

Why Badges?

badge [baj]: a special or distinctive mark, token, or device worn as a sign of allegiance, membership, authority, achievement, etc.

(Source: Dictionary.com)



A badge is a symbol or indicator of an accomplishment, skill, quality or interest. From the Boy and Girl Scouts, to PADI diving instruction, to the more recently popular geo-location game, Foursquare, badges have been successfully used to set goals, motivate behaviors, represent achievements and communicate success in many contexts. A “digital badge” is an online record of achievements, tracking the recipient’s communities of interaction that issued the badge and the work completed to get it. Digital badges can support connected learning environments by motivating learning and signaling achievement both within particular communities as well as across communities and institutions. (Source: [Erin Knight White Paper](#))



Digital Badges vs. Open Badges

A digital badge is an online representation of a skill you've earned. Open Badges take that concept one step further, and allows you to verify your skills, interests and achievements through credible organizations and attaches that information to the badge image file, hard-coding the metadata for future access and review. Because the system is based on an open standard, earners can combine multiple badges from different issuers to tell the complete story of their achievements — both online and off. Badges can be displayed wherever earners want them on the web, and share them for employment, education or lifelong learning.

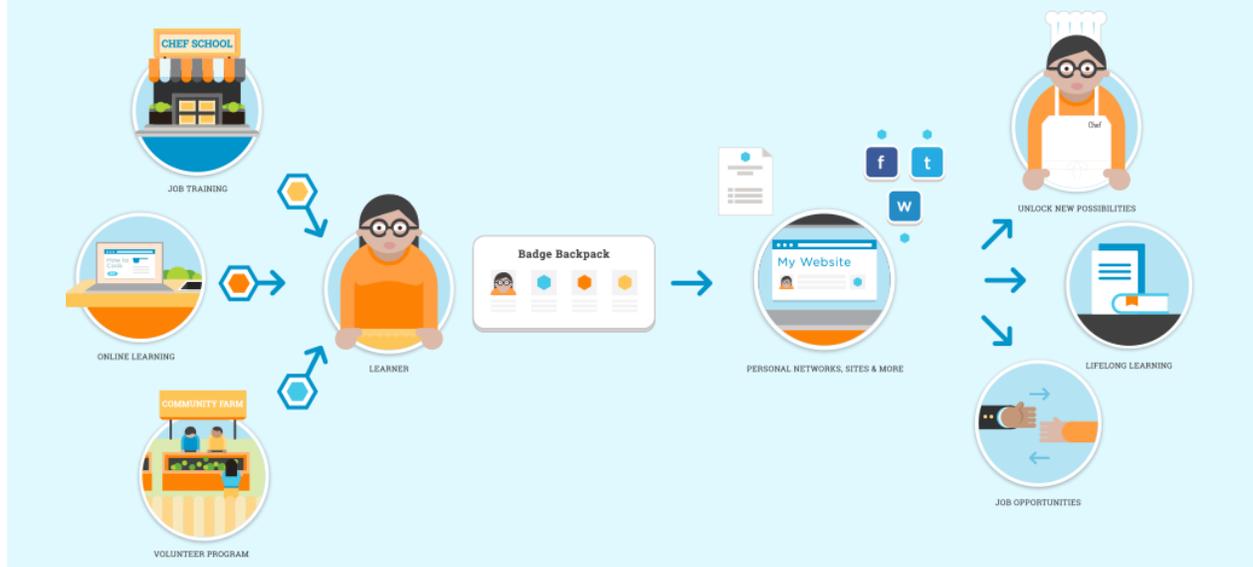
Open Badges are:

- **Free and open:** Open Badges is free software and an open technical standard. Any organization can use this standard to create, issue and verify open digital badges.
- **Transferable:** Collect badges from multiple sources, online and off, into a single backpack. Then display your skills and achievements on social networking profiles, job sites, websites and more.
- **Stackable:** Whether they're issued by one organization or many, badges can build upon each other and be stacked to tell the full story of your skills and achievements.
- **Evidence-based:** Open Badges are information-rich. Each badge has important metadata which is hard-coded into the badge image file itself that links back to the issuer, criteria and verifying evidence.

Open Badges make it easy to:

- Get recognition for the things you learn;
- Give recognition for the things you teach;
- Verify skills; and
- Display your verified badges across the web.

Open Badges help you share your skills & interests with the world:



10 Million Better Futures

This [Clinton Global Initiative](#) Commitment to Action seeks to scale up the Open Badge ecosystem to benefit 10 million workers and students by 2016.

Cities of Learning

The first citywide badging initiative launched in [Chicago](#) in 2013, which was so successful that six cities committed to launching badge systems for citywide learning in 2014.

Information provided by: <http://www.badgealliance.org/why-badges/>