

# Region of Learning Toolkit Employers

REGION  
OF  
LEARNING



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## About Region of Learning

**We are Region of Learning, a place-based mission aiming to recognise and connect all types of learning, skills and attributes outside of formal education to improve outcomes for people and the place they live in.**

With the support of learning providers, schools and employers, we harness the power of technology to accurately record, recognise and demonstrate the diverse skills and learning experiences of individuals gained outside of traditional academic qualifications.

Through our platform and digital badging, our goal is to unlock new opportunities, empower learners, and foster collaboration between stakeholders to shape the future of learning and employment.

Join us in shaping a brighter future for our community.

### Our Aims

- To build connections between industry and education
- Recognise and value informal and non-traditional learning
- Create pathways for young people to thrive

### Our Team

**Joanna Hodgson**  
Manager

**Lucy Laing**  
Manager

# Partners

We run the Region of Learning project in partnership with:



The project is funded by:



# What is a digital badge?

**Digital badges are visible, measurable and connected.**

A digital badge is a visual representation of an achievement, skill, or competency that is earned through specific activities or experiences. It serves as a digital credential that can be displayed and shared online, allowing individuals to showcase their accomplishments and capabilities.

The potential for learning is everywhere. Outside of formal qualifications, exams and tests, individuals are constantly evolving through everyday work, volunteering in communities, attending events, workshops, and online learning, and interacting with cultural experiences and discovering new ideas.

Digital badges provide a smart, simple, portable, sharable and verifiable way to recognise and validate these non-traditional and non-accredited learning experiences.



## How do digital badges work?

Digital badges are image files embedded with metadata that provides detailed information about the issuer, the criteria for earning the badge, and evidence of the achievement in a specific area. They also contain skills tags which demonstrate the core competencies developed through the badged activity. Making them credible and easily verifiable by potential employers.

Digital badges can be easily shared online, allowing individuals to showcase their skills and accomplishments to potential employers, educational institutions, and peers. They are also portable meaning that individuals can collect badges from a range of sources and keep them together to include in a digital CV.

## What is a skills tag?

Skills tags are an essential ingredient in a digital badge that connect the skills employers advertise for in job adverts and those that an applicant can demonstrate. A skills tag can be a specialised or 'hard' skill, a transferable or life skill, and a certified skill.

Skill tags are granular in their description and define the skills the recipient has gained through a certification or training program. They help differentiate between digital badges offered by different organizations and inform third-party hiring or admissions administrators of the candidate's experience and capabilities. There are no limitations to the number of skill tags that can be added to a digital credential, but they should be relevant to the award.

Specialised skill	Transferable skill	Certified skill
Data analysis	Communication	Apprenticeship
Foreign languages	Teamwork	Internship
Marketing	Time management	Summer course

# Where are digital badges stored?

Digital badges can be displayed online or shared digitally. Accessible anywhere through a website link, they can be shared through online platforms, from social media profiles to websites or downloaded and printed as certificates (see page 11).

## Badge Standards

The Royal Society of Arts (RSA) has created a badging standard to help learners progress on their learning journey. Endorsed by City & Guilds, the badging standard has four layers to help differentiate the depth of learning and provides a structure to communicate this learning in a consistent way.



### Engage

The learner has gathered information and experienced a topic. For example, they attended a careers fair, exhibition or an open day.



### Participate

The learner has interacted with learning and joined in. For example, they attended a workshop, training or club.



### Demonstrate

The learner has applied knowledge in a real world environment to gain experience and get feedback. For example, they took part in a competition, work experience or project.



### Lead

The learner has embedded knowledge in different contexts and influenced others. For example, they joined an ambassador or leadership programme.

# Benefits of badging to your organisation

There are two main benefits to your organisation to recognising and engaging with digital badging: recruitment and retention.

## Recruitment

Recruiting the right people for any organisation requires a lot of time, care and effort. Digital badges are a verifiable way for you to assess the soft and hard skills possessed by candidates, as well as providing a roadmap of organisations they have engaged with in addition to their previous job roles and formal qualifications.

