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## Open Educational Resource Policy Considerations and Recommendations: Arguments for Library Involvement

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## **Open Educational Resource Policy Considerations and Recommendations: Arguments for Library Involvement**

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### **Abstract**

Open Educational Resources (OER) have the potential to provide great benefit to those both in, and outside of, higher education. With financial pressure existing for both students, and libraries, OER could be uniquely positioned to alleviate some of this strain. This paper examines the role institutional and national OER policy plays in the development and use of OER in the context of the 2019 UNESCO OER recommendations, National Forum 2021 enabling policies recommendations for Ireland as well as the impact policy, or lack thereof can have on an institutional level. Librarians and the librarian skill such as in knowledge and experience in navigating copyright, licensing issues, intellectual property, rights, and discoverability, can be greatly beneficial to the creation, publishing and storing of OER but several barriers exist including awareness, staffing, skills, time, and institutional culture. This paper discusses policy concerns and considerations and makes arguments for librarian involvement and illustrates areas in which librarians' skills can be leveraged. Inequality, access, accessibility, and the common ethics that underpin both Open Education and librarianship are key considerations and are discussed throughout.

**Keywords:** open educational resources; OER; policy; institutional culture; librarianship; Ireland.

### **Definitions**

*Open Educational Resources (OER):* Open Educational Resources (OER) are learning, teaching and research materials in any format and medium that reside in the public domain or are under copyright that have been released under an open license, that permit no-cost access, re-use, re-purpose, adaptation, and redistribution by others. (UNESCO, 2019)

*Open License:* Open license refers to a license that respects the intellectual property rights of the copyright owner and provides permissions granting the public the rights to access, re-use, re-purpose, adapt and redistribute educational materials. (UNESCO, 2019)

## **Introduction**

This paper illustrates the demand for Open Educational Resource (OER) development, publishing, and teaching, and crucially, policy, bearing in mind the underlying values of an Open approach, within the context of the literature and the 2019 UNESCO Recommendations which Ireland has adopted. The Recommendation on OER - adopted unanimously by the UNESCO General Conference at its 40th session in November 2019 - supports the creation, use and adaptation of inclusive and quality OER, and facilitates international cooperation in this field (UNESCO, 2019). OER have been central to the IMPACT project at TU Dublin, leading to the development of the TOTAL repository, which has prompted this article.

Ireland broadly lacks OER policy in higher education institutions, and has no national policy, while we have national Open Access and Open Data policies (National Steering Committee on Open Access Policy, 2012). How should Ireland approach implementing UNESCO recommendations on national OER policy? Does Ireland have an opportunity to lead and set an example of what can be accomplished with sensible, clear, and concise national OER policy? Supportive policy is recommended for OER (UNESCO, 2019). What does that look like from an institutional perspective? Can a lack of institutional policy be supportive? What should we acknowledge and bear in mind when creating institutional OER policy?

The term openness is both widely described and contested as an evolving concept with multiple dimensions and layers (Cronin, 2017; Skidmore & Provida, 2019). It has become more difficult to define the ‘open’ in ‘open education’. While open education (OE) predates open distance models of education, the current interpretation is generally affiliated with distance learning (Weller, 2016). There have “always been tensions and philosophical questions provoked by the idea of open education” leading some to ask, “whether open education is the saviour of traditional education or the herald of its demise” (Farrow, 2016, p.1-3). The ‘battle for open’ is won and yet it does not feel like victory (Weller, 2014). We must be wary of, as Watters (2014) defines: “Openwashing: n., having an appearance of open-source and open licensing for marketing purposes, while continuing proprietary practices”.

Importantly, we must remain cognizant of the underlying values behind OE, the motivations behind policy, and the barriers to OER use when creating and implementing policy. This paper makes arguments that we must acknowledge the role that librarians can play in a several of OER areas, namely: advocacy, support, teaching, management, storage, creating value and policy development.

### **Methodology**

The methodology of this paper is a review and analysis of the literature through a functional library and Irish higher education lens with a focus on finding the current benefits and challenges, institutional policy considerations and case studies, negative aspects of institutional policy development in the emerging area of OE, and areas of library involvement. Literature was sought in the English language only, although a global perspective was also sought.

Although the literature covers a wide variety of areas within OER and OE, this research focuses on three themes identified throughout the literature: pertinence and policy, inequality, and librarian roles within OER policy and implementation. Although the literature considers these themes in a variety of contexts, this research paper will focus on the themes in the context of OER policy development.

