

Announcement

News on ICT in Education

Highlight

First international symposium brings together major global networks for innovation in education

More than 130 high-level decision-makers from 30 countries attended the first ICT in Education Networks international symposium on 11-12 June in Rome, Italy. The aim of the event was to build a vision for a common future for education, and set an agenda for future cooperation.

News & Events

Technology alone will not bridge knowledge divides

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The 2010 Tech Awards - Call for Nominations

The Tech awards committee - Technology benefiting humanity - is currently accepting 2010 nominations. Five laureates are recognized in each of the categories: Environment, Economic Development, Education, Equality and Health, and one laureate from each category receives a \$50,000 prize.

Nepalese delegation visits the ICT team at UNESCO Bangkok

How can ICT be used as an effective tool in education? A delegation from Nepal, led by the Ministry of Education, recently visited the UNESCO Bangkok office and other appropriate institutions in Thailand to learn about the application of ICT and to find out strategies how to implement ICT better into the Nepalese education system.

Planning of online platform for language learning takes shape

A group of international experts gathered in Shanghai, China, to discuss the feasibility of a Cyber Network for Learning Languages, an online portal to web resources for learning languages.

UNESCO and Sun Microsystems announce joint education and community development effort powered by open technologies

Open technologies are seen as key to social, educational and economic growth and greater digital inclusion. To support social and economic development, UNESCO and Sun Microsystems signed a collaboration agreement at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Forum 09.

Hong Kong primary school bolsters interactive learning

Fanling Public School, a 500 pupil primary school in Hong Kong, was chosen as a Centre of Excellence in 2001 and has since then strengthened the use of ICT in education.

7,000 schools to be connected to speed Internet: Azerbaijani education minister

The Azerbaijani Education Ministry aims to connect 7,000 educational institutions

to high-speed Internet as part of the "state program on informatization of education in 2008-2012", said Education Minister Misir Mardanov.

Programmes & Projects

The Quest Atlantis project

Quest Atlantis is a project that combines education, entertainment and real-world social action through a 3D multi-user environment. It offers 9-14 year-old students with both online and offline activities and development of their media literacy.

Resources

UNESCO-SALIS e-learning portal for awareness raising on information literacy for Southern Asia

The Society for the Advancement of Library and Information Science (SALIS), India, in collaboration with UNESCO, has launched a "Interactive E-Learning Portal on Information Literacy Competency Development Skills for South Asia".

Why give knowledge away for free? The case for open educational resources

Although learning resources are often considered as key intellectual property in a competitive higher education world, more institutions and individuals are sharing digital learning resources openly and without cost, as open educational resources (OER). The issues of why this is happening, who is involved, and the important implications are pointed out in this essay.

Smarthistory - a multimedia web-book about art and art history

Smarthistory is a free multi-media web-book designed as a dynamic enhancement for the traditional art history textbook.

neoK12 – educational videos and lessons for K-12 school kids

A selection of video clips on various subjects is available on this website to make lessons more exciting and visual.

Learn English Kids

Learn English Kids is for children who are learning English. Find games, songs, stories and lots of activities - and learn English too.

First international symposium brings together major global networks for innovation in education

More than 130 high-level decision-makers from 30 countries, members of international networks active in the field of ICT in education attended the first *ICT in Education Networks* international symposium on 11-12 June in Rome, Italy. The aim of the event was to build a vision for a common future for education, and set an agenda for future cooperation.

The event was jointly organised by four major education organisations: European Schoolnet (EUN), a network of 31 Ministries of Education in Europe, the Consortium for School Networking (CoSN) in the USA, Education.au, the Australian

national agency for ICT in education and ANSAS, the Italian agency for innovation in education.

In a globalised world, international networks may face challenges that could be better addressed by sharing knowledge and experiences with other networks. The symposium laid the stone for high-level networking within the global ICT in education community.

The two-day event highlighted the need to improve information-sharing and cooperation between international education networks to address key topics such as the nature of 21st century learning and analyse the role of international education networks vis-à-vis decision makers in the field.

