

The Value of Collaboration and Partnership with MERLOT

Begun in 1997 at the California State University System, MERLOT has grown into a multi-campus and multi-state consortium serving over 80,000 members, with a collection of over 22,000 online learning resources. The MERLOT collection, which has been designed to help people find learning materials quickly and easily, is a continually growing catalog of teaching tools and support resources supported by an active community of people interested in enriching educational experiences using technology.

MERLOT's collection is an open access, user-centered, searchable referatory of peer-reviewed and selected resources, catalogued by its members, and curated by editorial boards organized around academic disciplines. The collection also features annotations from MERLOT members – user comments, assignments, and personal collections. While primarily oriented towards higher education, MERLOT's communities and collections of Open Educational Resources (OER) are used by others in secondary education, K20 initiatives, workforce development, and continuing education.

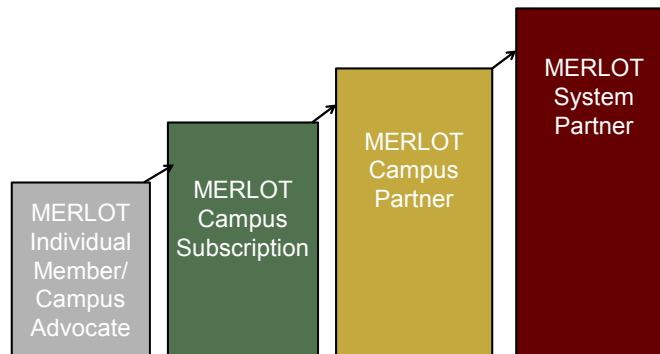
The benefits of participating in MERLOT are numerous. For example, MERLOT:

- Provides links to free online resources designed to improve teaching and learning.
- Promotes the scholarship of teaching and learning through peer reviews, affiliations with professional societies, a scholarly publication (*JOLT – Journal of Online Learning and Teaching*), and the annual MERLOT International Conference.
- Provides an open and accessible place where faculty and staff can share teaching-learning materials and pedagogies.
- Provides access to and use of the MERLOT Content Builder, an easy-to-use tool for creating text and importing documents, photos and video into pre-structured web pages for creating basic learning materials.
- Encourages the academic traditions of sharing and collaboration, leading to more efficient access to quality educational resources, and leveraging of investments in online content development.
- Provides a place where faculty can participate with others in discipline communities, regardless of their location.
- Through the MERLOT COMPASS, provides access to collections and communities designed to help campus academic support services. MERLOT Partners also receive consultation and customization services through COMPASS.

These benefits are extended to all MERLOT members, and membership in MERLOT is open and free to any individual user.

MERLOT participation levels range from individual faculty members who use MERLOT and serve as advocates for others, to campus and higher education system partners who help lead and support the consortium.

Ladder of Participation – Individuals, Campuses, Systems



- **Individual Member/Campus Advocate:** Individual members are free to build personal collections and networks of colleagues, and advocate use of MERLOT services and tools on their campuses.
- **Campus Subscription:** \$3k year. This entry-level participation for campuses provides discounts to MERLOT International Conference, Peer Reviewer support, faculty development materials for campus workshops, MERLOT webinars.
- **Campus Partner:** \$5k 1st year/\$6.5k after. Provides registrations and discounts to MERLOT International Conference, a seat at the MERLOT leadership table, and Partner Only Services and Resources (MERLOT consulting, customized co-branded teaching commons, dashboard reports, communication and marketing tools, web services, faculty development materials and workshops).
- **System Partner:** \$18.5k 1st year/\$25k after. Each of the Campus Partner benefits, but in increased numbers to accommodate all campuses in a multi-campus system.

