7 steps to start using Open Badges
based on Cities of Learning [activity](#)

Many people are excited about the idea of open badges but often are not sure where to start. Here are some essential steps towards using open badges.

Watch the video for an explanation: https://youtu.be/wKG1yWTGgFM

Complete the following steps with your team and learners! (mark ☑):

☐ Step 1. Identify the reason you want to use open badges.

Perhaps you want to make the outcomes of your educational programme more visible? Or you are looking for ways to connect your participants with some external organisations looking for people with certain skills? Or you wish to show learning pathways in a clearer manner? Badges can be a good solution to such challenges.

☐ Step 2. Identify more specific goals you wish to achieve with badges.

Some objectives might be linked to making your educational process better – to onboard or motivate your learners with badges or establish a more transparent assessment flow. Other objectives can be linked to achievements and recognition to support building badge-based portfolios or establishing endorsement agreements with other organisations.

☐ **Step 3. Reach an agreement in your organisation on using badges and make sure people gain the necessary understanding and skills to integrate them in their programmes**

Consider involving your partners or potential badge endorsers at a certain point. They can give you valuable ideas or build a foundation for a wider recognition of the skills acquired through your programmes.

☐ **Step 4. Now analyse your educational programme and identify how you want your learners to be different by the end of the journey. Identify some key milestones and some possible challenges on the way.**

Don't forget to involve your potential badge earners – they can tell you where some extra motivation is needed, where recognition is missing or what should be highlighted. It will help to identify where and what kind of badges shall be added to the learning journey.

☐ **Step 5. Start describing a few badges: think of a name, then add a description, criteria, assessment methods and the type of evidence required.**

Think of a possible image design and what badges should communicate visually.

☐ Step 6. Now think how your learners will learn about badges and how they will access them.

Should they do it on their own? Or should an educator present badges? It's important to consider different ways of inviting people to earn a badge. You can present a badge to your programme participants in several ways:

- *by showing a QR code. People can scan it and see the badge description and criteria – what they need to do to earn the badge;*
- *by sharing a link. It is helpful if you communicate with programme participants on an online platform or through a chat service;*
- *by sending an invitation by email. Programme participants will receive a notification that they are invited to earn a badge.*

☐ Step 7. Together with your badge earners explore how to make the most of badges.

Where to share them online? Who should see badges? Who might be interested in skills represented by badges? Should people share every single badge or an entire portfolio or a certificate of badges? Talk through different opportunities that may open up when people leave a positive and data-rich digital footstep.