



Open Badges Belgium, a new Open Knowledge Working Group to give value to badges you receive

- <http://2017.openbelgium.be/session/open-badges-belgium>
 - **Time: 13h30-15h00**
 - **Location: Aqua room**
 - **Level: Beginner**
 - **Type: Workshop**
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1. Introduction to Open Badges

What is an Open Badge? An Open Badge is basically a picture which has data embedded in it. The data inside follows an open standard, expressed in JSON-LD. This makes it useful to use in applications.

What are they for? An online representation of a skill, interest or achievement that gives recognition for things you have done. They are a tool to achieve open recognition. Not closed into institutions or education systems.

Formal education is only a small fraction. More and more of the learning that really matters is not taking place in the classrooms but also outside of it. Open badges allow for the recognition of these qualifications.

Open recognition - examples:

- Refugees might not have a diploma or qualifications that is recognized by employers. Open badges could help in this recognition.
- The concept of cities of learning. This started in the US and it's a program in which the city tries to create a culture of learning that is supported by different institutions. They want to engage everyone in the city in learning. Some citizens might not be motivated by what they learn in schools but they might get other qualifications for which they can get badges. For example, someone is a dj and is very good at this so he could get recognition for this with a badge, providing him with an opportunity on the job market.





- Employee recognition: IBM invests in open badges to replace certification, but also to make it possible to get recognition inside of a company for things that you do. It's not only about money but appreciation.

For what can you get an open badge? Hard skills, soft skills, participation, official certification, authorization, achievement, community involvement, etc.

→ You can basically get a badge for everything. It is important to get people involved. Afterwards the value will be defined.

How does it work, the ecosystem? Issuers (could be anyone, mainly institutions) give a badge to an earner of a badge. He can display it, show it off on the resume or Twitter. Displayers have the possibility to verify the badge (making sure it is issued by a company to an earner because of metadata). The consumers actually give value to a badge, they are employers or other education providers who use them as a proof of prior knowledge.

Difference between digital badges and open badges? Open badges are free to use and they are an open technical standard. The data that is in it is of a certain format (JSON-LD). They are portable and you can download them. They are stackable, you can go on a very granular level of your certifications. They are earner-centric, the earner is in control of its data and they can do whatever they want with it. It's evidence-based. They are granular digital credentials. Also verifiable.

Open badges are built like the web is built, they are local and decentralized and they use hyperlinks.

Where does this Open Badge standard come from?

- Before 2011: we saw in games and in youth movements that you get badges. A lot of digital badges were emerging because of games and digital communities. Mozilla defined a standard to make sure that all the badges of the web could follow the same one and to make it less messy and more valuable. They created the first open badges backpack.
- 2013: they had a new version of the backpack (the 1.0 standard). It was a place where people could get all the badges who followed the same standard checked and verified.
- 2014: the funding ended and Mozilla donated the code to the community. Different kinds of working groups emerged to spread the standard (working places, higher education have to recognize it).





- 2015: corporate companies joined the community and started issuing open badges. It established in online education, offline education is looking at it. The hardest part is to convince the consumers to use it.
- 2016: moved to a different standard. All the code is open source, main developer works for IMS Global. Matter of a different kind of funding. The funding for open badges is guaranteed with IMS Global.
- Open recognition movement: open badges is a tool, but there might be other tools (it's not the only way to do it). The movement to open up the community.

In Belgium in 2015, Selor started experimenting. A Belgian platform was built to make sure that people in Belgium have a place to gather badges and that data is not misused and safely stored. Selor is an issuer of badges.

2. Use cases of Badges at the City of Ghent

Vincent was involved in the creation of the BE Badges platform and is still involved in the follow-up of the project. A first case where Jobpunt was kind of a consumer of open badges.

A. Jobpunt: what do we do?

Jobpunt is an organisation like Selor, with a different structure. Kind of a broker organisation living in a network between a lot of organisations and Jobpunt offers services of these organisations to the government. They create big public tenders.

The rubix cube explains the complexity of the domain they are working in. Trends are coming at a rapid spread and Jobpunt has to get ready for this. When they create solutions for their clients they use their own expertise, but also the expertise of their clients and suppliers.

Services: organisational development & recruitment and development.

As an organisation, you think about how to get ready for the challenges of the future? Jobpunt tackles this by continuously evolving in their products and services. An important aspect here is data, and Open Badges is related to this domain. Data is everywhere and it can guarantee quality, it provides proof. That kind of data is still rare in our domain, basically anyone can say "I can promise you this" but proof is still necessary. Therefore there is a large focus on data.

Open Data: they want to share open HR data. Open Badges are very interesting in realizing this.





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B. Challenges on the labour market

First challenge: a lot of wasted talent. Firstly because it's not recognized. Example of refugees who have a lot of skills and they can't prove it.