MERLOT PARTNER BENEFITS

	Campus Subscription	Campus Partner	System Partner
COLLECTIONS			
How-to materials posted on a proprietary participant website	✓	✓	✓
“Taste of MERLOT” booth display	✓	✓	✓
MERLOT Marketing Materials	✓	✓	✓
Periodic Communications for MERLOT Partners (Vineyard e-newsletter)	✓	✓	✓
COMMUNITIES			
Membership on the MERLOT Leadership Council		✓	✓
Complementary registrations to the MERLOT Annual Conference	Peer Reviewers Extraordinaire	1	2
Discounted registrations to the MERLOT Annual Conference	2	5	15
Discounted memberships in MERLOT affiliated Organizations		✓	✓
CONSULTATION			
Supporting the integration of MERLOT , other Academic Technology Topics		✓	✓
Supporting the development of Institutional Teaching Commons		✓	✓
Supporting the implementation of web services		✓	✓
Supporting opportunities to acquire grants for both partner organizations and MERLOT		✓	✓
Supporting program evaluation, quality assurance, and usability testing of MERLOT products and services.		✓	✓
CUSTOMIZATION			
TECHNOLOGY AND SUPPORT SERVICES			
Customized MERLOT Home Page		✓	✓
Customized Templates for the MERLOT Content Builder		✓	✓
Customized Templates for Institutional Teaching Commons		✓	✓
Customized Templates for MERLOT Voices		✓	✓
Customized Templates for Open Access Journal & e-Newsletter		✓	✓
Partner/Organization Dashboard activity reports		✓	✓
Web Services – Advanced search, Contribute, Register, etc.		✓	✓
Discounted Licenses for Softchalk	✓	✓	✓
TRAINING			
Periodic webinars on how to use MERLOT	✓	✓	✓
Periodic webinars on academic technology topics of interest	✓	✓	✓
Customized Training Sessions (webinars and/or face-to-face workshops):		✓	✓
Training on and orientation to MERLOT		✓	✓
Training in the evaluation of academic technology, online resources, peer review processes, and the scholarship of teaching (Customized Grape Camp webinars)		✓	✓
Training on using MERLOT to advance local faculty development initiatives		✓	✓
Training in use of MERLOT Content Builder		✓	✓
Training on Training on Partner/Organization-selected topic/ project – e.g. online course development, open textbooks, etc.		✓	✓

Partnering with MERLOT

Campuses are being challenged to deliver and support the use of Open Educational Resources (OER). Doing so as part of a collaborative effort will be among the most effective and efficient ways of extending access to high-quality teaching and learning materials. The California State University System has been MERLOT's primary sustaining partner organization since its inception, but over time has been joined by other higher education systems, campuses, and other organizations to ensure that MERLOT continues to serve the teaching and learning needs of faculty and students.

There are many benefits to students and faculty, and reasons for system and institutional involvement. For those who "Partner" with MERLOT, there are additional *services and benefits reserved only for campus or system Partners*:

- A place at the table, and a voice in the planning and direction of MERLOT through its leadership community.
- Institutional Teaching Commons – co-branded MERLOT resources and pages that are customized for your campus, system, and/or projects.
- Complimentary and discounted registration fees for the MERLOT International Conference.
- Dashboard Reports – a comprehensive system for measuring and tracking of the use of MERLOT resources by campuses and systems.
- Web Services – advanced integration tools for Learning Management Systems (Blackboard, D2L, Angel, Moodle)
- Customized RSS feeds.
- MERLOT-developed templates for open electronic journals and newsletters that may be customized for use by partner campuses.
- Access to the MERLOT Partner Reserve – a collection of useful resources for faculty development, marketing/promotion, and other projects.
- Training for faculty development personnel, faculty, and librarians.
- Opportunities to acquire grants in partnership with MERLOT.
- Consulting services and training.

We believe that every campus should be active in the promotion and use of OER, and that MERLOT is the best option for campuses and systems looking for effective ways to partner in the OER movement. No comprehensive network has been in place longer, or supports and promotes such an open resource and community. MERLOT has been a pioneering leader in the use of peer review in providing quality assurance for online learning materials. MERLOT has demonstrated its innovative practices on campuses and in classes across the globe, and is constantly assessing tools and services, looking for ways to enhance and expand their usefulness for teachers, learners, and partners. MERLOT's collection (over 22,000 learning materials), community (over 80,000 members), and diversity (in disciplines represented, and institutional types from community colleges to research universities) are unmatched.

For more information, or to discuss how your campus or organization can become a part of MERLOT, contact Phil Moss, Director of Educational Partnerships and Planning, at phil@merlot.org

