

# **Open Badges** for adult education

## GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS



Erasmus+

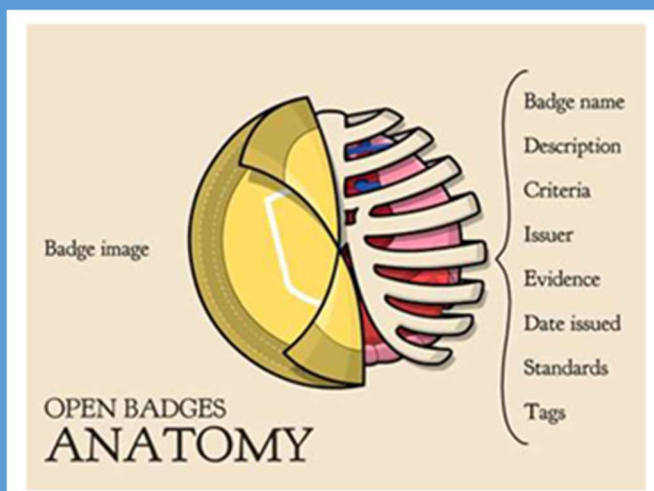


## WHAT IS AN OPEN BADGE?

A badge is a digital image that provides verifiable information about achievements, skills, competences or a quality of an individual. It allows valuing and recognizing the competences acquired through informal in and out of formal education, on-line and support so far lifelong learning.

Mozilla Foundation created the specifications for Open Badges in 2011 with the following data embedded:

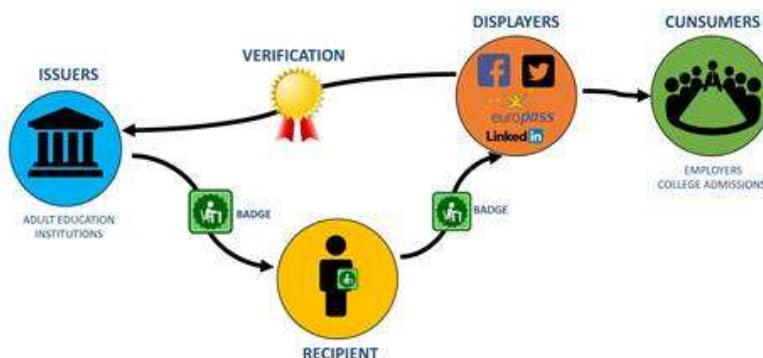
### Doug Belshaw/ Badge anatomy



## WHY ARE BADGES USEFUL?

An Open Badge was designed not to compete or replace a certificate, but to complement it. It is used to highlight specific abilities and qualities that may not appear on traditional certificates and are not represented by a course outcome, hence giving learners confidence in own capability to perform a task.

Additionally, it provides a unique way to issue a digital credential, which can be instantly shared across the web.



## WHY IS IT INTERESTING FOR EDUCATORS?

Badges have great pedagogical potential for you as an educator, to:

- ❖ **Introduce playfulness in the educational atmosphere**, allowing a friendly competition between learners and showing how close they are to accomplishing a goal. Badges speak to learners used to video games.
- ❖ **Provide feedback to the learners regarding their progress**
- ❖ **Act as milestones on pathways towards learning goals**, breaking lessons into smaller assignments
- ❖ **Valorise individual's talents**, highlighting specific abilities and qualities that may not appear on traditional certificates.
- ❖ **Validate soft skills**, thus providing a more complete picture of an individual
- ❖ **Drive learners' engagement and participation** in a course;
- ❖ **Stimulate disadvantaged learners**, for whom the traditional education system hasn't worked **and** a badge provides visible recognition and validation for accomplishments or mastering a skill.
- ❖ **Participate to the development of digital skills**: Badges earner learns how to manage them on their online backpack and include them in an e-portfolio or display them on their online profile, or anywhere on web.
- ❖ **Show learners how to professionalise their use of social networks**: By displaying their badges on Facebook, they will make it look more professional. Through badges they may also be driven to create an account on Networks such as LinkedIn.

 facebook Linked in europass

## BADGES DEVELOPED BY MY ORGANISATION

If your organisation is not yet delivering badges, you can suggest to enquire about this possibility (cf. guide for educational organisations).

If your organisation is already awarding badges, they need to provide you an account on the platform used to create them.

Note that if the platform used is badgr.io, you will find step-by step instructions visualised in short videos on <http://www.open-badges.eu>



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# Open Badges

for adult education



## CREATE YOUR OWN BADGES

To create your own badges, we suggest to use <https://badgr.io> because it is open source, free and easy to use, with no limitations in numbers of learners or badges, and the possibility to create badges. The steps are:

1. **Login**
2. **Click on “create issuer”**, typing your name and the website of your organisation, confirming your email, writing your role in the organisation
3. **Click on create badge**, entitle it, define the criteria for earning the badge, select from the platform applications a graphic image or upload one from another platform/your account

Be aware that choosing to use a free platform means that you take the risk of losing the continuity of service and facing some unexpected changes in the features.