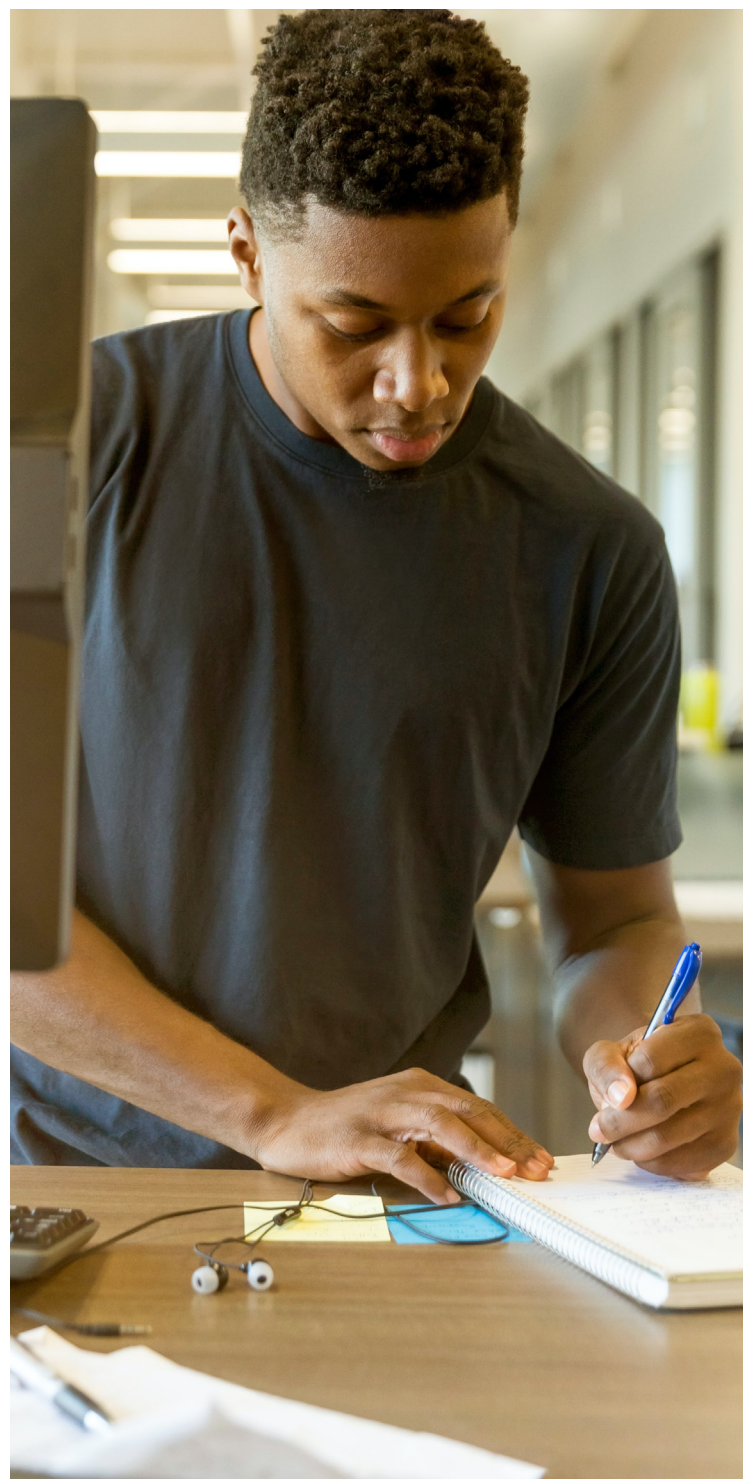
Digital badging also helps businesses to broaden the talent landscape suitable for a particular job; transferable skills and aptitudes can be possessed by candidates who haven't followed a typical career or education pathway for a given role, but may be the perfect person for the job.

## Retention

By implementing digital badging in training and professional development programmes, you are able offer employees tangible routes to career development and recognition, serving to improve job satisfaction for existing employees. You can also benefit from getting greater insight into the diversity of the skills and aptitudes of their current workforce.

