

## Recruitment Tips

The success of the OTN workshops depends on institutions efforts to recruit appropriate faculty for the event. We can't stress enough the importance of allowing for enough time to recruit, recruit, recruit!

This document provides tips from three OTN institutions that have had successful faculty recruitments at their institutions.

### **Josh Bolick, University of Kansas**

1. Allow sufficient time to promote and recruit, at least 4-6 weeks of actual recruiting, with time beforehand to have your messaging on point, space reserved, other logistics handled, etc.
2. Recruit a partner and work to each others' strengths. Sean Barker (Office of Scholarly Communication & Copyright Program Coordinator) and I worked really closely together for several months; I don't think either of us could have done it without the help of the other. I'm extroverted and good at talking to people but I hate logistics; he's really great at logistics and attention to detail. Together we made a pretty good recruitment team.
3. Think in tiers of exposure/marketing/outreach:
  - a. The top tier is campus wide or other venues with large unfocused audience: email to all faculty (from as high a place as possible), include announcement and link to event page with signup link. Have you got a campus news service? Does the library have a newsletter? Banner ad on library homepage? Use of social media (low for us, not many faculty on it for professional stuff)? Message to them is necessarily broad.
  - b. Middle tier is unit focused: research centers, departments, programs, centers for teaching excellence, centers for online and distance learning, various advisory boards with faculty on them (we have an OA Board, and OA Liaison program, a KU Editors group, and so on), any way to access a group of people that will have something in common. Customize an email for that group: why should they, specifically, take the time to come? Link to an open text or two, or a section of OTL (ex: for the Math dept, "The Math section of the OTL contains ~X texts [link]"). Send customized email to whoever is in charge of target group explaining what you're trying to do and requesting they forward the provided message to the group.
  - c. Next is individuals, which is time consuming but productive. Customized messages to particular individuals with a link to an open text in their area.

All of this includes appropriate links, and invitation to please share with interested colleagues.

4. Acknowledge responses and questions. Offer to send Calendar requests (we use Outlook) to get it on their schedule.
5. For registrants, follow up in the week prior as a friendly reminder ("We look forward to seeing you on Friday!")



**Cheryl Cuillier, University of Arizona**

1. Contact instructional designers who'd been working with instructors on new online courses (an excellent time to move to an open textbook).
2. Use every campus marketing avenue you can think of (not as effective as contacting individual instructors, but a few people joined the workshop as a result).
3. When I emailed individual faculty members with workshop invitations, I suggested possible titles that they could review, based on the courses they were teaching that semester. Here's a sample email:
  - a. Dear Steve,  
Since you're teaching GLS 251 - Dimensions of Globalization: Language, Literature, and Culture this fall, I'd like to invite you to apply for the UA Libraries' upcoming Open Textbook Workshop. Attending the workshop and writing a short textbook review will earn you a \$200 stipend. One of the textbooks available for review is World Regional Geography: People, Places and Globalization by Royal Berglee at Morehead State University (you can browse for other books in the Open Textbook Library). Details about our May 1 workshop are below. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me. [He did reply and sign up for the workshop]

**Merinda McLure, Colorado State University**

1. Use campus news/marketing outlets to let the campus know of the event. This included a poster, used in a variety of forms (electronic sign display in the Libraries and on campus, paper poster distribution, email distribution by liaisons and others), along with a [very brief piece](#) in our online campus newspaper. We also had the workshop listed in our online university events calendar.
2. In retrospect, we could have made a better effort to attract a student audience by also seeking a pre-event interview/press release through our campus student newspaper, too, and more comprehensive outreach to student government (we did reach out to them directly, but word of the event wasn't relayed to the extent that we might have hoped). Next time, I would pursue much more outreach to student government.
3. Mention the workshop in advance, in specific meetings where you are in a position to do so because of our membership in those committees, etc: the Faculty Council committees on Teaching and Learning, and on Libraries, for example.
4. Invites to specific individuals to the workshop.
  - a. Our Institutional Research office was able to report high-enrollment, lower-division undergraduate courses for us (sortable list in Excel). We decided to identify the course coordinators for a subset of the 20 highest-enrollment, multiple-sections courses within this set and our liaison librarians—sometimes in communication with departmental administrative assistants—did that. I emailed a template but tailored message to these course coordinators, inviting them to participate. Mail merge from Word and an Excel spreadsheet was my new friend in this whole recruitment process!



5. Reach out to invite the department/program contacts for those departments/programs that are undergoing a (cyclical) internal review during this academic year.
6. We have had a fund for open access publication and support of OA article/author processing charges for several years and we similarly reached out to invite past applicants (both successful and not).
7. Send to the campus all-faculty/instructors listserv from as “high up the chain” as possible.
8. If you are offering a stipend, put it in the subject line. For example, our emails (as well as those sent from our VP for Library and IT, said “Receive \$250, attend 2-hr CSU Libraries workshop about open textbooks”. The email body text was really a version of the application form and recipients could move directly from that email to link to the application form online. I think it was in no small part due to this broadcast email that we had just over 70 faculty/instructor applicants. The number of applications jumped in number on the day that it went out.