“It is the first time an initiative of this scale has been undertaken to build bridges between global networks, and to develop peer-learning mechanisms between all actors in the education sector. International networks are operating in a diversity of education environments and cultures, and the symposium was an occasion to share and exchange on this diversity and cultural wealth. We hope the momentum initiated by this conference will lead to a plan for action as a Rome declaration, said Marc Durando, Executive Director of European Schoolnet after the event.

Participants of the symposium came from six continents, representing 30 countries. Delegations from 32 Ministries of Education and education agencies participated.

Key industry partners are sponsoring the event, including eInstruction (www.einstruction.com), Intel Education (www.intel.com), Microsoft (www.microsoft.com), Oracle (www.oracle.com), PASCO Scientific (www.pasco.com), Promethean (<http://www.prometheanworld.com>) and SMART Technologies (www.smarttech.com).

Several other organisations support the initiative such as Futurelab in the UK (www.futurelab.org.uk), Apple Computers (www.apple.com), KERIS (the ICT agency of the Ministry of Education Science and Technology in South Korea – <http://english.keris.or.kr>), South East Asia Ministry of Education Organisation (<http://www.seameo.org/>) and World Links Arab Region (www.wlar.org).

Other networks which attended the event came from Africa (Schoolnet Africa), the Middle-East (iEARN Lebanon, World Links Arab Region), Europe (Global eSchools and Communities Initiative, Digital Europe) and South America (Interdidatica, Fundação Vanzolini).

Presentations and the programme for the event have been made available at: <http://is.eun.org>. The symposium also marked the start of a series of podcasts featuring key persons from International Networks for ICT in education.

The podcast is available at: <http://blog.eun.org/is/podcast/> More episodes will regularly be added to the podcast channel.

Further information:

- [International Symposium](#)

Related links:

- [European Schoolnet](#)

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- [UNESCO "ICT in Education" Announcement e-newsletter](#)

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News & Events

Technology alone will not bridge knowledge divides

“Knowledge societies should not be shaped and driven by technological forces but by societal choices”, UNESCO’s Abdul Waheed Khan said in Maastricht

Technology alone will not bridge the information and knowledge divide but political and social environments have to be developed that enable knowledge creation, preservation, acquisition and sharing, said UNESCO’s Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information, Abdul Waheed Khan, in Maastricht, the Netherlands, yesterday.

Addressing the 23rd World Conference on Open Learning and Distance Education of the International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE), Mr Khan said that “knowledge plays, in today’s world, a key role in economic growth, social development, cultural enrichment and political empowerment.”

But if ICT enhanced knowledge acquisition and sharing is to be applied successfully, sustainably and for the benefit of larger segments of society, we must create enabling environments, build adequate infrastructure and establish multi-stakeholder partnerships, he stressed.

Introducing UNESCO’s concept of knowledge societies that includes notions of inclusiveness, pluralism, equity, openness and participation as distinct from information society, he said that “knowledge societies should not be shaped and driven by technological forces but by societal choices”.

The concept includes four key principles, namely: freedom of expression; universal access to information and knowledge; respect for cultural and linguistic diversity;

and quality education for all, that according to Mr Khan “remain valid when the world is going through one of its most serious crises for decades, if not centuries”. “My optimism is based on the fact that government leaders increasingly recognize the fact that investments in the large and complex knowledge domains are critical to laying the foundation for recovery, sustainable development, economic growth and prosperity”, he added.

He also said that in the coming decades, the importance of acquiring factual knowledge will decrease. At the same time, the ability to find one’s way in complex information systems and to judge, organize and creatively use relevant data will become crucial. In addition, new skills need to be acquired to live in virtual social networks and to create own content online.

The Maastricht Conference in Maastricht was put under the theme “Flexible Education for All Open – Global – Innovative”

ICDE is an NGO with formal consultative relations with UNESCO to provide a framework for cooperation and development in open distance and web-based learning with its member ship including universities, schools, companies and educational authorities in more than 135 countries.

