**Support Expectations**
The University Libraries will provide guidance and referrals in the areas of project design and development, finding existing openly licensed resources, Creative Commons licensing and attribution, Copyright, MOUs for paid and volunteer students
working on projects, graphic design, website and E-publishing platforms, print-on-demand solutions, instructional design, learning pedagogy, resource hosting/archiving, and metadata. Additional services may include incur a fee, including: copy editing, peer review management, typesetting, LaTeX, etc.

Funding and Expectations of Grantees
Funds are classified by the University as E&G (Education and General) funds. Funds will be transferred to the lead faculty member’s department in two increments: 50% when the first benchmarks are complete, and 50% when the remaining benchmarks are reached.

First 50% of funds will be released to the lead faculty member’s department when the grantee has:
- Submitted a project timeline, project abstract or description (for public release), brief grantee biography, and summary of expected needs;
- Met with the Open Education project team to discuss project needs, proposed timelines, anticipated project costs, communication plan, eventual outreach strategies, and any other questions;
- Submitted a peer review proposal (faculty and/or student)
- Submitted an OER impact study proposal

The remaining 50% of funds will be released to the lead faculty member's department when:
- Their project plan has been implemented
- The output is openly licensed (CC BY most open license available)
- The output is publicly shared via a public portal (limited access for testbanks, etc.)
- Evidence of peer review is submitted
- 1-page project evaluation has been received
- OER was presented to grantee(s)' Department Head(s) for approval
- Indication of intent to participate in Faculty Showcase
- Indication of agreement to implement OER in their course for two semesters
- Indication of intent to assess the impact of their open educational resource during or after one semester of implementation
- Indication of intent to report enrollment each semester their OER is in use

After final payment, grantees are required to:
- Implement their OER content in their course for at least two semesters
- Participate in a Faculty Showcase
- Assess the impact of their open educational resource during or after one semester of implementation
- Report enrollment each semester their OER is in use

Intellectual Property
Creators retain ownership of their intellectual property. The University Libraries does not assert ownership of creators’ intellectual property. However, grantees are expected to
license their projects with a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 license](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0) and to make the works freely and publicly available via the internet. (Limited public access is permitted for assessment tools such as test banks, etc).

Projects should be based upon the grantee’s own work, existing Creative Commons licensed works (allowing derivatives), or [public domain](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Public_domain) works. Projects must avoid incorporation of works with non-transferable permission, 3rd party for-fee licensed-materials (including library-subscribed resources), and free online materials without a CC-license.

Grantees are prohibited from transferring or licensing rights to their learning resource in ways that would limit the material from being editable and freely available, or from being licensed with the most open Creative Commons license possible (i.e. grantees are restricted from signing commercial publication agreements for their learning resource which may restrict free public access and/or limit modification.)

**Criteria for Funding**

1. Project is understandable and manageable
2. Reduces student learning costs
3. Impacts reduced learning costs for large numbers of students
4. Quality and rigor equivalent to works listed in governance-approved courses applications
5. Contributes to innovations in university curricular activities
6. Results in creation and public distribution of open educational resource(s)
7. Supports the strategic goals of the University
8. Aligns with current academic initiatives and priorities, and is coordinated with efforts across the College, discipline, or program
9. Complies with any/all state regulations and accreditation requirements
10. Course has already been approved through the governance process
11. University Library and affiliated partners can reasonably support proposed projects.

Applications will be reviewed by a peer-review committee consisting of Virginia Tech faculty with additional representation from the University Libraries, TLOS, and CETL (formerly known as CIDER).
Application Process

Elements of a complete proposal include the following FOUR items:

1. **Online application** (includes project narrative)
2. **Letter of agreement**
3. Current Syllabus
4. Governance-approved syllabus and coversheet (available from: gkinder@vt.edu)
5. (optional) Sample of materials already created on which you plan to build your project

We recommend that you first download and review elements 1 and 2 before beginning an application.

After completing the online form, please attach and send the remaining three documents to: arwalz@vt.edu with the subject line: **OEL Faculty Grant Application**

Applications are accepted until November 15, 2018 and February 15, 2019. Awards are anticipated to be announced within two weeks after the review period begins. Projects are expected to be completed within twelve months of initial award or as otherwise agreed upon.

Questions or comments? Please contact Anita Walz arwalz@vt.edu or 540-231-2204