

BECOMING AN ISLAND OF LEARNING

An exploration for the Isle of Man

www.learningcities.net | info@learningcities.net



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WHAT IS CITIES OF LEARNING?

- A **Connected Learning eco-system** encompassing local and digital learning experiences and **recognition** across life-wide and lifelong learning programmes
- A **local network of learning providers** who share a common vision and strategy for a territory - city, region or island.
- Digital solutions: a **territory-focused platform, Badge Wallet App** and global standard of **Open Badges**
- An **international network** of more than 30 organisations in 45 locations in Europe, Caribbean and Africa on a mission to support **open, accessible and inclusive learning and recognition**



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The image displays the Cities of Learning by Badgrcraft website and its mobile application interface. The website features a map of Europe with various countries highlighted by colored circles and numbers, indicating active users or activities. Below the map, there are sections for 'Latest Opportunities' and 'Featured Skills'. The mobile app interface shows a dashboard with a list of badges, including 'Better Than Coffee' and 'Academy Contributor', and a sidebar menu with options like 'My activities', 'My playlists', 'My badges', 'Personal settings', and 'Logout'.

Map Data (Approximate):

Country	Count
Sweden	39
Norway	23
Finland	39
Denmark	245
Poland	219
Germany	217
France	62
Spain	49
Italy	61
Greece	29
Turkiye	2
Syria	2
Iraq	2
Iran	2
Pakistan	2
Afghanistan	2
Turkmenistan	2
Kazakhstan	2
Mongolia	2
China	2
South Korea	2
Japan	2

Featured Skills:

- #anticipate needs
- #communicating
- #prepare statistical reports
- #recruit volunteers
- #self-reflection
- #reflexion on own behaviour
- #sports events
- #demonstrate willingness to learn
- #develop a listening attitude when talking to players
- #work for social inclusion

Latest Opportunities:

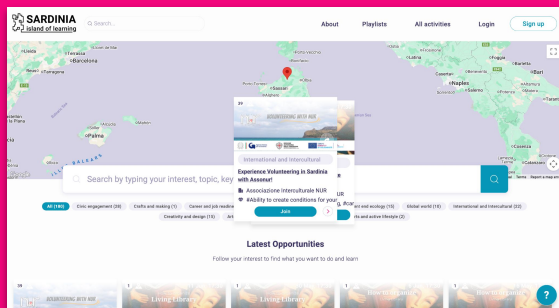
Follow your interest to find what you want to do and

Learning Playlists:

Complete Learning Playlist and earn digital Open Badges

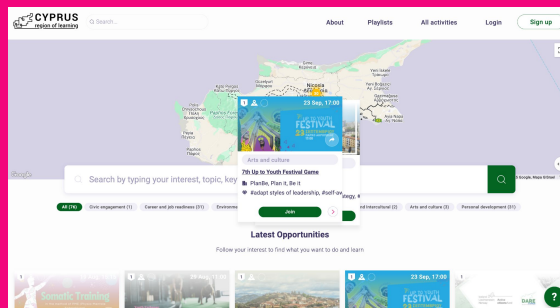
ISLANDS OF LEARNING EXAMPLES

SARDINIA ISLAND OF LEARNING



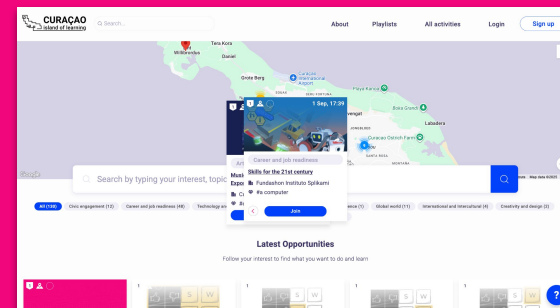
- Youth NFL opportunities
- Youth participation
- YW development and recognition

CYPRUS ISLAND OF LEARNING



- Youth development
- Environmental sustainability
- Non-formal education

CURACAO ISLAND OF LEARNING

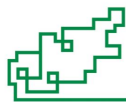


- Sustainable development goals
- Digital transformation
- Entrepreneurship



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CYPRUS

region of learning



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Background information

About Cyprus:

- Island in the Eastern Mediterranean, known for rich history, beaches and blend of Europe and Middle Eastern influences
- Young and diverse population with around 18% of people aged under 24
- Leading industries include tourism, the maritime sector and financial and legal services.
- Cities are bustling urban centres, especially on the coast.
- Rural heartland is made up of villages where young people are involved in farming.
- The island is a melting pot of cultures shaped by Greek, Turkish and British influences.