### **David Rose, American University**

1. The single most effective tool was an all campus blast from [ExecutiveDirectorCTRL@american.edu](mailto:ExecutiveDirectorCTRL@american.edu). This is an email address that is controlled by our office administrator to send emails on behalf of our executive director. Faculty getting an email from “Executive Director CTRL” was the biggest advantage we had. I guarantee an email from David Rose would not have been opened or acted upon nearly as much.
  - a. 29 faculty registered in first 24 hours. Within 48 hours, we had 36 faculty registered from one email. This was sent out a little less than a month before the workshop.
2. I also provided lunch which was always advertised in the emails. We spent ~\$800 on food, coffee, water.
3. Other strategies we tried that were less effective:
  - a. I worked with University Comms to write a press release that was also shared via our school’s weekly newsletter, AU News. Probably resulted in ~5 sign ups.
  - b. I sent targeted emails to former OER grant applicants who had not been accepted in years past. I spent time listing specific books from the OTL they could review to make their job even easier. I spent maybe 4 hours putting together these targeted lists and got 1 person to sign up.
4. After unsuccessful targeted campaigns for about a week, I sent out another all campus blast from [ExecutiveDirectorCTRL@american.edu](mailto:ExecutiveDirectorCTRL@american.edu). By the time the workshop rolled around, we had 66 faculty registered. 47 attended. 38 wrote a review. 21 intend to adopt, and another 15 said “maybe.”

### **Amanda Larson, Penn State University**

Due to the nature of Penn State University, I believe what made our workshop successful was allowing people to attend in person, or virtually via the library’s Media Site, while providing the opportunity to watch the recorded version.



We followed Josh and Cheryl's suggestions above for the most part.

1. We had a lot of faculty interest come from a [Penn State News story](#) which directed faculty to directly get in touch with me. I then provided them the registration link. We did this so I could filter out support staff who should attend the afternoon session. It gave me great access to all the faculty who were thinking of attending and allowed me to discover faculty already using OER or who wanted to create it. So while the registration link is streamlined, it was helpful for me to be the person who gave it out.
2. I worked very closely with Julie Lang, our OER Coordinator, from Teaching and Learning with Technology and the OER Taskforce who were able to generate a direct list of faculty invites. I then followed up with a [personal invite](#) to each of those faculty on the direct list individually. These were modified from the templates the OTN provided but you can see the modifications at the link.
3. We had 80 RSVPs. The stats we pulled from Media Site on Oct. 30th, showed that we had a total of 143 views (84 live, 59 on demand) in addition to the 7 faculty who showed up in person. I'll update this after we find out how many actually reviewed.
4. I sent a Qualtrics survey to those who had registered for the event, or had contacted me to say they watched the recording. (51 people). The survey collects information about their awareness of OER/Open Textbooks before the workshop and after the workshop, and whether they're interested in pursuing further topics on open authoring, and faculty development. It also reminds them of the review deadline.

Caveat: If I'm responsible for the PALCI OTN workshop there a lot of things I'd do differently. I think it's worth sharing those tips:

1. Build a team to disperse the work since it will be across institutions.
2. Start planning at least two months out from the event - decide early about venue, food, what the day will look like, groups to invite to meet with presenters).
3. Secure firm deadlines for each step of the process - registration, attendance, viewing, and the review deadline. This way we can batch submit anyone who watches remotely/or the recording.
4. We found that while Foster Auditorium was great for providing Media Site, it was a bit formal of a setting. In the future, we're looking into getting a zoom enabled classroom so that it feels less stiff.
5. Build assessment into the workshop, pre-survey via the Google Registration form to gather awareness level before the workshop, and then maybe a Qualtrics survey post to closely follow the workshop.

### **Hilary Thompson, University of Maryland**

We followed Josh and Cheryl's suggestions as outlined above. At our institution, customized invitations, which we sent to current instructors of large enrollment classes, generated half of our faculty workshop registrations.



How we streamlined the process:

1. We already had readily available data on the largest classes, their textbooks, and instructors contact information in a Google Sheet from our library's textbook reserves program. Check to see if other units in your library or around campus has similar data that you can use.
2. Student assistants used current textbook titles and course names to search the Open Textbook Library and add titles (with embedded links) for similar textbooks to the Google Sheet (where they existed). *Note: this was simply an extra task added for them to work on during slow periods; no additional hours scheduled or students hired.*
3. We used a Google Sheet add-in, Yet Another Mail Merge, to automate sending of the customized emails to these instructors, which featured an open textbook from their subject area as an example of something they could review. As a result, it took me only a couple of minutes to send 70 custom emails to a couple of hundred faculty. According to the tracking report, 77% of the instructors opened the email and 37% clicked on a link embedded in the email (either the registration link, sample open textbook, or open textbook library link).

