



Free Content Comes at a High Price IPA Raises Questions about Open Educational Resources

Geneva, 28 May 2013 - For immediate release

The International Publishers Association (IPA) has published a policy paper outlining the publishing industry perspective on Open Educational Resources (OER).

The policy paper notes that open educational resources have worked well as complements to textbooks and commercial content, but the experience of the past decade — with free content on the Internet aiming to replace publisher-created textbooks — has demonstrated that it is difficult to maintain the quality, efficacy and sustainability necessary for good education.

The position paper calls on policy makers to continue to explore new content procurement models, but to avoid damaging education by replacing effective and efficient textbook markets with untested content creation mechanisms. Asking simple factual questions when embarking on OER projects can ensure their success and avoid hurting education.

Says IPA Policy Director José Borghino: “Those advocating OER across the board sorely underestimate the skill and experience required to create and maintain excellent educational content. OER can work well as supplements. But where these resources seek to entirely replace commercial content produced by publishers in a competitive environment, then quality, pedagogy and, ultimately, teachers and students suffer. OER cannot provide adequate mechanisms to ensure that the content follows the latest curriculum, that it is maintained, updated and enhanced within an active feedback loop which includes teachers all along the way. That’s what publishers do. Replacing functioning competitive markets with this kind of free content comes at a high price.”

The IPA’s OER Policy Paper is available [here](#).

More about IPA:

The International Publishers Association (IPA) is an international industry federation representing all aspects of book and journal publishing. Established in 1896, IPA’s mission is to promote and protect publishing and to raise awareness for publishing as a force for economic, cultural and political development. Around the world IPA actively fights against censorship and promotes copyright, literacy and freedom to publish.

For further information, please contact:

José Borghino, IPA Policy Director

Tel: +41 22 704 1820 borghino@internationalpublishers.org