

## Digital Badges 101

This year, we are trialling the use of Digital Badges as part of the Cell Explorers program to showcase and celebrate the participation of our volunteers.

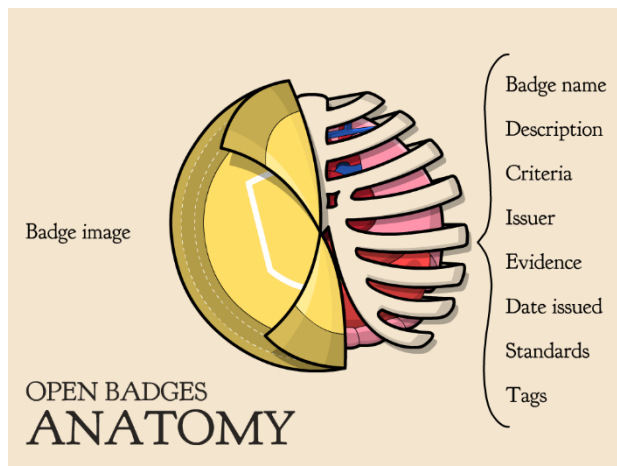


Digital badges are an online method of recognising, accrediting and displaying achievements, skills or participation. Similar to the way that boy scouts traditionally wear physical badges to display their skills or achievements, a digital badge allows the earner to display their achievement online.

In this case, the Cell Explorers badges represent the tasks you have completed and the skills you have gained while volunteering and working with Cell Explorers.

## The Techy Bit

Badges are comprised of an image, which provides a visual description of the skill or achievement, and 'metadata', which provides background detail on it: who issued the badge, a description of the badge, and the criteria involved in earning it.



These types of digital badges, known as 'open badges' are robust, evidence based, and are linked directly to your email address, so anyone who clicks on the badge can see the badge was awarded to you. If you like, you can attach additional evidence to it, making it a powerful record of the experience you've gained on your Cell Explorers volunteering journey.

Open badges are aligned to the Mozilla Open Badges Standard, and company.

Image: CC licence, Kyle Bowen

are not tied to any one organisation or

In practice, you can collect open badges from multiple organisations, store the badges online and display them as you choose.

## Earning Cell Explorer Badges

How can you earn Cell Explorer badges? We have designed our badges as a hierarchy, which means the greater your involvement, the more badges you earn. Each badge has its own particular criteria, and showcases the skills you have gained in earning it.

The graphic below outlines the various Cell Explorers badges along with their criteria. Can you aim to earn our silver and gold badges?



## How Can I Use My Badges

Badges are a great way of showcasing skills to employers as part of an online portfolio. You can share your badges on social networks such as LinkedIn, Twitter or Facebook or add badges to your online CV or website, anywhere you would like to display your skills.

As you complete the criteria and earn Cell Explorer badges, you'll receive an email about how to claim your badge. It will outline how you can access the badge, and how you can display it online. You'll also be getting access to a mini e-portfolio system where you can store your badge, add extra evidence to it, and display the badge, along with any other open badges you may have already earned, or do in future.

Finally, we'll describe where else you can display your badge, such as on social networks. Storing your badge online means you can bring it with you after you finish college as a record of your experience and skills.

## The All Aboard Initiative

At NUI Galway, we are currently leading a national project investigating the use of digital badges in Higher Education. We will be running a number of badge issuing pilot projects such as this one. To learn more, please visit our website: [www.allaboardhe.org](http://www.allaboardhe.org)