Our learning eco-system:

- Multilingual education - Greek and Turkish are official languages but English is widely used.
- Strong higher education through top universities and focus on vocational training for tourism and maritime services.

Key issues:

- Youth unemployment - challenges finding steady, well paid jobs, sometimes young people are overqualified leading to frustration and brain drain.
- Social integration due to the island's divided history between Greek and Turkish Cypriots.
- Social inclusion and inequality becoming more visible as more migrants arrive.

Our objectives

- Development of Soft Skills
- Local Volunteering
- Promoting awareness and encouraging the adoption of Open Badges as a method for formally acknowledging the skills and competencies of youth workers.

Our policy impact

- Youth
- Education
- Employment

European Youth Goals

- #10 Sustainable Green Europe
- #6 Moving Rural Youth Forward
- #11 Youth Organisations & European Programmes

Antonis Nicolaides antonis.planbe@gmail.com

Our thematic focus

- Youth development
- Environmental sustainability
- Non-formal education

Our recognition

Collaboration with stakeholders including municipalities and formal education to enhance youth work recognition and competencies
Integration of non-formal education into the educational framework
Work with universities and schools to create synergies supporting young people's skills development
Advocating use of Open Badges for formally recognise youth workers' competences

Proud to showcase



Sustainability and Other
Green Practices, created
by PlanBe:

Testimonials

"The website is very easy to use and essential for creating badges and certificates for our projects. We received very positive feedback from our participants about the way the Open Badges System works and how engaging and helpful is, for non-formal education, for games, activities, and evaluation- Antonis"

Island in the Eastern Mediterranean, known for rich history, beaches and blend of Europe and Middle Eastern influences.

- **Young and diverse population** with around 18% of people aged under 24
- **Leading industries** include tourism, the maritime sector and financial and legal services.
- **Multilingual education** - Greek and Turkish are official languages but English is widely used, strong higher education
- **Key issues:** youth unemployment, social integration, inclusion and inequality





CAGLIARI METROPOLITAN city of learning



Background information

About Cagliari

- Located in southern Sardinia, Italy
- 17 municipalities with a population of around 430,000, with under 30s making up around 25%
- Leading industries include tourism (coastal resorts, cultural sites), commerce (port activities and services), and technology (IT and telecommunications)
- Mix of urban centres, coastal areas and rural zones in agricultural and mountainous regions

Our learning eco-system:

- The University of Cagliari is renowned for its strong engineering, medicine and ICT programmes
- The territory is home to several high schools, technical institutes and vocational schools, focusing on digital skills and green innovation

Key issues

- Youth unemployment (over 30% of the population, significantly higher than the national average)
- Economic disparities between rural and urban areas
- Preventing brain drain due to young people who go to mainland Italy or abroad in search of better opportunities

Our objectives

1. Increasing badge recognition and the use of badges for **validation of competences in non-formal learning**.
2. Introducing and implementing Open Badges and the Badge Quality Label in the **formal education and employment sectors**.
3. Raising awareness and advocating for the use of Open Badges as a tool for **formal recognition of youth workers' competences**.

Our policy impact

- Youth:** formal recognition of youth work and of youth workers at regional level
- Education:** contributing to the recognition of competences and achievements gained through non-formal learning

European Youth Goals

- #1 Connecting EU with Youth#8 Quality Learning
- #8 Quality Learning
- #11 Youth Organisations & European Programmes

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@assonur on Facebook and Instagram

@cagliarimetropolitancityoflearning on Facebook

Our thematic focus

- Promoting non-formal learning opportunities aimed at young people, through the involvement of local NGOs and youth associations
- Promoting the development and recognition of youth work and youth workers at local and regional level
- Promoting youth participation, civic engagement and entrepreneurship among young people

Our recognition

- Cooperation with municipalities on youth participation projects and regional government youth police department involved in activities
- Cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce testing badge system for internships
- Connecting with high schools and university to endorse achievements of young participants
- Members of NINFEA (Italian association of youth workers) and CASMI (Sardinian association of youth mobility NGOs) and together we advocate for better professional recognition of youth workers

Proud to showcase



Discover Cagliari playlist in English, aimed at foreign visitors, volunteers, exchange students and young people