## Why recognise digital badges?

- Make a lasting impact on young talent and contribute to their professional development
- Better identify potential candidates and match them to your business needs
- Enhance your recruitment process and support diversity and inclusivity
- Join a vibrant community of local employers connecting and empowering young talent
- Retain current employees through training and development opportunities



## Could you provide work-related opportunities for young people?

As an employer, you have the power to offer young people valuable work experience that can shape their future. Share your work-related opportunities and develop a digital badge to help them gain practical skills and knowledge in your industry.

# How to embed digital badging in your organisation

## Recruitment

Will you pledge to recognise badges?

Region of Learning is working with employers across Cambridgeshire to recognise digital badges as part of their recruitment process, so that the process of earning badges has meaningful outcomes for badge earners.

Organisations that have pledged to recognise and validate digital badges as part of their recruitment process when considering new applicants will have the Recognition of Digital Badges badge. Organisations will also have access to networks of other local providers and opportunities to collaborate to inform and develop pathways.

Contact us to pledge and transform the way you recognise and value skills beyond formal qualifications.



## Retention

**Badge your training opportunities to reward staff and promote progression**

You can write your own digital badges to reward staff achievements and encourage retention. Badges make a great record of the upskilling and progression of staff within the organisation, including:

- Staff training
- CPD courses
- Core competencies
- Progression to other roles within the organisation

Full support is offered to help you design and write your badges – just contact us at Region of Learning.





# How to write and issue digital badges

## Interested in writing your own digital badge?

### 1. Join a badge writing workshop

New to writing badges? Badge Nation offers free digital badge writing workshops to help organisations to develop their first badge!

Explore the elements of a badge, the Quality Assurance process, and how to use the platform to write and issue badges. You will come away from the workshop with a draft of your first badge, and be issued with a badge when the session is complete. Join the next online workshop by visiting the [Badge Nation](#) website.

### 2. Use a Badge Planning Document

Use this [Badge Planning Document](#) from Badge Nation to help write your first badge.

### 3. Refer to existing digital badges

There are many digital badges already on Navigatr – have a look in the ‘Discover’ section of the [Navigatr platform](#) or visit the [badge ideas bank](#) to explore sector-specific badges.

## Top 5 tips on how to encourage Digital Badge adoption with your team

Once a badge series has been implemented, the process of issuing it and communicating its benefits with earners can seem far away. Our top five tips to increase interest are:



## How to issue badges

Visit the [‘Need Help’ section](#) on the [Navigatr](#) platform to learn how to issue digital badges.

Issuing your badges can be to individuals or large groups by simply entering the earner’s email address and clicking the ‘Issue’ button. Walkthroughs are available on the [Region of Learning](#) site or [Badge Nation Help Centre](#).

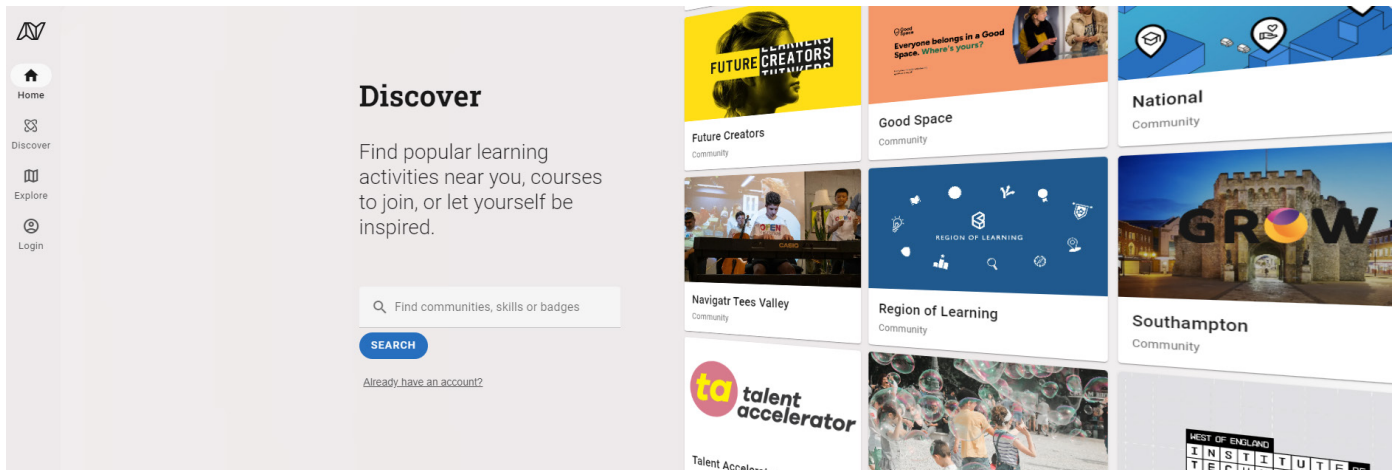
## Is there a cost to get involved?

