

Open Policy Institute

Advocating for policies that support openness

http://wiki.creativecommons.org/Open_Policy_Institute

Overview

The Open Policy Institute is a hub for academic institutions, governments, foundations, non-profit organizations and open advocates to share, discuss, and work toward the implementation of open policies that have the potential to make hundreds of billions of dollars in publicly-funded education, research and scientific resources available to everyone.

Open policies require unrestricted access and open licensing of resources financed through public and philanthropic funding, effectively maximizing the impact of investment. For governments, adopting open policy means that publicly funded resources are openly licensed so the content can be reused, revised, remixed into new works, and redistributed. While there are many open licenses, publicly funded resources should use an open license that allows the public to exercise all of these rights.

The adoption of open policies is hindered because most policy makers do not understand how 21st century technical and legal tools can be leveraged to significantly improve the effectiveness of investments in public education and scientific research. The global reach and increasing speed and bandwidth of the Internet; the decreasing cost of hardware and near zero costs of digital copying and distribution; and the popularity of mobile devices is making accessibility to online content universally available. Further, growth in the use of Creative Commons licenses in the past decade indicates peoples' mass willingness to share globally.

Policy makers need to understand the power of wielding these tools to avoid being trapped within existing frameworks and outdated business models. Taken together these technical and legal tools collectively enable affordable, high quality, continuously improving, openly licensed education, research and scientific resources.

Rationale

Open policy advocacy efforts are generally tied to specific institutions or bodies of government, and as a result are decentralized and disconnected from similar initiatives. Moreover, there is little emphasis on sharing knowledge between these entities, despite their common goals.

Academic institutions, foundations, non-profits and governments around the world frequently reach out to Creative Commons, seeking assistance to develop strategies to increase the adoption of open policies. The need for support and leadership around open policies was amplified at Creative Commons' 2011 Global Summit in Poland, when affiliates from 35 countries called for a central hub where open policies could be shared, discussed and developed.

Early adopters of open policies have created knowledge resources that could be broadly useful, but because these resources are not widely collected, curated and disseminated, momentum for adoption in other locales is hindered. Open policy advocates and supporters

are calling for centralized access to existing open policies, sample legislation, and action plans for how they were created and enacted.

The Open Policy Institute will bring together best practices, policy models, effective strategies and resources to help governments, academic institutions, foundations and advocates make the case for why and how to implement open policies.

DRAFT Outcomes¹

- **Open Policy Institute Website** to showcase open policies and best practices for adoption from around the world, including a directory of open policy advocates, slides, talking points, FAQs, etc.
- **Webinars and Conference Presentations** to raise awareness of the importance and benefits of open policies and to connect with open policy advocates.
- **Annual Meeting** to connect open policy advocates to one another, possibly co-located with existing open conferences.
- **No Cost Consulting Resources** for entities seeking to implement open policies.
- **Open Policy Institute Fellow** to help lead work in specific open policy areas.

¹ To be updated at the 4 October, 2012 planning meeting:
http://wiki.creativecommons.org/Open_Policy_Institute/2012_Convening