### **Review and Analysis of the Literature**

OER have a range of potential advantages: expanded access to learning, scalability, support for lifelong and non-formal learning, replacing costly course materials, up-to-date information which can easily be made current unlike traditional textbooks, enhancement of course content, showcasing of innovation and talent within the institution, and continual improvement of resources (Braddlee & Vanscoy, 2019; Cronin, 2019; IFLA, 2020; Kruger & Abramovich, 2019; National Forum, 2019; Skidmore & Provida, 2019).

OER are increasingly important for education and have proven that they can provide democratic and equitable access to knowledge (HEA, 2021; IFLA, 2020; UNESCO, 2019). The equitable access to higher education has been a national policy priority in Ireland (Higher Education Authority, 2021). OER and Massive Online Open Courses (MOOCs) have expanded the educational options available to people around the world (Farrow, 2016). OER have had an increased uptake due to the Covid-19 global pandemic – fulfilling online student needs as well as for sharing ever-evolving Covid-19 information, with UNESCO praising OER for these feats (UNESCO, 2020a; WHO, 2020). Additionally, Covid-19 has highlighted

and exacerbated the ongoing digital content crisis. With costs of e-resources such as journals and eBooks rising unsustainably and putting libraries under serious financial strain (LAI, 2020), the creation and use of OER have become increasingly important. There have been many new OER databases established due to the pandemic, The *OER4Covid Initiative* providing one such example, aiming to establish an online community support network for educators, assess local needs, share OER-enabled online courses, give examples of open technologies, curate openly licensed resources and to build capacity to design and develop OER for local needs (OER4Covid, 2020). OER Recommendations were adopted by UNESCO member states in November 2019 aiming to enhance cooperation within the OER community, develop policy, and support open teaching and learning. The *Call for Joint Action* encouraged the implementation of the OER Recommendations, developing supportive OER policy, inclusive and equitable access to quality OER and nurturing sustainability while fostering cooperation internationally (UNESCO, 2020b).

Cronin (2019) asserts that “Higher education operates within a rapidly changing sociotechnical context characterized by ubiquitous connectivity, a shift from knowledge scarcity to knowledge abundance, and a move from hierarchical toward more networked forms of social organisation”. Social issues of inequality are ever present, and librarians are well placed to foresee and mitigate potential flaws in their development and delivery of OE and OER in keeping with the ethics of librarianship. Social justice can be seen as a component of the meaning of Open (Farrow, 2016). IFLA (2012) advises librarians to ensure that accessing information is not denied and that equitable services are provided for all people regardless of any factor (age, citizenship, gender and so on). The Higher Education Authority (2021) advocates for access to be seen as the responsibility of everyone in a Higher Education Institution. IFLA (2012) recommendations propose that librarians support people in their information searching, assist them to develop their reading skills and information literacy, and encourage them in the ethical use of information (with particular attention to the welfare of young people). Inequality is ever present, and only through acknowledgement, recognition and attempts to reduce inequality will we make a difference. A concerted effort is required, and we should remain cognizant of barriers to access and accessibility issues.

Inequality and accessibility are essential considerations and should remain as such (Atenas et al., 2019; Czerniewicz & Brown, 2013; Czerniewicz & Rother, 2018). More should be done to consider unique Irish student issues with access and accessibility and is a priority on both a national and European level (Higher Education Authority, 2021). Student barriers to access

are innumerable and can range from learning difficulties to physical technology access, and these barriers can hamper and hinder student development and outcomes (Feldstein et al., 2012). “Openness really refers to the removal of a barrier that previously impeded some groups from participation” (Farrow, 2016). The place for policy is to support and advocate for access (Czerniewicz & Rother, 2018; Skidmore & Provida, 2019). Students with any range of disability must be considered in the creation of OER, and a focus on accessibility is imperative (Skidmore & Provida, 2019). OER should be created using a Universal Design for Learning (UDL) approach and follow W3C Accessibility guidelines (Atenas et al., 2020). OER offer a wide variety of content beyond simply just text, such as videos and images (Rolfe, 2017), through this OER can be used to support a diversity of learners. UDL is viewed as an achievement of the current *National Access Plan* (Higher Education Authority, 2021) and the range of content types offered by OER can be used as a means to help further this. “...Openness should make some difference to the way people teach and learn” (Farrow, 2016).

