(ID 846) OER SMART: Promoting OER Concepts, Reuse and Practices in the Arab Countries

Nominated for the 2026 Open Education Awards for Excellence

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2026 Nominees

2026 Shortlist

Award Category and Specific Focus

Open Practices Awards: Building Open Education Communities in the Arab World

Reasons To Recognize This Nominee with An OEAward

The reason this nomination deserves to be recognized with a 2026 Open Education Award for Excellence is that OER SMART was one of the pioneering initiatives that advanced Open Educational Resources (OER) awareness, adoption, and capacity building in the Arab region. Implemented through a partnership between Al-Quds

Open University (Palestine) and the Queen Rania Center for Educational Technology and Information (Jordan), the initiative transformed OER from a little-known concept into a practical educational movement among educators, academics, and decision-makers.

The project developed a comprehensive Arabic OER learning ecosystem that included a web-based platform, mobile application, open educational videos, a downloadable handbook, and a training curriculum grounded in regional needs. Beyond producing open content, OER SMART prepared a network of OER champions through Training of Trainers programs and established one of the first cross-border Arab communities of practice dedicated to open education.

The initiative demonstrated measurable improvements in participants' understanding of open access, open licensing, copyright, quality assurance, and OER implementation. Most im

General Description

OER SMART (Promoting OER Concepts, Reuse and Practices in the Arab Countries) was established in response to a growing need for accessible, high-quality, Arabic-language professional development in Open Educational Resources. The initiative was led by Al-Quds Open University through its Continuing Education and Community Service Center and implemented in partnership with the Queen Rania Center for Educational Technology and Information of the Jordanian Ministry of Education.

The project began with a comprehensive needs assessment involving educators, academics, and policymakers from Palestine and Jordan. Based on the findings, a multidisciplinary team of OER experts, instructional designers, software developers, graphic designers, translators, and quality assurance specialists developed the OER SMART Course. The course addressed key themes including OER concepts, open access, copyright and Creative Commons licensing, quality assurance, open pedagogies, policy development, and sustainable OER implementation.

To ensure accessibility and inclusiveness, the course was delivered through multiple open formats, including a web-based learning environment, a mobile application, educational videos, and a downloadable handbook. This multi-platform approach enabled participants to access learning resources regardless of device or location, supporting broader participation across the region.

A distinctive feature of the initiative was its emphasis on community building. Through two intensive Training of Trainers workshops in Palestine and Jordan, forty educators, academics, and decision-makers were equipped to become OER advocates and multipliers within their institutions. Participants were introduced not only to OER concepts but also to practical methods for creating, adapting, sharing, and evaluating open educational resources.

The project's impact extended beyond individual training outcomes. OER SMART established an Arab community of practice dedicated to advancing open education, fostering collaboration among educators and institutions, and promoting dialogue around policies and frameworks that support openness. The initiative contributed to strengthening regional capacity, encouraging the adoption of open educational practices, and laying the groundwork for future OER-related projects and collaborations across the Arab world.

Alignment with OEGlobal Principles and Goals for Open Education

OER SMART strongly aligns with Open Education Global's vision of expanding access to education through openness, collaboration, inclusion, and innovation. The initiative democratized access to knowledge by providing freely accessible educational content in Arabic, addressing a significant gap in open educational resources available to educators and learners in the Arab region. By delivering learning opportunities through web, mobile, video, and downloadable formats, the project promoted equitable access and reduced barriers related to geography, technology, and institutional affiliation.

The initiative also exemplifies OEGlobal's commitment to building open ecosystems and empowering communities. Rather than focusing solely on content creation, OER SMART cultivated a sustainable network of educators, researchers, and policymakers committed to sharing knowledge and advancing open educational practices. Through capacity building, cross-border collaboration, and the establishment of a regional community of practice, the project fostered a culture of openness that continues to influence teaching, learning, and policy discussions. OER SMART demonstrates how open education can serve as a catalyst for educational transformation, collaboration, and lifelong learning within underserved linguistic and regional contexts.

Additional Details

Web References

- Primary web reference: https://dspace.qou.edu/contents/oer/
- Optional web reference: https://www.facebook.com/smart.course.oer/

Geographic Location (country)

Palestine

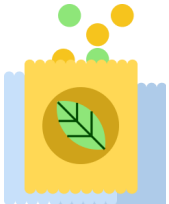
Additional countries/regions represented:

Jordan

Comments from the Reviewers

"I appreciate the emphasis on Arabic-language professional development. Open education cannot truly be global if the resources, terminology, and training opportunities are concentrated in only a few languages and regions. By developing resources specifically for educators in the Arab world and delivering them through multiple formats, OER SMART addresses accessibility in a meaningful way while also recognizing the importance of local context."

"This nomination addresses a significant challenge within the Arab open education landscape by recognizing that meaningful participation in Open Educational Resources requires professional development that is both linguistically and culturally relevant. Rather than focusing exclusively on the production of open resources, the initiative attempts to strengthen educator capacity, institutional collaboration, and regional networks through training, shared learning, and partnership. This orientation reflects an important understanding that open education is sustained through communities of practice as much as through openly licensed content."



Meet us in the garden! Share comments, add congratulations, ask questions about this nomination of "OER SMART: Promoting OER Concepts, Reuse and Practices in the Arab Countries" in the discussions of OEAwards in the OEG Connect Community.