Testimonials

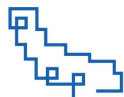
"The system of certifying non-formal skills through Cities of Learning badges transformed the educational approach of the Monument Apert (i.e. Open Monument) project, allowing participating volunteers to obtain digital recognition for skills acquired during activities. This fostered a more conscious participation and enhanced learning within the project, facilitating the construction of personal growth paths through a new approach to the valorisation of the local cultural heritage." - **Marco Cabitza**, Educational activities manager at Imago Mundi

"Open Badges speak the language of the third sector fluently, but their valorisation has also been a priority for the Metropolitan City of Cagliari, in its role as City of Learning. At the basis of the choices made is in fact the conviction that it is a tool that brings to light and enhances the wealth of skills and diverse initiatives that are implemented in our territory, while allowing for the personal but, hopefully, also professional growth of citizens." - **Carla Cherchi**, Administrative officer at Metropolitan City of Cagliari

A large Italian island in the Mediterranean Sea with a mix of urban centres, coastal areas and rural zones in agricultural.

- **Cagliari Metropolitan City** has a population of around 430,000, with under 30s making up around 25%
- **Leading industries** include tourism, commerce, IT and telecommunications
- University of Cagliari, several high schools, technical institutes and vocational schools
- **Key issues:** youth unemployment, Economic disparities between rural and urban areas, preventing youth “brain drain”





CURAÇAO island of learning



Background information

About Curaçao:

- Caribbean island that is an autonomous part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
- Population of 155,823 of which 28% is under 30.
- Leading industries are Financial Services, Real Estate, Accommodation and Food Services.

Our learning eco-system:

- Based on the Dutch system and is multilingual and multicultural, with a focus on digital transformation and 21st century skills.

Key issues:

- High youth unemployment: 29.8% compared to total unemployment rate: 13.1% (2022).
- Rapidly increasing dependence on tourism and resistance to this.
- 25% of people live in poverty.

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Our thematic focus

- Awareness about the Sustainable Development Goals
- Digital Transformation
- Building relationships with NGO's working on Sustainability, Awareness of Climate Change and Greening Strategies.
- Entrepreneurship: In line with the national export strategy: Creative Industry, Startups, Innovators & Tourism
- Youth activities: non-formal education
- Community Development: using the badges when working with volunteers
- Awareness and knowledge about EU funding possibilities

Our objectives

1. Establishing a data collection system for monitoring of community involvement in SDG activities.
2. Implement digital literacy and entrepreneurship training programs that enable Curaçao's small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to adopt innovative technologies by earning relevant digital badges.
3. Establish partnerships with educational institutions, NGO's, governments, and businesses to create pathways for lifelong learning, with a focus on promoting continuous skills development for at least 1,000 citizens by 2029.
4. Develop and implement a badge system that aligns with a national skills strategy and international industry standards, ensuring that the majority of badge earners secure employment, internships, or entrepreneurial opportunities.

Our recognition

Platform manager is the Ministry of Economic Development which develops the National Skills Strategy
Link with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs to connect with the education industry.
Link with the tourist board, developing tracks for entrepreneurs to expand skills recognition in tourism.

Proud to showcase



Sustainable Development
Goals Hero Challenge

Our policy impact

- Youth Empowerment and and Youth Unemployment
- European Skills Agenda
- Promoting Employment and Entrepreneurship

European Youth Goals

- #3 Inclusive Societies
- #7 Quality Employment for All
- #11 Youth Organisations & European Programmes

Testimonials

"In general organisers are enthusiastic about the potential to reach people through online channels and appeal to a younger target group. Badge earners are enthusiastic about collecting badges and it seems to motivate them. It is also welcomed as an alternative to traditional registration for an event."

Caribbean island that is an autonomous part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

- **Population** of 155,823 of which 28% is under 30.
- **Leading industries** financial services, real estate, Accommodation and food services
- Based on the Dutch education system and is multilingual and multicultural
- **Key issues:** high youth unemployment, rapidly increasing dependence on tourism and resistance to this, 25% of people live in poverty.



HOW DOES IT WORK?