Furthermore, the fact that digital strangers exist in higher education and that the confidence and skills required for use of technology are still lacking require sincere consideration (Czerniewicz & Rother, 2018). Moreover, access to digital technology, the internet, and the reliability of such are serious barriers to OER use and adoption in rural Ireland and lower socioeconomic areas, as well as globally (UNESCO, 2019). This is especially pertinent due to the online delivery of education necessitated by Covid-19. Student outcomes should not be disadvantaged by the method of delivery, and OER has some potential benefits including no break in access, cost-free and institution or course specific materials. Covid-19 has demonstrated the inequality present in our society, the haves and the have nots, everywhere in the world but also in Ireland (Higher Education Authority, 2021). Unique Irish inequality such as those in direct provision, those in halting sites, those who are homeless should also be examined and suggestions made for how to overcome these challenges. Covid-19 has disproportionately impacted those from disadvantaged areas (Higher Education Authority, 2021). The philosophy of Open is that as many barriers as possible should be dismantled in the aim of providing knowledge, and librarians endeavour to serve their community as best they can (Walz, 2017; Farrow, 2016). Through the promotion of the social justice component of Open, Farrow (2016) proposes that we could eventually see the expression of Openness give way for “rubric of educational freedoms”. Awareness, innovation, and collaboration on inequality are continually required. Access, accessibility, and equity are all cornerstones of

Open and as such need to be acknowledged in any national or institutional OER policy or when creating OER.

The UNESCO (2019) recommendation highlights five action areas, namely:

1. Building the capacity of stakeholders to create, access, re-use, adapt and redistribute OER
2. Developing supportive policy for OER
3. Encouraging inclusive and equitable quality OER
4. Nurturing the creation of sustainability models for OER
5. Promoting and reinforcing international cooperation in OER.

UNESCO recommends embedding OER policies into national policy frameworks and strategies and aligning them with other open policies and guiding principles such as those for Open Access, Open Data, Open Source Software and Open Science (UNESCO, 2019) as well as encouraging member states to deploy appropriate research mechanisms to measure the effectiveness and efficiency of OER policies and incentives against defined objectives.

Monitoring the impact of OE policies will provide insight into their appropriateness (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2020; National Forum, 2021).

Recommendations for institutional policies from the National Forum (2021) and Atenas Havemann, Neumann, and Stefanelli, (2020) compliment those of UNESCO, institutional OER policies should both relate and support other existing policies, strategies, and missions. The National Forum (2018) recommends creating policies which are enabling. Enabling policies are defined as “those which are implementable, situated in practice and reflective of the priorities of the higher education institution”.

The literature contains case studies from countries where OER and institutional OER policy are much more prevalent and have a longer history in higher education institutions than in Ireland. For example, examination of institutional OER policy in South Africa, and found that it is not always clear what type of policy is best in a given institution, and how institutional culture, structure and agency affect institutional OER policy (Cox and Trotter, 2016). Some institutional policies act as 'hygienic' (mandated, requiring adoption) while others act as 'motivating' (incentivizing) and that the success of OER policy is mediated by existing institutional structure, prevailing culture, and academic agency (Cox and Trotter, 2016). Therefore, consideration of these factors will give insight into how an institutional policy should be developed.

Place and culture must influence how institutional policy might become philosophically informed, but that the concepts of ‘place’ and ‘culture’ themselves require further philosophical analysis (Griffiths, 2014). The question to be asked is whether the institution has the practical means of promoting OER or other forms of open activities (Cox & Trotter, 2016). This is often a space in which the librarians can be involved in promoting an OER culture - giving advice to faculty, running workshops and other training materials, and making the institutional repository a place in which OER can be deposited and shared. Training in copyright is seen as a necessary step in providing faculty with the skills to engage with OER (Rolfe, 2017).

For sustainable engagement with OER, advocates must take a nuanced and often multi-pronged approach to institutional policy. That policy must fit the culture, and give examples of possible interventions for motivating OER activity in different institutional contexts (Cox & Trotter, 2016). Institutional culture is therefore a key policy consideration, and lends itself to the findings of Riskey et al. (2020) and their suggestion of a devolved model facilitating access to OER through the use of institutional repositories. Policy alone is not motivating for staff, culture, and values on both an institutional and a personal level play a stronger role in engaging with Open (Rolfe, 2017). A national policy with devolved implementation would allow individual institutions the autonomy to decide how to integrate and implement enabling OER policy into their institution and strategy.

