

2018 Annual Report

Policies and objectives

The objectives of CORE Economics Education (CORE) are: to promote the advancement of education in economics and related fields of study for public benefit and to raise public awareness, through the provision of teaching and learning materials and associated activities.

Activities for achieving objectives

During the 2018 financial period (1 October 2017 - 30 September 2018) CORE Economics Education actively fundraised to support the development of new teaching and learning materials, further develop the publishing platform over which CORE ebooks and materials are delivered, train people in their use, and to expand the project's reach. Part of CORE's activities continue to be delivered through the CORE Project based in the Economics Department at University College London.

Main activities undertaken

Building on the success of *The Economy* ebook, which was published as a 1.0 edition in August 2017, CORE continued to develop free, high-quality online resources and implement the best new teaching techniques, available to anyone in the world with access to the internet. In September 2018 beta editions of two new ebooks, *Economy, Society, and Public Policy* (ESPP), and *Doing Economics* have been published.

ESPP is designed for students studying social sciences and other disciplines who want to understand how the economy works and how it can be made to work better. Policy problems are used to motivate learning the concepts and methods of economics. No previous knowledge of economics is needed. *Doing Economics* is a unique, freely available, resource for learning a valuable array of data-handling, software and statistical skills that will be transferable to other courses and to the workplace. It is keyed primarily to both *Economy, Society and Public Policy* and *The Economy* but it can be used alongside other courses or for self-study.

Further improvements to the CORE website and the publishing platform, as well as the creation of apps for off-line reading, are delivering better user experience and preparing CORE for future developments with the ability to host multiple projects, e-books, and sets of resources that is easier to navigate.

Achievements and performance

By the end of September 2018, more than 77,000 people from 206 countries have registered on the CORE website to use the materials, as well as 7,100 teachers from 131 countries. At the same time, *The Economy* was being used in instruction in [128 universities](#) from 33 countries, including some of the highest rated economics departments, such as University College London, Toulouse School of Economics, Humboldt University of Berlin, University College Roosevelt and Utrecht University, as well as universities in Australia, India, Italy, Pakistan, Reunion Island, Turkey and the US.

In its mission to reform the teaching of economics, CORE continues its work of providing free access to high-quality online resources. These are not only available to university students and teachers, to help them in the learning process, to support instruction, or to help them prepare their courses, but to anyone in the world with access to the internet. Alongside the open-source based platform over which CORE materials are published, CORE has developed *The Economy apps for off-line reading* which are available free for Android and Windows devices. For iOS users *The Economy* is available in the Apple iBooks store for free. In addition, *The Economy* is also available as a [free epub](#) file.

In order to reach a wider audience and provide benefits to users who do not necessarily speak the English language [The Economy French language edition](#) has been published as an ebook. The Italian, Portuguese and Spanish translations are currently under way. CORE's online activities are complemented by the publication of the English and French print versions of *The Economy*, with a significantly lower purchase price than other economics textbook on the market, royalties from which flow to the charity to further CORE's educational mission.

In September 2018 full beta editions of two new ebooks, [Economy, Society, and Public Policy](#) (ESPP), and the companion ebook [Doing Economics](#) have been published. Academics from around 20 universities, including the [O-Step centres](#), have participated in developing the project, which adapts *The Economy* for students who are non-specialists in economics. *Doing Economics* is a unique empirical resource that gives users the opportunity to gain hands-on experience with real-world data in areas of pressing importance to contemporary societies. The full set of resources for these two ebooks includes:

- 12 units of *ESPP*,
- 12 empirical projects in *Doing Economics*, available in Excel and in R,
- *Doing Economics* step-by-step walk-throughs for conceptually difficult or challenging tasks in Excel and R. These are [annotated screenshots](#) (Excel) and [code with explanations](#) (R) that give students simple instructions on how to complete the exercises. The walk-throughs are designed so that beginners in Excel or R will be able to learn the skills required to complete the project,
- *ESPP* [lecture slides](#) for all 12 units,
- *ESPP* [Answers to exercises](#) for all 12 units.

ESPP and *Doing Economics* are currently undergoing classroom testing in 10 pilot institutions in the UK, Hungary, Iceland, the Netherlands, and the US, with the aim of collecting feedback in preparation for the publication of the 1.0 edition in mid-2019.

Significant effort is being made to train and build networks of teachers who wish to switch to use CORE's approach to teaching economics, and to introduce the material to PhD students and new lecturers. In June 2018 CORE and the Economics Network, with support from the Royal Economic Society and the Nuffield Foundation, hosted a two-day workshop 'Teaching and Learning with CORE' which focused on effective and innovative teaching of economics using the CORE texts. The workshop was attended by 42 participants from 14 universities. The entire workshop was filmed and is available as a ['virtual workshop' webpage](#) on the CORE website, together with references to additional materials and downloadable resources. In this way, the ideas and concepts that underpin CORE, and make it different to other introductory texts, as well as practical tutorials on how innovative pedagogy engages students and improves understanding, and how games and experiments can be used in classroom to help students learn best by doing economics, are freely available for teachers.

Further explanations of the CORE approach are available in the [23 short videos](#) produced by Oxford University Press in which former CORE students talk about their experiences, CORE teachers share tips on how to switch to and how to teach CORE, and CORE authors detail some of CORE's innovations.

To promote the study of economics with high school students CORE organised the [Schools Economics Challenge](#) (CORE SEC), an international video competition for which student videomakers had to deliver a three-minute analysis of a topic related to where they live, using the work of a famous economic thinker, and to relate it to Unit 1 of *The Economy*. The entries were received in October 2017; the [winning video](#) was made by six students of the Academy at Penguin Hall from Wenham, MA, US. The CORE SEC 2018 is currently under way.

Assessing impact

With the start of every academic year CORE is being used in an increasing number of universities around the world. To understand the impact on students being taught by CORE in 2018 a much wider evaluation of the CORE curriculum was started, aimed at assessing the effects of a new first-year economics course on academic and non-academic outcomes. The evaluation will run during the 2018-19 academic year with results published later in 2019.

In the meantime, the real-world impact of CORE's efforts can be gleaned from the experience of teachers and students using CORE. [A teacher](#) at the Arkansas State University calculated that using CORE's open-access text and open-source supplementary material will save his students \$100,000 in one academic year. CORE's innovative approach to teaching economics is felt in all corners of the world. For instance, [a teacher](#) at the American University of Afghanistan says: "The textbooks I was teaching were a long way from reality in countries like Afghanistan. I had to contextualise the lessons, as the textbooks were primarily written for students in the US." To create a more relevant curriculum, he switched to teaching CORE's *The Economy* as the source text for his students.