



**Open  
Learning  
Initiative**

Carnegie Mellon University

Transforming higher education  
through the science of learning.

## **OPEN: Platform+ Opportunity in Detail**

The OLI platform is a collection of tools for creating and delivering online instruction that embeds practice and feedback throughout for a complete, supported learning experience.

The platform is enhanced by Universal Design for Learning principles to increase flexibility and allow learners multiple ways to recognize, act on, and engage with knowledge. Further, the platform captures data on student interactions and uses this data to provide meaningful feedback to the learner, the instructor, and your course development team.

### **What Does Platform+ Include?**

Platform+ projects will receive technical training on and access to the OLI platform, project space for development, course hosting, and access to all learning data and reports. Participants will also receive upfront training on learning science principles to inform their course development. OLI and CAST will share best practices on effective use of the technology to provide meaningful feedback to learners and instructors, address learner variability, and capture actionable data for iterative course improvement. OPEN will create opportunities for Platform+ projects to interact with each other to ensure that lessons learned are disseminated within and across TAACCCT consortia.

### **What Are The Benefits of Platform+?**

**Design activities for practice and feedback.** Use advanced assessment tools to create interactive activities. Add hints and feedback to target student misconceptions and offer learners immediate feedback. Access instructor feedback reports for a real-time view of student performance.

**Attend to student variability through UDL.** Provide learners with choice. Apply a variety of enhancement options including multimedia glossaries to support technical vocabulary development, notepads and tagging systems, text-to-speech tools, audio recording features, drawing features, and electronic coaches that can be scripted to provide hints, models, and think-alouds.

**Capture data on student learning and behavior.** The OLI platform tracks student actions through a course, including: respond to a question, receive feedback, ask for a hint, login, view a page, etc. Projects will receive access to summary reports and raw data.

**Continuously improve.** Identify areas where students succeed and struggle. Use data reports to focus your efforts to refine materials for future students.

**Measure effectiveness.** Take a scientific approach to course design. Use data to evaluate the impact of the resources you create.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit the OPEN website to learn more about this and our other services: <http://open4us.org/>.

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**Contribute to a virtuous cycle.** Data improves our understanding of human learning which in turn allows us to build more effective instructional tools and practice. Join OLI and CAST in this community based research activity.

**Satisfy TAACCCT grant requirements.** The OLI platform features built-in support for Creative Commons licensing and metadata standards. It also complies with Section 508 and WCAG accessibility guidelines.

## What Technical Skills Are Required?

We recommend that Platform+ project teams include a course developer/ implementer role with a strong background in technology and instructional design. The OLI platform requires the ability to create and edit XML documents, manage files in a version control system, operate UNIX command line tools, create media files for the web, and troubleshoot common problems in web based materials.

## Is Platform+ Right for My Project?

If you would like to benefit from enhancements designed to support a wider variety of learners and provide you with effectiveness data, Platform+ might be the right option for you. Platform+ is not a learning management system or content repository for distributing existing resources. It is a hosted solution where students access resources from a shared website. While content is exportable to XML the platform does not produce a content package which can be directly imported into other systems. Instead, Platform+ integrates with your existing learning management system using the Basic LTI standard. With Basic LTI, instructors can embed the modules you create alongside other materials and activities they add to the LMS.