

Preview of Siyavula: an open education project for South Africa

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Simon Dingle, [Siyavula to bring free and open resources to education](#), iCommons, May 19, 2008.
Excerpt:

Siyavula is an ambitious project that aims to transform education in South Africa by providing free, open and curriculum-aligned educational resources. Siyavula means 'we are opening' in [Nguni](#) and is an apt description of the initiative that will provide content via an online portal where educators can collaborate and create resources, leveraging [Creative Commons licenses](#).

The conventional publishing model for textbooks presents significant problems for education in the developing world. It has resulted in an environment in which textbooks are prohibitively expensive and where great effort is required in order to localise, refresh or translate content. The market is controlled by a handful of corporate players who utilise restrictive copyrights and are primarily focused on driving profits and less concerned with enhancing education....

Siyavula will combine technology with Creative Commons licenses to make open content resources available to educators and learners in South Africa.

The project is being incubated by the [Shuttleworth Foundation](#) and is led by Mark Horner, who is also one of the co-founders of the foundation's Free High School Science Texts (FHSST) project....

Horner says..."The aim is to provide free textbooks both online and in print that cover the entire South African curriculum," he adds.*

The South African government's Department of Education has expressed its support for Siyavula and is in regular contact with the Shuttleworth Foundation, ensuring that the project is aligned with departmental initiatives....