However, OER are not without challenges: copyright and legal issues, quality concerns, intellectual property and ownership concerns, lack of recognition or reward, discoverability issues, technological barriers to use (access and skills), and accessibility issues (Cronin, 2019; Czerniewicz & Rother, 2018; IFLA, 2020; Kruger & Abramovich, 2019; Skidmore & Provida, 2019).

Therefore, knowledge of copyright, licensing, intellectual property rights and laws, quality standards and ethics, discoverability, storage, and accessibility are necessary for successfully enabling institutional OER policy, implementation and use, advocacy, support and management, publishing, and production. In all these areas, librarians’ skills can be leveraged (Braddlee & Vanscoy, 2019; IFLA, 2020; Kruger & Abramovich, 2019; Santiago & Ray, 2020). In order to follow National Forum (2021) guidelines, institutions should be consulting and collaborating with experts when policymaking. Atenas et al. (2020) specifically name librarians as stakeholders to be involved in the creation of OE policies. Both Atenas et al.



(2020) and Risquez et al. (2020) propose the institutional repository as a home for OER, however the study by Risquez et al. (2020) found that repository managers did not feel that institutional repositories were necessarily the best fit to host OER. Most OER were held by institutions in dedicated repositories as opposed to hybrid repositories that contain a mix of both OER and research (Santos-Hermosa, Estupinyà, Nonó-Rius, París-Folch, & Prats-Prat, 2020).

There are many demands on the library's budget, time, resources, and staff. Individual librarians may find themselves taking on more services without gaining more staff, higher budgets, or higher salaries, while the scope of their roles continues to creep. The increased workload and responsibilities are amongst the big challenges in supporting and promoting OER (Smith & Dickson, 2016; Mwinyimbegu, 2018). Morgan, (2018) found that the effort involved in supporting the development of OER was unsustainable for their library. It is felt by repository managers that a different set of skills are required to support the development of OER (Risquez et al., 2020).

### **OER Policy and Implications**

OER policy in higher education institutions, in contrast to some other Open initiatives, such as Open Access or Open Data, is not prevalent in Ireland. Creating an enabling institutional policy for OER represents another paradigm shift towards Open outputs, and OE at large. It also represents a move towards legitimizing work that academics and university staff have done, particularly those who do not participate in traditional research (Braddlee & Vanscoy, 2019; Santiago & Ray, 2020; Thompson & Muir, 2020). To promote a culture of openness and to encourage the creation of OER, institutional policies should look to both reward and recognise the creation and usage of OER (Atenas et al., 2020). OER can also be an alternative to traditional publishing as a means of creating resources, as well as reduce, augment, or replace traditional course materials which may be expensive for students (Griffiths, 2014; Hunsicker-Walburn et al., 2018; Nagle, 2021; Rebecca Griffiths et al., 2018)

Creating OER can require different level of services in OER publishing, for example, for open textbooks: project management, peer review, editing, proofreading, layout and design, book cover creation, obtaining an ISBN, and marketing – in many of these areas the library is engaged, meaning the library is often an integral part in the production of OER (Santiago & Ray, 2020). A lack of institutional OER policy can be perceived as a barrier to usage, with policies being seen as providing boundaries helping to facilitate proper OER discovery and

usage (Mwinyimbegu, 2018). Similarly, the presence of an institutional policy can promote awareness and usage of OER among faculty (Cronin, 2017). Many faculty members are creating content that do not have open licenses so are not technically OER but are made available to students through virtual learning environments (VLEs) (Santiago & Ray, 2020). This provides a sort of untapped market in which existing resources can be transitioned to OER. Librarians can advise and support this transition, as well as create dedicated spaces for OER on institutional repositories. However, a wider strategy is needed than simply putting OER online (Farrow, 2016); Thomas, Campbell, Barker, and Hawksey (2012) suggest treating OER like Open Datasets. A survey of institutional repositories storage of OER, found under half of the respondents used their institutional repositories for OER. One respondent reported that credibility and a quality assurance element are given to OER by uploading content to a repository with the repository managers ensuring that the licensing, format, metadata is correct (Thomas et al., 2012). Moreover, it is important for the academic staff to feel that they are not “burdened” with the task of creating or using OER but that institutional support be encouraged to engage with them on their own volition (Cox & Trotter, 2016). However, the creation of OER can take time and the true impact of a resource might not be seen until long after it is published (Cox & Trotter, 2016). Therefore, institutions must avoid the pitfall of expecting immediate returns on their investment and communicate and support staff (Santiago & Ray, 2020). Communicating, supporting, and listening to staff could potentially go a long way in changing the viewpoints of the faculty who do not contribute to OER. Are faculty aware that teaching notes could be made into an OER? Are they aware of the wider societal benefits of OER? Do academic staff feel that their content is worth sharing?