Further information:

- [Technology alone will not bridge knowledge divides](#)

Related links:

- [The Director-General opens the UNESCO Future Forum on Knowledge Acquisition and Sharing](#)
- [UN works with the Philippines to close the digital divide](#)
- [UN appeals for funds to bridge ‘digital divide’ in the Asia-Pacific region](#)
- [UN helps strengthen Mongolia and Pacific Island nations' information and communication technology capabilities](#)
- [Reducing the digital divide through innovative after-school programmes](#)

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The 2010 Tech Awards - Call for Nominations

The Tech Awards Committee - Technology benefiting humanity - is currently accepting 2010 nominations. Five laureates are recognized in each of the categories: Environment, Economic Development, Education, Equality and Health, and one laureate from each category receives a \$50,000 prize.

The Tech Awards is an international awards program that honors innovators from around the world who are applying technology to benefit humanity. It inspires global engagement in humanity's most pressing problems by recognizing the best of those who are utilizing innovative technology solutions to address the most urgent critical issues facing our planet.

People all over the world are profoundly improving the human condition in the areas of education, equality, environment, health, and economic development through the use of technology. It is the goal of The Tech Awards to showcase their compelling stories and reward their brilliant accomplishments.

Each year, candidates are nominated and then invited to submit applications. Individuals, for-profit companies, and not-for-profit organizations are eligible. International panels of judges review the applications and annually honour 15 Laureates, three for each of the Award categories:

- Intel **Environment** Award
- Accenture **Economic** Development Award
- Microsoft **Education** Award
- The Katherine M. Swanson **Equality** Award
- Fogarty Institute for Innovation **Health** Award

One Laureate per category receives \$50,000, and the act will take place at the annual Gala event hosted by The Tech Museum at the San Jose McEnery Convention Center in San Jose, California.

To submit a nomination, click [here](#).

The 2010 deadline for nominations is March 31, 2010.

Further information:

- [Teachwards](#)

Related links:

- [Australian students win award for an innovative educational tool](#)
- [Shanghai TV University and Egyptian Ministry to receive the 2008 UNESCO King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa Prize for the Use of ICTs in Education](#)

- [Outstanding ICT initiatives of the year shortlist announced](#)
- [Celebrating Innovative ICT in Education Practices: From Idea to Impact](#)

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Nepalese delegation visit the ICT team at UNESCO Bangkok

How can ICT be used as an effective tool in education? A delegation from Nepal, led by the Ministry of Education, recently visited the UNESCO Bangkok office and other appropriate institutions in Thailand to learn about the application of ICT and to find out strategies how to implement ICT better into the Nepalese education system.

During the five days study visit to Thailand the group attended presentations and discussions about the UNESCO Bangkok ICT in Education programme; the design of ICT related curriculum; the preparation of the next generation of teachers in the Asia-Pacific region; ICT for higher education; innovative ICT approaches; and ICT resources and tools for enhancing teaching and learning.

Each participant successfully completed a new ICT in Education capacity building e-Learning course, which will soon be released by UNESCO Bangkok.

A whole day was devoted to the training with the "ICT in Education Toolkit for Policy Makers, Planners and Practitioners". The Toolkit serves to guide policy makers in a systematic approach through the planning process and provides policy options regarding the use of ICT in Education.

Furthermore, the group also visited the Ministry of Education and the National Electronics and Computer Technology Center (NECTEC) of Thailand to learn about programmes and activities on ICT in Education in Thailand.

Mr. Janardan Nepal, Joint-Secretary of the Ministry of Education Nepal, underlined the importance of ICT in Education for his country. One step in advancing the current state will be the development of an ICT in Education Masterplan for Nepal. In addition, the Ministry needs to work on the design of a reformed curriculum, in which ICT is fully integrated. He concluded that the training of in-service and pre-service teachers regarding the application of ICT should also be enhanced.

For further information about the UNESCO Bangkok ICT in Education programme, please view the links below.

Further information:

- [UNESCO Bangkok ICT in Education programme](#)

Related links:

- [ICT in Education policy project](#)
- [ICT National policies & case studies](#)
- [Developing a national information and communications technology strategy for education in Pakistan](#)
- [Bangladesh begins initiative to develop its National ICT in Education Master Plan](#)
- [Bangladesh receives USD\\$81 million from the World Bank to build up higher education](#)
- [India launches a new scheme on ICT in Education, minister says](#)

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Planning of online platform for language learning takes shape

A group of international experts gathered in Shanghai, China, to discuss the feasibility of a Cyber Network for Learning Languages, an online portal to web resources for learning languages.