- ☐ Developing **Island of Learning strategy**: research needs, map opportunities, connect to policies
- ☐ Establishing **Island of Learning partners network**
- ☐ Setting up and launching the **Island of Learning platform**
- ☐ **Capacity development** for learning providers
- ☐ **Populating** the platform with learning and recognition opportunities
- ☐ **Visibility and promotion** to target groups
- ☐ **Implementation and ongoing support** to learners and learning providers
- ☐ Collaboration with **recognition partners** and stakeholders
- ☐ **International collaboration** and learning opportunities

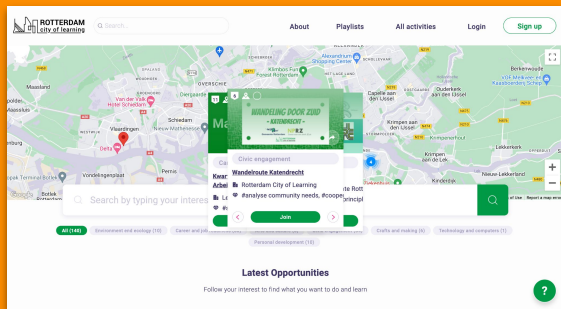


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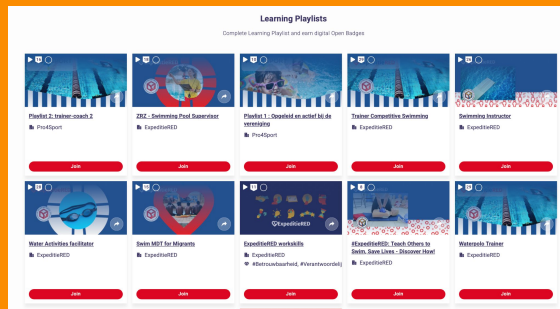
COL PLATFORM USE CASES - THE NETHERLANDS

ROTTERDAM CITY OF LEARNING



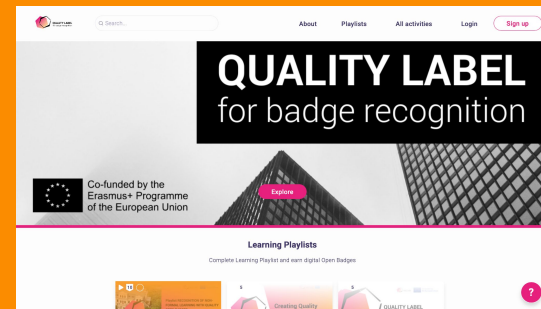
Digital inclusion and skills based badge portfolio

EXPEDITIERED, NATIONAL VOLUNTEERING LIFESAVING



Organisation, Learning platform for public/private learning ecosystem

DUTCH CITIES OF LEARNING



Leading for the international quality standard in recognition

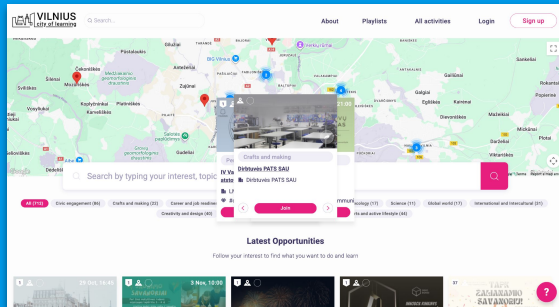


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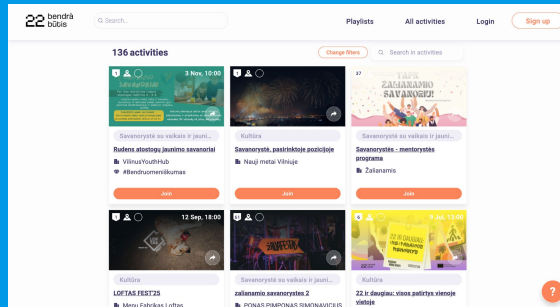
COL PLATFORM USE CASES - LITHUANIA

VILNIUS CITY OF LEARNING



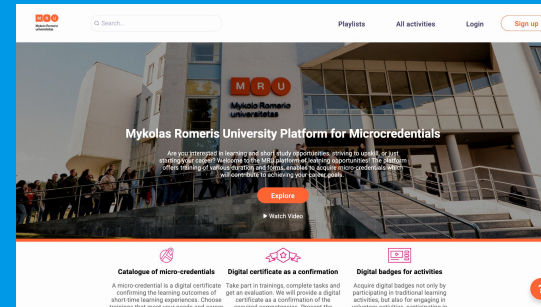
Digital youth work,
innovation, recognition