## DETERMINATION OF CRITERIA

A useful approach to write badge criteria is SMART-method. It stands for:

**S**

**Specific** - what will the badge earner have accomplished by earning this badge?

**M**

**Measurable** - how will the assessor know when the level at which the badge is awarded has been achieved?

**A**

**Achievable** - in what ways can the badge be achieved?

**R**

**Relevant** - is this badge worth earning? What opportunities does it unlock?

**T**

**Timely** - the timeframe for earning the badge needs to be limited and known in advance

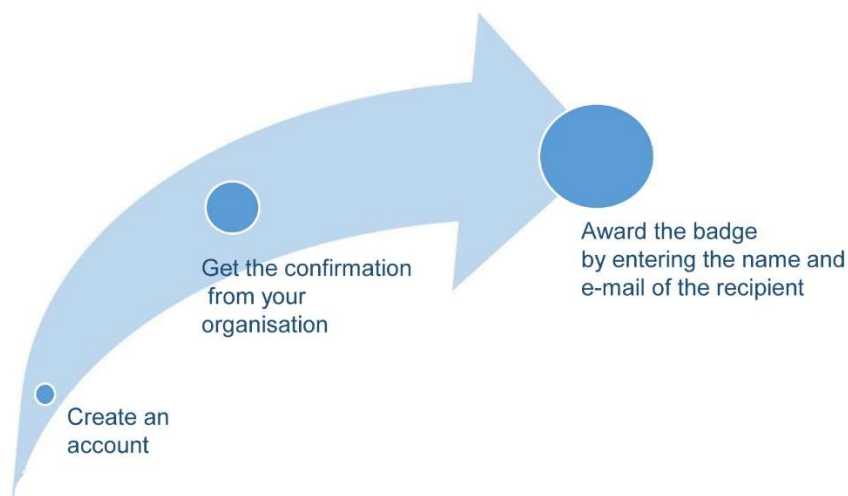
In particular you can create badges to valorise practical activities that have been achieved during the training period such as a contest, the organisation of an event, the participation to an external conference, a volunteer action... There are many activities that can enrich the CV of a learner with little professional experience. By badging them, you will help learners to valorise them as an “official” third part explaining and certifying the action. (...)

Don't forget that when you create and deliver badges, you are involving the reputation and legitimacy of your employer.



## BADA OPEN BADGES

The Open Badges for Adult Education project provides a set of 50 badges related to behaviours and attitudes evidenced by attending adult education courses and 50 badges related to key competences, like communication in mother tongue, foreign languages, digital skills etc., available on <https://badgr.io>. To use them you just have to:



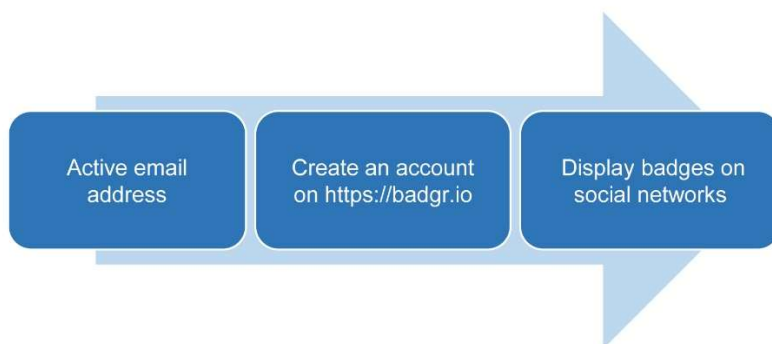
## VALORISE BADGES

**Badges serve a** mechanism to show and communicate to a broader audience, what an individual is capable of, or if an individual belongs to a group or is member in a community.

Learners have the option to keep their achievements private and store badges in a “backpack”, which is basically a private website that act as an e-portfolio. Directly, or from this backpack, selected Badges can be displayed on social media platforms, include in learning environments and Europass CV.

**Help learners to take advantage of badges** and signal their achievement to their peers and their professional suitability to the employers. This could have a positive impact on jobs and career advancement.

### Steps for the learners:



## MOTIVATING LEARNERS, COMMUNICATING ABOUT BADGES

Organise an open discussion (1,5h) to present badges, let the learners express their experience with badges and their vision of badges, how can they use them? What added value they see? Which media they will prefer? What are their fears? What they don't understand? It is advised to invite a learner from the same target group who has already received some badges so that s/he can act as ambassador.

The list of badges that you provide needs to be presented to the learners. We also suggest that learners can be involved in the process by suggesting that a badge should be awarded to a co-learner. They can also claim for a badge when they estimate they fulfil the requirements.

### TEACHER'S TESTIMONIALS:

**"The granting of digital badges has encouraged my students to contribute ideas for creating new digital badges! Therefore, I currently award 4: for knowledge, conscientious participation, participation in instruction, and accuracy. "**

**"Digital badges are a great motivation for the participants of my lectures. In addition to the playful touch, they promote healthy rivalry, as participants try to gain as many digital badges as possible. "**

**"I did not think that awarding digital badges would be so easy and so well accepted by pupils. An excellent means to encourage participation in lessons. "**



### Project partners:

1. Greta du Velay – France
2. Folkuniversitetet – Sweden
3. VHS Cham Ev. –Germany
4. Ljudska univerza Ptuj – Slovenia
5. Accion Laboral – Spain

Visit our website: <https://www.open-badges.eu/>