Opening the meeting, UNESCO's Assistant Director-General, Abdul Waheed Khan, said that the initiative, which was launched by the Chinese Government during the meeting of UNESCO's Executive Board in October 2008, is "very timely indeed since it has the great potential to contribute to widen the access to the Internet and to promote its language diversity at the same time".

The experts looked at the issues to be solved to establish a fully fledged online portal that would cater for services offering the possibility to contact language teachers or networks with language experts and researchers; to access automatic translation tools; to use online language proficiency standards; to find online resources on the thousands of language communities and their very diverse cultures - all this enriched with interactive community tools for the users.

Growing interactively, and used collaboratively, the platform could become the ultimate web resource to teach, learn and preserve endangered minority languages in cyberspace.

“Whatever services, structures and functionalities the platform may provide, we must not envision it as a static information repository but as a dynamic service that could become an essential part of the information infrastructure in the 21st century,” said Mr Khan in Shanghai.

UNESCO has launched a variety of initiatives to support multilingualism in cyberspace and to promote wider and more equitable access to the web while preserving endangered languages.

Further information:

- [Planning of online platform for language learning takes shape](#)

Related links:

- [UNESCO Open Training Platform](#)
- [Expert meeting on Cyber Network for Learning Languages](#)
- [UNESCO's programme on Safeguarding endangered languages](#)
- [Open Training Platform to become a hub for Cyber Network for Learning Languages](#)
- [New edition of UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger](#)

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UNESCO and Sun Microsystems announce joint education and community development effort powered by open technologies

Open technologies are seen as key to social, educational and economic growth and greater digital inclusion. To support social and economic development, UNESCO and Sun Microsystems signed a Collaboration Agreement on 18 May at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Forum 09.

At the signing ceremony, UNESCO's Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information, Abdul Waheed Khan, and Executive Vice-President and Chairman, Europe, APAC and Emerging Markets for Sun Microsystems, Crawford Beveridge, outlined details of the initiative. The agreement recognizes open source technologies as key to increasing access to information, communications technologies and ICT skills training in under-served communities throughout the world.

The agreement is part of UNESCO's ongoing effort to improve digital inclusion globally by partnering with the private sector. Under its terms, Sun Microsystems and UNESCO will promote the use of open source technologies, including OpenOffice.org and OpenDocument Format (ODF) standard, as a low-cost way to improve education with universal access to information and knowledge. They will also support the development of open and inclusive knowledge societies in developing and emerging economies.

"At Sun, we believe the momentum of open source and its power to bring people onto the network is unquestionable, and has the power to help emerging economies spur indigenous innovation and improve the lives of their citizens," said Mr Beveridge. "This agreement will help nations around the world provide top notch engineering programmes that never would have been available without the flexibility and collaboration of open source technologies."

"UNESCO values the possibilities offered by all software models and advocates a diversity of choice to ensure that all can benefit from information and knowledge. We are glad to work with Sun to harness the power of free and open source software for extending and disseminating knowledge, and to foster community approaches to software development," said Mr Koichiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO.

The agreement includes the creation of a Centre of Excellence for Adoption of Open Technologies and collaboration on promoting adoption of OpenOffice.org and Open Document Format Tools. As part of these projects, Sun will provide availability, expertise and training materials for its open source software, while UNESCO will focus on promoting adoption of open technologies. UNESCO will work to identify institutions that would become partners for providing support and training in the use of OpenOffice.org and ODF.

Open source technologies are cost-effective, provide increased security and deliver enhanced accessibility for citizens. By leveraging open technologies, organizations are no longer locked into expensive, long-term licensing contracts that typically require additional costs for new technologies to work with legal solutions. Today, most of the Internet runs on freely available, open source software such as

OpenOffice, Apache webserver and the MySQL database.