VOLUNTEER IN VILNIUS



All volunteering opportunities in
one place, including volunteer
recognition

MYKOLAS UNIVERSITY MICRO-CREDENTIALS



Recognising
extra-curricular activities
and issue microcredentials

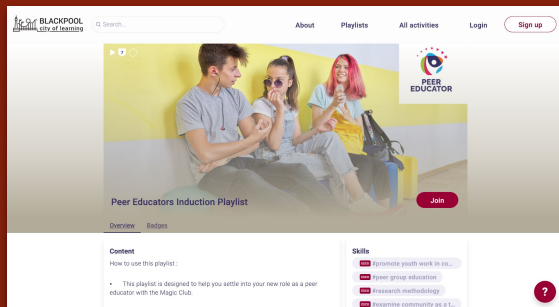


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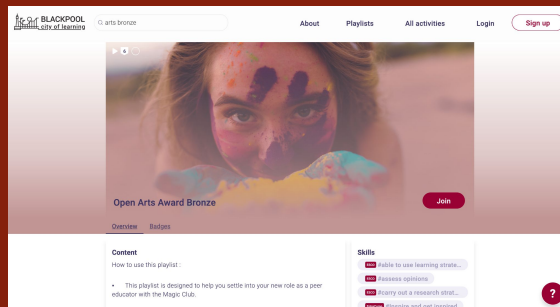
COL PLATFORM USE CASES - BLACKPOOL

PEER EDUCATORS INDUCTION PLAYLIST



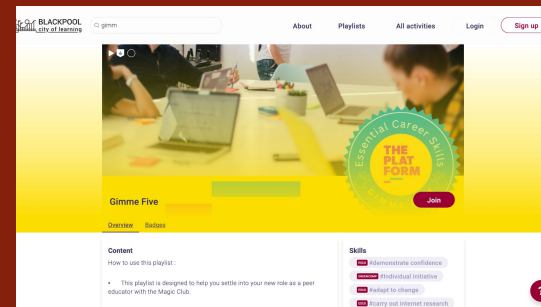
Progression from the
senior youth club to
supporting the junior youth
club

OPEN ARTS AWARD BRONZE



Taking part and participation in
arts activities

GIMME FIVE



Five essentials skills for
young people's
employability



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Badging in the UK - a new momentum



- The Digital Badging Commission was launched by Ufi VocTech Trust and the RSA in May 2024, bringing together experts across higher & further education, employment, and technology to explore how digital badges and credentials can broaden recognition of learning and skills in the UK.
- The report was published on 13 October 2025.
- Its main aim is to address the fact that the UK's current skills-recognition system is fragmented, often opaque, and fails to capture many of the capabilities people develop through work, volunteering, life experience or non-formal learning.



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Badging in the UK - a new momentum



- **Integration of digital badges** into all post-16 education and training
- **Development of a national registry** for digital credential quality assurance and standards.
- **Launch of exemplar badges** and frameworks
- **Establishment of open technical standards** for interoperability across platforms and nations
- **Pilot programmes** across FE, NHS, and employer networks to test large-scale deployment.
- **Framework for employer engagement**, ensuring badge data feeds into hiring and HR systems.



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IMAGINE...

One platform for all young people from across the Isle of Man where learning and skills were recognised and collected.



A platform where all organisations working with young people (from the Youth Service, Uniformed Organisations, Voluntary Groups and Schools, University College) can plan, realise and engage with young people through learning playlists and activities and issue badges.

A place where Senior Youth Clubs, Youth Projects, Outdoor Learning, DofE, Detached and Outreach Engagement, Youth Councils, Workforce Initiatives, Holiday Provision, Extra Curricular and Non-Formal Learning can be built around a structured offer that supported by young people's; reflection, evidence and recognition.



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POTENTIAL - KEY IMPACTS

Education

- Broader, more flexible lifelong learning pathways

Economy

- Skilled workforce aligned with local industries

Community

- Inclusion, collaboration, and civic pride

Reputation

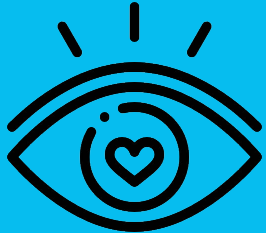
- Global recognition as a leading “learning island”

Innovation

- Adoption of digital credentials and smart learning tech

Connection

- Becoming a member of an established international network



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