

**PRIZE OF EXCELLENCE**



INTERNATIONAL  
COUNCIL  
FOR OPEN  
AND DISTANCE  
EDUCATION

**2021**

Institutional

University of the Philippines Open University

**International Council for Open and Distance Education**

**2021 ICDE PRIZE OF EXCELLENCE**

**THIS AWARD IS GIVEN TO**

**UNIVERSITY OF THE  
PHILIPPINES OPEN UNIVERSITY**

for its Institutional contribution to the field of Open, Flexible  
and Distance Learning.

*Torunn Gjelsvik*

**TORUNN GJELSVIK**

Secretary General



*Neil Fassina*

**NEIL FASSINA**

ICDE President

[www.icde.org](http://www.icde.org)

# International Council for Open and Distance Education

## INSTITUTIONAL PRIZE OF EXCELLENCE LAUDATION

Established on 23 February 1995, the University of the Philippines Open University (UPOU) is the pioneer and leading institution in open and distance learning in the Philippines and in the Region.

UPOU's mission is to provide Filipinos everywhere access to quality higher education through innovative methods of teaching and learning that are designed to be responsive to their needs as well as to national development priorities. Their wide range of program offerings, coupled with UPOU's capability to harness recent and relevant digital technologies in education, have enabled UPOU to build a global community of Filipino and international learners in more than 70 countries.

The UPOU adheres to the philosophy of open education and has been a longstanding advocate of Open Educational Resources (OER) and open access courses. Since 2012, the UPOU has crafted its OER policy and has put in place strategies to promote, support, contribute and integrate OER values in its institutional processes and practices. Recognising the transformative potential of OER in achieving SDG 4, UPOU continues to produce open educational resources in various formats. These free educational resources are housed in the UPOU Commons under the UPOU Networks, an online repository of all UPOU produced multimedia resources.

UPOU has also been developing and offering a number of MOOCs catering to lifelong learners, career shifters, out-of-school youth, alternative learning system students, and overseas Filipino workers. Since 2013, more than 80 courses have been offered via the UPOU MODeL platform, accommodating almost 70,000 learners.

UPOU has unique brands of public service aimed to widen access to continuing professional education, provide digital opportunities to local communities, foster critical discussion of relevant issues in the community and society, and provide technical assistance to higher education institutions (HEIs), local governments, people's organisations, and civil society. This role has been highly accentuated during the COVID-19 pandemic, where UPOU's societal contribution to the education field has proven to be outstanding. The ICDE Institutional Prize of Excellence is well deserved.