Creating digital badges is funded by Region of Learning. Region of Learning aims to support you with: writing your badges, quality assuring them to the RSA standard and choosing which badging platform is right for you. We can offer small grants to cover licenses up until March 2025. Get in touch with the Region of Learning team to learn more.

# Navigatr platform

The [Navigatr digital platform](#) hosts an online learning community for Region of Learning, where individuals can easily discover the opportunities that a place offers, create and view their portfolio of digital badges, and follow personalised learning pathways based on their interests or career goals.

Designed to connect local organisations, services, and employers, the platform serves as a hub for individuals to explore learning experiences and employment opportunities near them. Its primary focus is to empower people to articulate their skills in a meaningful way to potential employers.



A digital map displays local learning opportunities, helping learners to discover what is on their doorstep and allows providers to promote their activity and understand who engages with them.

## Could you offer a pathway?

Pathways are created when digital badges are used in a series to lead to a destination. This destination can be another badge, work experience, qualifications or employment.

A pathway can be built by a single organisation or through a collaboration of organisations and can include non-formal learning and qualifications.

Region of Learning is working to develop pathways within specific sectors and for specific user groups. Contact the Region of Learning to discuss developing digital pathways with your digital badges.

## Live labour market information

The Navigatr platform is the first to embed the Lightcast skills taxonomy: an open-source library of skills based on millions of job postings, which can then be embedded within existing digital badges and pathways.

Thanks to these skills tags, the platform can offer pathway opportunities linked to live labour market information. By including your digital badge in a pathway, it can provide users with current job vacancies with that skillset.

## How to share digital badges

Earners of digital badges can share their digital badges in many different ways:

- Digital CV
- Email signature
- Facebook post
- LinkedIn certification / post
- WhatsApp message
- Website

You can find detailed how to share guides on the [Navigatr website](#).

## Digital badge wallets

A badge passport, also known as a digital badge wallet, is an online platform that enables users to collect and store their digital badges in one place. Regardless of who or where the badge was issued from, earners can download their badge and store and manage them centrally.

Digital Badge wallets are usually free to sign up to. There are lots of different types of digital badge wallets such as Open Badge Passport and some come with lots of different features like digital CV management and certificate upload.

Are your earners sharing their badge on social media? Encourage them to use the hashtag #RegionofLearning so that we can see their achievements!





## The bigger picture

### Cities of Learning

We are proud to be part of a wider national movement, RSA's Cities of Learning, which takes a 21st century approach to skills recognition and empowering people to pursue their career ambitions. Cities of Learning is an initiative of people and places committed to nurturing, validating and connecting learning across towns, cities and regions to support a regenerative economy. Alongside Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, these include Brighton, Plymouth, Belfast, Bradford, Tees Valley, and Southampton.

### Quality Assurance

Badge Nation has partnered with Cities of Learning to ensure that all digital badges are upheld to the RSA Badge Standard.

Every digital badge is Quality Assured by Badge Nation. The spelling, grammar, skills tags and the Badge Standards within your badge will be assessed to ensure that each badge is high quality, makes a positive impact on badge earners, and is consistent with the RSA Badge Standard.