Around the world, increasing numbers of people are adopting open source. In February 2009, the Ministry of Technology in the United Kingdom announced that it will begin directing the nation's government agencies to adopt open source. It joined the governments of Vietnam, Brazil, The Netherlands, Denmark and South Africa, among others, that have recognized the power of open standards or open source technology solutions for the benefit of their citizens to reduce costs, lower barriers of entry, improve security and bridge the digital divide.

Sun's collaboration agreement with UNESCO is part of the company's broader initiative to bring more people into the information network and to allow them to gain access to the tools, skills, technology and innovation to realize their full potential.

Further information:

- [UNESCO and Sun Microsystems announce joint education and community development effort powered by open technologies](#)

Related links:

- [New WSIS Forum 09 format offers remote web-participation](#)
- [Free and open source software: applications for education, culture and access to information](#)
- [Linking technology innovations and international development](#)
- [Digital Research Tools Wiki](#)

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Hong Kong primary school bolsters interactive learning

Fanling Public School, a 500 pupil primary school in Hong Kong, was chosen as a Centre of Excellence for using ICT in education by the Territory's Education Bureau in 2001.

“Back then, although we were already using the computers, the applications tended to be very teacher centric,” says Chong Wu Lam, a General Studies teacher who has been with the school for more than a decade. “There was very little interaction between teachers and students.”

With teachers like Mr Chong who are passionate in IT, the school wanted students to take a more active role in learning, by making the teaching process more interactive.

It became the first Information Technology Learning Centre in Chinese and General Studies in 2004, in a government scheme aimed at developing interactive learning in schools.

Classrooms were re-arranged to foster more group discussions. ICT tools, including nine interactive whiteboards procured from Promethean, were introduced to help each group collaborate and accomplish their learning tasks.

“The electronic whiteboard is very helpful in fostering interactive teaching,” Mr Chong said such tools not only allow teachers to put more content more flexibly, but also give the students opportunity to contribute through a writing pad on their desks.

Students are also allowed to cast their vote on questions and issues through voting devices connected to the interactive whiteboard.

Mr Chong added that this is much more effective compared to teaching in a multimedia lab or with a PowerPoint. “The interactions have helped students more readily grasp abstract concepts and then apply these principles to practical situations.” He said that since the adoption five years ago, the school has witnessed an ‘obvious improvement’ in the students’ motivation and concentration.

And combining the functions of PowerPoint, traditional blackboard, video player and so on, the interactive whiteboard also allows teachers to prepare for their classes much more easily. In addition the connectivity with the Internet allows them to access and share information with their peers more effectively.

The school has been collaborating with Hong Kong University and Hong Kong Institute of Education to develop methodologies to embed ICT in teaching.

“Universities are quite advanced in applying technologies in education, however it is hard to directly replicate that into primary schools,” said Mr Chong. “That’s why we work together to customise these methodologies to the specific needs of our school.”

In the future, Mr Chong hopes that students, empowered with technology, will be able to go out more and see the real world. “We hope better information access in the future can allow students to spend more time outside the school to learn from what they see in real life.”

Now PDAs, with all the necessary information pre-loaded, are used for students going on site trips. “They can access the web-based knowledge about the things they see during the trip, and relate the two to have a much better understanding.” Mr Chong hopes better technologies could make it easier and more interactive.

For the classroom, Mr Chong believes that more interaction and collaboration between students, aided with ICT will achieve much better results than assigning each student with a computer.

“Many schools in Asia are trying to equip every student with a computer in the classroom,” he says. “I don’t think it is necessary or even productive.”

“IT equipments are ultimately tools,” he adds. “Whether they are effective or not depends on how you apply them to your teaching activities.”

Mr Chong is also worried about the over-reliance on communications through virtual channels. “Good at e-chats doesn’t mean good at interacting with people,” he said. “We can’t afford to let physical communications diminish.”

Author: Jiangan Li, FutureGov

Further information:

- [Hong Kong primary school bolsters interactive learning](#)

Related links:

- [Computer curriculum in elementary schools](#)
- [How ICT can be used in primary schools](#)
- [Singapore schools go high-tech](#)
- [ICT in school education - the model of the Byrraju Foundation](#)
- [How to help teachers use technology in the classroom](#)

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7,000 schools to be connected to speed Internet: Azerbaijani education minister

The Azerbaijani Education Ministry aims to connect 7,000 educational institutions to high-speed Internet as part of the "state program on informatization of education in 2008-2012", Education Minister Misir Mardanov said on June 12.

