



EUniWell Declaration on Open Education

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1. EUniWell Declaration on Open Education

1. We, the University of Birmingham (United Kingdom), Università degli studi di Firenze (Italy), Universität zu Köln (Germany), Universiteit Leiden (the Netherlands), Linnéuniversitetet (Sweden), Nantes Université (France), Semmelweis University (Hungary), all members of the EUniWell consortium, adhere to the principles of the Cape Town Open Education Declaration.
2. The Cape Town Declaration, written in 2007, covers all aspects of Open Education. These ideas have further been improved in Europe's framework on Open Education and, in 2019, in the Unesco Recommendation on Open Educational Resources, going from ideas to implementation. Moreover, we share the analysis that the pandemic of 2020-2021 has led education into new directions in which more than ever cooperation and openness have become the pillars. We adhere to these ideas and in particular we stress that:
 - i. Open Educational Resources (OER) represent a crucial pathway to share learning material between teachers and institutions.
 - ii. Other Open Educational Practices (OEP) have the potential to make education more inclusive and collaborative.
 - iii. Open Education enables our institutions both to advance education in the 21st century and to contribute to the goals put forward by the United Nations and Unesco towards the achievement of the UN 2030 Agenda.
 - iv. Publicly-funded research ought to serve society, it cannot be "closed source". Results and data should be made available as widely as possible to penetrate society, economy and politics. Beyond the development of infrastructure which enables the sharing of data and results, the culture of Open Science also depends on the capacity for researchers to communicate their research results broadly, beyond their peers, to a non-specialist public. The responsibility of EUniWell extends to issues regarding how we do science and how we share its results. Building upon the Mission Statement of the EUniWell partners (https://www.euniwell.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/Downloads/EUniWell-Mission-Statement-for-Download.pdf), we believe that these goals can apply equally to the question of Open Education.
3. We adhere to the principles of the Cape Town Open Education Declaration, the European Framework on Open Education and the Unesco

Recommendation on Open Educational Resources as well as the EUniWell Mission Statement and make it our intention to promote these principles by encouraging and supporting our staff in using and developing open educational practices, by making the produced open educational resources visible at international level and in particular by providing a common repository of OER built by our institutions. This corresponds to a number of operations to which the partners of EUniWell are already individually committed, as detailed in the Appendix, where the definitions are clarified and the challenge of integrating the different commitments into a complex network and shared platforms is highlighted.

4. As Universities with a mission and interest both in Research and Education, we will aim to consider jointly the questions of Open Science and Open Education through promoting research on these topics and, more than ever, allowing and favouring a continuum between research and education.
5. We therefore strongly recommend that the EUniWell partners sign the Cape Town Declaration and provide a roadmap for integrating all of the above in our mission.

2. Appendix

Some definitions

Open Education is widely accepted as “creating a world where each and every person on earth can access and contribute to the sum of all human knowledge [...] planting the seeds of a new pedagogy where educators and learners create, shape and evolve knowledge together, deepening their skills and understanding as they go”ⁱ.

As for **Open Science**, a key component of Open Education is the free circulation of knowledge. The mechanisms to do this, in Open Science, come under **Open Access**. In the case of Open Education, **Open Educational Resources** (OER) are “teaching, learning and research materials in any medium – digital or otherwise – that reside in the public domain or have been released under an open license that permits no-cost access, use, adaptation and redistribution by others with no or limited restrictions”ⁱⁱ.

Of course, there are many other ways to deploy Open Education. These are usually known as **Open Educational Practices** (OEP), which can be defined as “the use of Open Educational Resources for teaching and learning in order to innovate the learning process”ⁱⁱⁱ.

ⁱ <https://www.capetowndeclaration.org/>

ⁱⁱ <https://en.unesco.org/themes/building-knowledge-societies/oer>

ⁱⁱⁱ Ehlers, U.D. (2011). "[Extending the Territory: From Open Educational Resources to Open Educational Practices](#)". Journal of Open, Flexible and Distance Learning.

3. Cross references to other work packages of the EUniWell work programme

The EUniWell Alliance follows a strong commitment towards the transfer of research knowledge and research-based education to society on diverse levels. Therefore, Open Science and Open Education are also integrated in Work Package 4 and Work Package 5 of the EUniWell work programme. Specifically, in:

1. WP4, task 2 (Open Science): The alliance will assure to empower cutting-edge research and research-based education through a stronger and more diverse interaction with society and make scientific research in the broadest sense accessible to all levels in society. The alliance will adapt an open access policy that includes support for all researchers to publish open access.
2. WP4, task 3 (Citizen Science): The alliance will engage with all levels in society to build on diverse perspectives in co-creation of research initiatives. EUniWell-Solved! will provide entrepreneurial training to stimulate citizen-led problem-solving to address regional well-being issues.
3. WP5 builds on the third key component of the EUniWell mission concerning the improvement of synergies and enhancing organizational structures, opening boundaries and installing a holistic approach to the development of EUniWell. At the heart of EUniWell's mission is the need to accelerate internal transformations within our higher education institutions and ultimately systems, thereby promoting an inclusive well-being agenda for all staff, students and society at large. It is here that the accelerating teams will play a crucial role as focused task forces to drive our joint organizational transformation, supporting EUniWell's vision to build a learning organization based on a system thinking approach. Within this framework, EUniWell follows the objective of Open Science: openness and the removal of borders is a key element of our vision. This translates into a very strong commitment to Open Science and Open Access, as is also reflected in our research-and innovation project EUniWell#Research, under the H2020 topping-up grant. We will notably pool our resources and elaborate a common framework and development roadmap for Open Science and Open Access.

4. WP 5, task 4 (Infrastructures for Open Science), rests on openness and the removal of borders as a key element of our vision. We will develop a common initiative for Open Science, based on existing practices and expertise. We will:
 - a. exchange best practices and initiatives to promote and foster Open Science.
 - b. design a common Open Science framework for the alliance based on the LERU roadmap for Open Science.
 - c. set up an Open Science skills training programme in cooperation with the Cologne Competence Centre for Research Data Management (C3RDM) and the Leiden University Centre for Digital Scholarship (CDS).

4. References

- The Cape Town Open Education Declaration:
<https://www.capetowndeclaration.org/>
- The Unesco Recommendation on Open Educational Resources:
<https://en.unesco.org/themes/building-knowledge-societies/oer/recommendation>
- Europe's Framework on Open Education:
<https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/open-education>
- FOSTER Portal (Foster Plus Project):
<https://www.fosteropenscience.eu/>
- Open education Global Strategy:
<https://www.oeglobal.org/open-education-global-strategic-plan/>
- MIT Open Learning experience:
<https://openlearning.mit.edu/about-us>