Second challenge: when looking for a job, you might have to do several tests again. You have already proven your skills but you don't own the results, the data. This is also kind of wasted talent.

Third challenge: the labor market in Belgium is characterized by a lot of roadblocks. It is very hard to get a job in the public sector if you don't have a university degree. It's better in the private sector but the bigger the company gets, the more they have to rely on formal structures. We need to go for a more mobile labor market.

Fourth challenge: talent mismatch. Employers want experts for complex functions and roles while the available pool tends to get lower educated. A mismatch that we have to deal with.

C. Use case Be badges 'City of Ghent'

The City of Ghent is one of Jobpunt's big clients and they wanted a large recruitment procedure for administrative assistants. They are popular vacancies because you can enter the procedure without diploma. They needed to update their testing procedure:

- They created a first generic testing module. Every candidate had to pass this to get to the second round. Afterwards, a more role related module.
- For the client, it was very important that the test quality was high. The adverse impact have to be very low. Costs were important as well.
- Together with the client, the competencies and the test approach was defined.

Approach: for the generic module, they worked together with different organisations. For the situational judgement test, they worked together with Selor. It tests different competencies: teamwork, acting in a service-oriented manner, showing reliability, developing oneself, achieving objectives. These are competencies that are important for any kind of role. Any candidate who passed the selor test module received a badge, the SJT was part of it. The City of Ghent could use these badges also.

- 766 candidates with Selor badge C
- 91 candidates with active account
- 75 participants used their level C badge in the Ghent procedure & 2 a level B badge
- 77 badges were used





- 54 candidates took the test. They didn't have to do the SJT test, but they had to the other two tests. The success rate of those people was 85% while for the other participants was 71%.

Conclusion: the success rate was high for the badge holders.

D. Future

Open Badges is a very motivating system for receivers of the badges.

Learning path: if all the data is contained in badges than it can be easily visualized. Visualizing your learning and data, you can see paths and follow those paths. In the recruiting industry, a lot of tools are used but we see that machine learning starts to take over.

Applymagicsauce.com: predictions on psychometrics, personality, political and sexual orientation based on digital footprints. If we badge/structure this data, we have a very powerful tool.

Open badges is about the open sourcing of talent.

3. Hands-on session: How to create and issue an Open Badge

How does it technically work? Once you design and publish the badge, you can share it with recipients via email or claim code. The earners can collect them, store them, display and share them.

The data behind the badge is structured. Three important elements:

- The badge class gives an idea on the skill/qualification behind the badge.
- With the assertion, you link the badge to a recipient.
- And also information related to the issuer. Different issuers can be added when they endorse skills.

These elements can be verified by consumers.

“Baking your badge” : putting your JSON data inside of the PNG. This makes it possible that an open badge is portable.

You can design a badge yourself or use an issuing service: it makes the technical process easier. You don't need to take into account the structure of the standard. Examples: Open Badge Factory, Acclaim, badgr, BadgeOS, etc.





The backpack services allow you to keep all your badges in one place. Examples: badgr, Mozilla, CanCred Factory, etc.

4. Q&A + discussion: Future of Open Badges

What brings 2017? BE belges now operates under Open Knowledge Belgium.

Mission:

- Try to spread the use of open badges in Belgium.
- Try to have as much companies and individuals on board.
- Try to make it very easy for everyone.
- Support initiatives in line with vision.
- Help build International Open Recognition Community.
- Focus on the international community, but implement it in Belgium. We're building it and we try to make a system that works for everyone in the company. Try to take into account the needs of corporates, of individuals
- Earner-focused: Open badges wants to have meaning for individuals

Feel free to join the community as an issuer, earner, displayer, consumer or just a supporter:

- Twitter [@be_badges](#)
- Mail info@bebadges.be
- community@bebadges.be and introduce yourself to the community.

Stay informed via Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Meetups.

Questions 1: How do we know that the issuer is an organisation we can trust if the badge holder if you don't know it?

If it's a company you have never heard of, you might not accept it. But if you see that other institutions you trust, trust the other organisation, you might accept it. The network of trust is key here! The comments or the valuations of others also play an important role here (same as for Tripadvisor for example).

Question 2: How will it be different from the endorsements on LinkedIn?

The biggest problem with LinkedIn endorsements is that it's a tagging system. Open Badges provide more evidence. It is richer in data and the Open Badge community is also learning from LinkedIn. One of the learning is that they put it completely open (you can endorse anyone for anything). Rich data makes it possible that anyone can issue a badge for anything, but also make it possible to only show the badges with the most value.





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Question 3: badges for people with disabilities?

For some people now, the educational system doesn't work. These people, who have very good skills (in gaming or digital skills) might not have the possibilities to show it but might have the skills that companies need. Badges allow to show this.