"I positively assess the implementation of such a large number of works for a short time. But the main work still lies ahead," Mr Mardanov said.

The minister said that at present 200 schools in Baku, as well as in the country's different regions have been connected to high speed Internet as part of the state program, to which 18 million manats (about USD\$ 22 million) was allocated in the first year.

The program aims to create a unified national educational environment through applying modern informational and communications technology and provide people with an opportunity to receive quality education.

The action plan of the state program includes improving material and the technical base of educational institutions, equipping them with computer equipment, developing networks and intranet access to the Internet, creating electronic research tools in all disciplines, a resource base of e-education (e-learning), an information and resource centre in the application of ICT in education, a single educational portal, measures to promote distance education in the country, educational informatization management system, strengthening of human capacity and improving the regulatory framework.

Source: Trend News Agency (Azerbaijan)

Further information:

- [7,000 schools to be connected to speed Internet: Azerbaijani education minister](#)

Related links:

- [The Wireless School Connectivity Project](#)
- [Pacific ICT Ministers set priorities to "connect the unconnected"](#)
- [India to link 18000 colleges under new ICT in Education plan](#)
- [A school administrator's guide to planning for the total cost of new technology](#)
- [Samvidha: Making Internet content available to rural schools in India](#)

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Programmes & Projects

The Quest Atlantis project

Quest Atlantis is a project that combines education, entertainment and real-world social action through a 3D multi-user environment. It offers 9-14 year-old students with both online and offline activities and the development of their media literacy. The project was developed by a team of academics of the School of Education of Indiana University. Although it seems to be that the project is more appropriate for American schools due to the use of American learning standards called McREL Content Knowledge standards, the users include schools and students from China, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Malaysia, Turkey and Singapore.

The project seeks to develop the students into knowledgeable (in the areas of science, social studies, and language arts), empathetic and responsible persons. With this in mind, seven critical dimensions are set as below;

- **Creative Expression** - "I Create"
- **Diversity Affirmation** - "Everyone Matters"
- **Personal Agency** - "I Have Voice"
- **Social Responsibility** - "We Can Make a Difference"
- **Environmental Awareness** - "Think Globally, Act Locally"
- **Healthy Communities** - "Live, Love, Grow"
- **Compassionate Wisdom** - "Be Kind"

The storyline of this educational game is that the mythical world of Atlantis is faced with social, cultural and environmental degradations and the users have to travel a variety of virtual Worlds, namely Unity World, Culture World, Healthy World and Ecology World in order to obtain the necessary knowledge to save Atlantis. The missions students must carry out are not only online activities but also in real life, thus connecting the virtual world to the real world. For this reason this project can be used as a tool for Education for Sustainable Development that is promoted by the United Nations.

It also promotes International Cultural Understanding (ICU). Cross-cultural dialogue and understanding is encouraged through learning contents as well as online interactions among users in the process of working towards the goal.

The benefits of the projects are;

Benefits for Teachers:

- Quests are associated with educational standards as well as social commitments
- Multiple-week lesson plans on various themes are provided
- QA promotes computer literacy and the sophisticated use of online media
- Students create online portfolios that easily organize student work and teacher feedback
- A computer-based Teacher Toolkit allows teachers to browse, assign and review Quests
- Students are self-motivated to learn academic content
- Teachers can collaborate with classrooms from other schools and countries

Benefits for students:

- QA provides students with opportunities for collaboration through Co-Questing, bulletin boards, blogs, and other group activities;
- Children have the opportunity to interact with users from around the world in a protected virtual environment;
- Students are motivated to progress in social skills, social commitments, and academics through completion of specific Quest clusters;
- Children can access their work from any computer with Internet access;
- Students develop online personae by way of avatar customization and personal homepages.

