

**BadgeStack**, [www.badgestack.com](http://www.badgestack.com):

(Part of *Learning Times*, NYC, a company which produces online conferences, events and activities that involves, [www.learningtimes.com](http://www.learningtimes.com))

**What is a badge?** (taken from the website)

“Think about scouting merit badges – but in a digital form. You can take them with you for life, and even showcase on sites like LinkedIn and Facebook. A badge is a validated display of accomplishment, skill, quality, participation or interest that can be earned in any learning environment. Badges can represent traditional academic achievement or the acquisition of skills such as collaboration, teamwork, leadership, and other 21st century skills.

Badges can be earned by people of all ages, from kindergartners on up, and they can make any notable accomplishments visible to anyone and everyone, including potential employers, teachers, and peer communities. They can be earned in structured settings like classrooms, courses or seminars, or they can be awarded for learning and contributions that take place in more informal contexts, such as online communities, association gatherings, or extracurricular activities.”

**What is BadgeStack?**

- innovative system
- game-like approach
- assesses skills, recognizes learner achievement, sparks community
- for learners of all ages
- social learning tool that encourages people to master new skills and get involved in a community
- designed by educators, trainers and gamers
- individual learning and community involvement
- authentic, real-world activities combined with direct engagement with peers and experts
- BadgeStack system is open source
- “BadgeStack is the first and only standards-based system designed for badge-driven social learning and is already in use by some of the world's best-known education-minded systems”, See for example the case study with the New York City Department of Education <http://www.learningtimes.com/what-we-do/badges/digit-badges-nycdoe/>

## **How It Works** (how they want you to use BadgeStack, taken from the website)

“Digital badges provide a creative new way to encourage and reward learning. Whether adapting existing programs into a badge-motivated offering or developing new experiences from scratch, we're here to help you.

### **Step 1**

- You and the BadgeStack team review your learning goals or existing materials and
- Design a meaningful program and stunning badge identity for your organization

### **Step 2**

- Create progressive and instructionally-sound learning activities
- Identify appropriate assessments for each badge-based skill and reward

### **Step 3**

- Create a community-engagement plan that rewards learner participation

### **Step 4**

- Launch your badge-based learning program on the BadgeStack platform and you are ready to go!”

## **Why do we need badges?** (one question of the FAQ)

“Learning today happens everywhere, but it's often difficult to get recognition for skills and achievements gained outside of formal school programs. By displaying skills and achievements that traditional degrees and transcripts often leave out, badges can lead to jobs, community recognition, and new learning opportunities.

A digital badge is an online record of achievement, the work required, and information about the organization, individual or other entity that issued the badge. Badges can be earned in any learning environment, and signal either traditional academic achievements or can include skills such as collaboration, teamwork, networking and more.

Once earned, they can be carried with the learner and displayed (hence "digital") on social networks, resumes, blogs, and websites; essentially any digital display avenue, allowing potential employers, teachers and peers to view them.

Any organization or community can issue badges (for example, an after-school program, free online course, or a museum association) backed by their own seal of approval. Learners can then collect badges from different sources and display them across the web -- on their resume, web site, social networking profiles, job sites or just about anywhere.

LearningTimes is not alone as an advocate for badge-based learning. The US Department of Education recently joined the [MacArthur Foundation](#) and Mozilla to call for groups

worldwide to create and implement badging systems to recognize skills and knowledge gained outside of traditional settings.”

### **What does it cost? (FAQ)**

“We offer a variety of pricing options for building badge-based learning programs. For some, a self-serve model is preferred. For others, a custom model is preferred and we provide detailed estimates based on project scope that can include elements such as instructional design, rich media development, production, project management, and platform licensing. Call us today so we can learn more about your needs.”

### **Can I download the BadgeSystem and run it on my own server? (FAQ)**

“BadgeStack is currently available on a Software as a Service (SaaS) basis, hosted by LearningTimes. We provide full access to the system to your organization, complete customizability, and options for custom functions, themes and plugins to the core architecture.

We are working with an advisory group of education, museum, library and other non-profit groups to rapidly extend the core feature set and customization options. As part of the "[BadgeStack Project](#)" we intend to release a downloadable version of BadgeStack. If you'd like to be notified of its release or be part of the BadgeStack Project advisory or beta groups, contact us at [project@badgestack.org](mailto:project@badgestack.org).”