

Open Educational Resources Set to Become an Essential Teaching Tool in 2018

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Open educational resources (OER) have long been touted as “the next big thing” in higher education, but the drawn-out hype has led many educators and administrators to wonder if it would ever live up to its expectations. Those days are over.

Until recently, the use of OER—digital educational materials that are both more easily adaptable by instructors and more affordable than traditional textbooks—was being led by early-adopter professors driven by a desire to improve teaching and an interest in new technology. But it never seemed to gain broader adoption beyond that group of pioneers. To bring OER to more students and instructors, whole institutions needed to jump on board and plan for the widespread implementation.

That happened in 2017. This year, the list of colleges with “open learning initiatives” of various kinds has boomed, and much of that has been part of an essential drive to modernize their classrooms and push the cost of education down. For example, both the City and State University of New York systems are [investing millions in OER](#).

Now that OER has the backing of college administrations and state legislatures, it’s about to face a new spate of challenges in 2018. As its users move beyond the early adopters and into the mainstream, OER will be competing much more directly with traditional textbook publishing.

Source: [EdSurge](#)