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## Grant boost for no-cost uni textbooks

CAUL awarded \$38,000 in grant funding this month to nine CAUL Member institutions across Australia and New Zealand in its second year of the Open Educational Resources Collective Pilot DIY Open Textbook Grant Program.

The CAUL Open Educational Resources Collective Pilot was established at the start of 2022 to build institutional capability to support open textbook publishing, build community across participating institutions, and provide grant funding for open textbook projects. The two year pilot involves 35 CAUL Member institutions across Australia and New Zealand.

“Australian students are under increasing financial pressure and the increase in textbook costs further compounds the issue,” said Fiona Salisbury, Open Educational Resources Program Director for CAUL. “By creating textbooks with an open licence, not locked down by publishers in the traditional publishing model, everyone benefits”.

While they may be free for students to access, open textbooks are not free to create. Aside from the investment of academic time in writing an open textbook, there are production costs including platform fees, the cost of a professional editor, library staff time in providing copyright and licensing advice, and overheads associated with running a peer review process.

This year, the OER Collective Governance Group awarded 12 grants to author teams lead by academics at Charles Darwin University, Federation University Australia, James Cook University, Monash University, Queensland University of Technology, Swinburne University of Technology, University of Newcastle, University of Queensland and University of Technology, Sydney, in addition to industry partners.

\$38,000 in funding was awarded this year across three categories: Large cohort grants; Small cohort grants; and Kickstarter grants. Projects focus on a diverse range of disciplines, including health, law, psychology, languages, education, finance and Indigenous studies.

[Information about the projects](#) is available on the OER Collective website.

Check out the [catalogue](#) of books created in 2022. These include Bond’s [The Law Clinic Experience: A Guidebook for Students](#) which has seen over 1700 views since its publication in February 2023. More titles are scheduled for release in the coming quarter so stay tuned, including titles from the 2022 grant round.

“To fully realise the potential of open textbooks, we need to see funding for grants programs at the levels we’ve seen in the US and Canada,” said Fiona. “As we have seen in the first year of the pilot, The Collective grants are an important step in pushing the open textbook agenda forward in Australia and New Zealand. We’re excited to see the outcomes of the 12 projects funded this year, which will make a real difference to student learning.”

### **About the Council of Australian University Librarians**

The [Council of Australian University Librarians](#) Inc. (CAUL) is the peak leadership organisation for university libraries in Australia and New Zealand. CAUL members are the University Librarians or equivalent of the 39 institutions that have representation on Universities Australia (UA) and the University Librarians or equivalent of the 8 institutions that have representation on Universities New Zealand (UNZ) and which form the Council of New Zealand University Librarians (CONZUL), a committee of UNZ. CAUL makes a significant contribution to higher education strategy, policy and outcomes through a commitment to a shared purpose: To transform how people experience knowledge – how it can be discovered, used and shared. CAUL’s vision is that society is transformed through the power of research, teaching and learning. University libraries are essential knowledge and information infrastructures that enable student achievement and research excellence.

### **Contact**

Dr Kate Davis, Director, Strategy & Analytics, Council of Australian University Librarians,  
kate.davis@caul.edu.au