Quest Atlantis is, therefore, an example of how ICT can be used for innovative education with a holistic approach by addressing various themes of sustainable development and providing not only knowledge but also skills and values. It is also based on the pedagogies such as child-centered, experientially-focused and inquiry-based learning.

Further information:

- [Quest Atlantis](#)

Related links:

- [Travel back to Ancient Rome with Google Earth](#)
- [Computer curriculum in elementary schools](#)
- [Using Student Response Systems to increase motivation, learning, and knowledge retention](#)
- [Student Peer Teaching Strategy: Hands on, heads on and hearts on learning](#)
- [Visit the Virtual Forbidden City](#)
- [Teaching multimedia in the offline world](#)

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Resources**UNESCO-SALIS e-learning portal for awareness raising on information literacy for Southern Asia**

The Society for the Advancement of Library and Information Science (SALIS), India, in collaboration with UNESCO, has launched a six-month project entitled Interactive E-Learning Portal on Information Literacy Competency Development Skills for South Asia.

The project aims to raise awareness and enhance information literacy competency skills of laymen as well as information professionals and educators. Its objectives are fully in line with UNESCO's mandate to bridge the digital divide and UNESCO's vision of Knowledge Societies.

This project has its genesis in recommendations of a UNESCO supported Workshop on Information Literacy Competency Development for Information Professionals and Special Educators organized in November 2006 by SALIS in Chennai, India, and subsequent Information Literacy sensitization workshops held in Delhi and Nagpur in December 2006.

Further information:

- [UNESCO-SALIS e-Learning Portal for Awareness Raising on Information Literacy for Southern Asia](#)

Related links:

- [UNESCO Bangkok releases new publication on ICT literacy in the Asia-Pacific region](#)
- [The code of best practices in fair use for media literacy education](#)

- [Training-the-Trainers in Information Literacy: UNESCO continues its series of workshops](#)
- [UNESCO's Abdul Waheed Khan: ICT to shape the future of education and learning](#)

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Why give knowledge away for free? The case for open educational resources

An apparently extraordinary trend is emerging. Although learning resources are often considered as key intellectual property in a competitive higher education world, more institutions and individuals are sharing digital learning resources openly and without cost, as open educational resources (OER). The issues of why this is happening, who is involved, and the important implications were addressed in a 2006 study carried out by the OECD Centre for Educational Research and Innovation with the support of the Hewlett Foundation. The main conclusions are summarised in this article by *Jan Hylén*, together with some insights from a follow-up, and not yet published, study from spring 2008.

Higher education is facing a number of challenges: globalisation, an aging society, growing competition between higher educational institutions both nationally and internationally, and rapid technological development. OER is itself one of these challenges, but may also be a sound strategy for individual institutions to meet them. The trend towards sharing software programmes through open source software and research outcomes through open access publishing is already so strong that it is generally thought of as a movement. It is now complemented by the trend towards sharing learning resources: the OER movement.

OER are a fascinating technological development and, potentially, a major educational tool. They accelerate the blurring of formal and informal learning, and of educational and broader cultural activities. They raise basic philosophical issues dealing with the nature of ownership, the validation of knowledge, and concepts such as altruism and collective goods. They reach into issues of property and its distribution across the globe. They offer the prospect of a radically new approach to the sharing of knowledge, at a time when effective use of knowledge is seen as the key to economic success, for both individuals and nations.

OER projects can expand access to learning for everyone, but most of all, for non-

traditional groups of students. They thus widen participation in higher education. They can be an efficient way of promoting lifelong learning, both for individuals and for government, and can bridge the gap between non-formal, informal, and formal learning.

Read the full text:

- [Why give knowledge away for free?](#)

Related links:

- [UNESCO, U.S. Library of Congress and partners launch World Digital Library](#)
- [Open Training Platform to become a hub for Cyber Network for Learning Languages](#)
- [Reflections on sustaining Open Educational Resources: an institutional case study](#)
- [SchoolForge.net - Advocating free and open resources for education](#)
- [Gateway to 21st century skills](#)

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- [UNESCO "ICT in Education" Announcement e-newsletter](#)

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Smarthistory - a multimedia web-book about art and art history

Smarthistory is a free multi-media web-book designed as a dynamic enhancement (or even substitute) for the traditional art history textbook.