Fears over the ownership of a resource can prevent faculty from engaging with OER (Thompson & Muir, 2020). This can be alleviated through the use of Creative Commons licenses, which are viewed as means of sharing content while still maintaining control over (Rolfe, 2017). It should be noted however that a work can be given an unrestrictive license but not properly shared or promoted; is a resource truly open if it cannot be found (Farrow, 2016)? Enabling institutional OER policies should include and be created in conjunction with support to encourage OER creation and use. Institutional policies should provide guidance on the creation, use and implementation of OE (Atenas et al., 2020). If there is a lack of support or follow through on behalf of the institution, policies might just become something to be

ignored and forgotten. The best policy is going to depend on the institution, it is not a one size fits all situation (Cox & Trotter, 2016).

Atenas, Havemann, Nascimbeni, Villar-Onrubia, and Orlic (2019) identified three policy sensitive areas where participants expressed the need for support: the use of data in education and educational policy; IP licensing, copyright, and copyright reform; Unbundling and Open Learning accreditation. Atenas et al. (2019) contend that open data to be considered OER, which is interesting paired with Thomas et al. (2012) who want OER to be treated like Open datasets. Atenas et al. (2019) have a keen eye on inequality and suggest using workshops to create open educational policies. Guidelines from both the National Forum (2021) and Atenas et al. (2020) recommend the creation of policies through a collaborative process, engaging with a variety of individuals across the institution. Creating institutional policies through collaboration and considering local needs and cultural approaches in education are key to ensure the successful implementation of an enabling policy (National Forum, 2020). The existence of an institutional policy alone is not enough to motivate staff, culture, and values on both an institutional and personal level play a stronger role in engaging with Open (Rolfe, 2017).

The motivations and underlying value of openness in institutional OER policy, both in macro and micro view are worthy of consideration. Czerniewicz and Rother (2018) reviewed studies on the rationale behind institutional educational technology policy and noted that the drivers often do not pertain to concerns of equality or equity – the main drivers behind OER.

### **Final argument for library involvement in OER policy**

Librarians have the expertise and experience necessary to engage with OER, they must remain flexible in their approaches and pivot to fit and contribute to new institutional needs and goals. Creating awareness of the what the library does and has on offer, as well as assess the impact of their activities is an ongoing challenge librarians need to overcome. Librarians are well situated to both be involved in the creation of an enabling institutional OER policy and be contribute to its implementation and assessing of its impact.

Clapp (1964) articulated that the library should focus on local needs and who, how, and for what they serve, and to both identify these and conceptualize workable and aspirational solutions for meeting those needs. Policy may not be required to meet those needs, as Walz (2017) notes that academic librarians usually contribute to institutional governance and can interpret their role to fit programme and institutional needs as they arise, as is often the case

with Open librarians. Moreover, the move towards innovation and collaboration, especially in Open, creates opportunities for the library in scholarship, teaching, support, and service. Walz (2017) is an Open Education, Copyright and Scholarly Communications Librarian, and her role has essentially been crafted by her own decisions and pivots into the sphere of OE. This model of developing and creating your role as a librarian to fit the current need is detailed in a way that is glossed over in other literature. There are various motivations, but also barriers and implications for librarians in working with OER which remain important, but can be of a personal preference, workplace culture and or status quo nature (Aucock, 2014; Duranceau & Kriegsman, 2016; Thompson & Muir, 2020).

The case studies of Scottish Universities (Aucock, 2014; Thompson & Muir, 2020; National Forum, 2021) give notable examples the University of Edinburgh's OER policy is an example of an effective and clear enabling policy that could be replicated elsewhere, like Ireland (National Forum, 2021). "Ground-Up" as opposed to "Top-Down" approaches have been found to work best in Scottish higher education contexts (Thompson & Muir, 2017; Duranceau & Kriegsman, 2016). A similar approach could be considered for Ireland (Risquez et al., 2020). Scottish leaders in the area, for example, University of St. Andrews and University of Edinburgh, have identified benefits and challenges to policy through case study. The University of Edinburgh has been cited by the National Forum (2021) as an example of an enabling policy. The case study approach was not taken for this paper, but this research in an Irish context would be valuable. Policy is a tool and should be used effectively.