Badge Nation hosts the [Badge Zone](#) – the free online hub to support with all things Badge Nation and digital badging, from getting started to managing badges and engaging with badge earners.

## Contact

For any enquiries, please contact us:

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**Region of Learning**

General enquiries: [regionoflearning@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:regionoflearning@cambridge.gov.uk)



**Navigatr**

For support, visit: <https://www.navigatr.org/>



**Badge Nation**

For badging support: <https://badgenation.org/enquiry-form>



# Press release template

[Organisation logo]

[Region of Learning logo]

**XXX introduces digital badging**  
**[INSERT ORGANISATION IMAGE]**

[Organisation] has joined the Region of Learning movement to support young people's career development in the region by recognising digital badges as a valid credential during their recruitment process.

By accepting / offering digital badges, [organisation] is reinforcing its commitment to social mobility and staff development. Badges recognise the valuable non-traditional and non-accredited learning experiences and skills developed by young people outside of formal education.

[Insert quote from organisation]

[Insert detail about badges offered, if applicable]

[Organisation] is one of the many organisations in Cambridgeshire already working with the regionwide initiative to recognise and reward informal learning and skills, as well as provide new opportunities for young people across the region. The full badge collection offered by [organisation] can be viewed here [insert link to Navigatr platform].

If you're interested in how to develop your own badges or provide learning and working opportunities, you can find out more information by emailing: [regionoflearning@gov.uk](mailto:regionoflearning@gov.uk)

## **Region of Learning**

Region of Learning has been developed to address entrenched barriers to skills development, civic engagement and employment opportunities, for all children and young people (aged 15 to 24 years) across the region, targeting those most at risk of poor life outcomes and furthest from the labour market.

Through digital badging, Region of Learning enables young people, employers and learning providers across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to recognise and validate learning and skills development outside of the classroom to help young people become more employable and achieve their goals.

Cambridge City Council is the lead partner in this initiative that is delivered through a smart, universal passport app to learning, skills and opportunity.

## **Funding and support**

Region of Learning is led by Cambridge City Council and supported by the European Social Fund, Cambridgeshire County Council, Anglia Ruskin University, Arts Council England, Form the Future CIC, Shift Momentum and Greater Cambridge Partnership.

## Email template for badge earners

Dear XXX

Congratulations on earning our XXX digital badge!

You have been issued a digital badge by XXX for XXX

A digital badge is a visual recognition of your learning and skills achievement and can be shared online or included in digital CVs, email signatures, downloaded or stored in a digital wallet along with any other digital badges you may have received.

You can share or display your achievement on the online Navigatr platform, LinkedIn, your email signature, or even WhatsApp – visit the [Navigatr help centre](#) to learn how.

Interested in developing your skills and working towards another badge? Explore our badge collection on the [Navigatr platform](#) to discover more local learning opportunities.

Best wishes

XXX

# GDPR and digital badges



Digital badges are a safe, secure and verified way of collecting credentials.

Region of Learning recommends that all learning providers include details about their digital badge offer in all promotional material and information about data collection.

**You must inform users that they will receive an email containing instructions about how to access their digital badge upon completion of the activity.** Once users have signed up to the badging platform, their badges will appear in their profile. You could include a check box, so that users can opt out should they not wish to share their personal details at this stage. We would recommend sharing the below statement with badge users:

Dear learner,

As part of our provision we recognise the skills you have gained by taking part in this experience through Digital Badges.

In order to issue you a digital badge we, the data controllers will require your name and email. We will pass this to our data processes to issue you with an email so that you can access your digital badge.

If you would like us not to issue you with a digital badge please check this box

When a user signs up to a badging platform to collect their badge they will need to consent to the use of their information by the platform, such as Navigatr, who provide a full privacy notice upon sign-up.

You have the right to request your information held by an organisation, amend or remove your data at any point.

Digital badges are issued to a named individual or organisation and belong to that individual alone. Only this individual can collect, reject or share that badge once claimed.