Dr. Beth Harris and Dr. Steven Zucker began smARThistory in 2005 by creating a [blog](#) featuring free audio guides in the form of podcasts for use in The Museum of Modern Art and the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Soon after, they embedded the audio files in our online survey courses. The response from the students was so positive that they decided to create a multi-media survey of an art history web-book. They created audios and videos about works of art found in standard art history survey texts, organized the files stylistically and chronologically, and added text and still images.

Smarthistory is delivering the narratives of art history using the read-write web's interactivity and capacity for authoring and remixing. Publishers are adding multimedia to their textbooks, but unfortunately they are doing so in proprietary, password-protected adjunct websites. These are weak because they maintain an old model of closed and protected content, eliminating Web 2.0 possibilities for the open collaboration and open communities that our students now use and expect.

In Smarthistory, the aim is for reliable content and a delivery model that is entertaining and occasionally even playful. The podcasts and screen-casts are spontaneous conversations about works of art where they are not afraid to disagree with each other or art history orthodoxy. They have found that the unpredictable nature of discussion is far more compelling to students, museum visitors and other informal learners than a monologue. When students listen to shifts of meaning as we seek to understand each other, we model the experience we want our visitors to have—a willingness to encounter the unfamiliar and transform it in ways that make it meaningful to them. We believe that Smarthistory is broadly applicable to our discipline and is a first step toward understanding how art history can fit into the new collaborative culture created by web 2.0 technologies.

Further information:

- [Smarthistory](#)

Related links:

- [Next generation textbooks](#)
- [Future of online 'textbooks' and modules](#)
- [Free reading lessons for young readers](#)
- [Education for a digital world](#)

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neoK12 – educational videos and lessons for K-12 school kids

A selection of video clips on various subjects (physical science, life science, human body, earth and space, social studies, health, mathematics and English) is available on this website to make lessons more exciting and visual. There are also clips of science projects and experiments. In addition, the category named 'Fun Videos!' contains some interesting clips showing, for example, the process of plant growth, food decomposition and environmental changes, as well as music and sports techniques. Different videos are appropriate for different age groups but so many clips are available that the website covers all levels of schooling from pre-school to secondary school. The duration of clips varies; however, all are relatively short from one minute to ten minutes. Also, if you cannot find a clip you would like, it is possible to make a suggestion.

Further information:

- [neoK12](#)

Related links:

- [YouTube's education portal well received in Hong Kong](#)
- [Teachers TV - Thousands of education programmes on TV and online](#)
- [The Education Clip Library](#)
- [Satellite education – Providing quality education under extreme conditions](#)
- [The Use of Film to Support Classroom Literacy Learning](#)
- [Digital video technology in education](#)

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Learn English Kids

Another great initiative from the British Council, Learn English Kids, is a website specially set up for young learners of English. It is attractively laid out and is easy to navigate. It contains a variety of fun and interesting activities that can improve English listening, reading and writing skills at no cost. Some examples of the activities include games, songs, stories, poems, and writing practices.

Learn English Kids also has downloadable flashcards. Specifically designed for vocabulary learning, the cards come with corresponding pictures and words, making them extremely easy for children to learn new vocabulary on their own. The cards cover 25 themes, and they range from animals, the human body, places and jobs to weather and the environment.

Since children's education extends beyond school and themselves, the site also offers links to resources for parents. They include tips on the best ways to help children learn English as well as advice on course and learning programme choices.

To make it even more interactive, the British Council has also set up a special "parent talk" page where parents can post and share relevant concerns, experiences and questions with one another. Though not yet very active, the site has so far received quite a number of interesting questions and perspectives.

Further information:

- [Learn English Kids](#)

Related links:

- [Expert meeting on Cyber Network for Learning Languages](#)
- [Sri Lanka calls 2009 the year of English and ICT](#)
- [How successful is ICT integration into English language education in Malaysia?](#)
- ["Project Pygmalion" Uses Refurbished Computers to Teach English in India](#)
- [E-Learning Language-Laboratory Transforms English Learning](#)

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