Geronimo's Cadillac (Casey, Proven, & Dripps, 2006) offers a great analogy for providing policy and technology to an area that is not ready for it. The central theme of that paper is that the most challenging aspect of e-learning is change management, even though it is not perceived that way. Legal issues (such as copyright in the context of OER) can act as a lightning rod that brings many ownership queries, policy questions, and problems with understanding to the surface (Casey, Proven & Dripps, 2006). Will the implementation of institutional OER policies in Ireland have a similar effect? If institutions do not value OER as things stand, such as in Rolfe (2017), what motivating or hygienic aspects can we have in policy? Will policy simply be redundant? There can be a disconnect between the desires and interests of the staff and those of the institution, with OER being neither well understood or particularly valued (Rolfe, 2017).

As such, awareness is another consideration, exemplified by Mwinyimbegu (2018) examining the role of librarians with OER in Tanzania, selecting three different institutions with different cultures. Their study found that the lack of awareness of OER was a major challenge to librarians, and that creating awareness among all areas of the institution was needed. Similarly, a lack of awareness of what the library does was found by Rolfe (2017). Librarians work in an environment where needs, stakeholders and services are constantly changing and their value as contributions may not always be clear, therefore librarians should demonstrate library impact and value on research and the institution (Oakleaf, 2010). Positioning of the library is important and determines how resources are allocated, how the library is perceived and how the library fits within the organisation (Lawton, 2016). Similarly, a strong position in the institution is vital and affects recognition, resourcing, and prospects (Cox, 2018).

Librarians could measure their visibility using Chapter 7 of *The Invisible Librarian* (Lawton, 2016), and use Chapter 8's *Visibility Improvement Plan* to improve visibility and impact. This assessment would illuminate barriers to involvement, institutional culture issues and awareness issues.

Funders, government, and other stakeholders all look for demonstrations of the library value and each have their own agendas, therefore librarians should be innovative (Peet, 2016). Libraries should connect their activities to the mission of the institution and develop metrics to assess impact and value (Wilkin, 2015). Mwinyimbegu (2018) recommends that librarians promote awareness, integrate OER into collections and library websites, as well as information literacy training and using Institutional Repositories for OER and promotion. As Mwinyimbegu (2018) states “the importance of librarians in OER cannot be overemphasized”.

## **Conclusion**

Ireland should have a national OER policy which is short, clear, and concise with a timeline for implementation in individual institutions, allowing institutions autonomy over depth and implementation, following the UNESCO 2019, National Forum 2021, and Atenas et al. (2020) recommendations, and employ research mechanisms to study the institutional effect and success of national policy. Following Scottish examples is suggested as a template, due to their similar population size and culture.

The role of librarians is varied, and individual librarians can play to their strengths in areas such as advocacy, support, dissemination, advisory (copyright and other legal issues), creation and management. Librarians may need to further develop and broaden skills as they advance in these areas and should be supported in doing so, potentially with professional add-on qualifications in teaching, IT, and soft skills. While there are various barriers to library involvement in OER: some explored were institutional culture, awareness, the status quo in libraries and no clear roadmap for what to do next, these are not insurmountable. Many factors affect this, including library visibility, perceived value, and impact, and how the library is viewed within the institution, potentially limiting library involvement. Means of overcoming these barriers discussed are through leveraging librarian skill sets by involving library staff, utilising librarians in institutional and national policy development and implementation, and by considering completing Lawton's (2016) *Visibility Improvement Plan*.

Recommendations from this paper are that the Ireland introduce national OER policy, and that librarians be involved in Open policy discussions as their wealth of skills are beneficial and their insights valuable. OER policy is pertinent with UNESCO recommendations, Ireland has an opportunity to advance in OER, and with the global pandemic of Covid-19, online and remote delivery of education may continue for some time. Institutions should consider integrating enabling OER policy into existing Open Access and Open Data policies. The opportunity to build Ireland's reputation is apparent, we can lead as well as partner with early adopters to create an Open culture of knowledge sharing, transparency, and discoverability. On a final note, inequality, access, and accessibility are paramount considerations and we should endeavour to innovate in these areas.

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