

Open Badge Network O1-A5 Green Paper

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1. Executive Summary

The function of this paper is to inform the design of a business plan for the sustainability of the European Open Badge Network (OBN). This paper will present different models for sustaining the OBN project for consideration. It will also outline the function of the Steering Committee who will be the body that will take over the leadership of the network beyond the funding of the project, and how this committee will be formed.

It is fundamental that Open Badge Network members and associate partners are enabled to contribute to this discussion and help shape the structure of the European Open Badge network beyond the funding of the current project. OBN members and partners are invited to contribute their views on this document.

2. Sustaining the Open Badge Network Project

2.1 Background information about OBN project

The Open Badge Network (OBN) was a 3-year-long Erasmus + project (running 01 September 2015 - 31 August 2017). OBN brings together organisations from across Europe to support the development of an Open Badge ecosystem, promoting the use of Open Badges to recognise non-formal and informal learning.

Mozilla Open Badges is an open standard that allows all skills and achievements to be recognised and shared across the web. Schools, universities, employers and informal learning providers globally are using Open Badges to capture lifelong learning which has previously gone unrecognised.

The OBN project aimed to provide a trusted source of free, independent information, tools and informed practice to support people who are interested in creating, issuing and earning badges across Europe.

Key project activities included:

- 1. Promote the use of Open Badges for the recognition of learning;**
 - a. Creation of discussion papers to explore badge issues & opportunities
 - b. Production of guidelines to support implementation
 - c. Localised dissemination via partner networks
 - d. Dissemination via events
 - e. Dissemination via BEU community portal
- 2. Develop Open Badge initiatives at institutional/local/city/regional/national levels;**
 - a. Implement pilots informed by guidelines
 - b. Evaluate and make recommendations
- 3. Promote Open Badges across Europe;**
 - a. Create White Paper at policy level
 - b. Develop a network of associate partners to advocate Open Badges within their territories
- 4. Develop innovative practices using Open Badges in learning and employment;**

5. Make recommendations and implement improvements to the Open Badge Infrastructure, technologies and services.

- Improved technology infrastructure
- Active participation in wider OB community
- Inventory of OB projects

These activities were carried out directly, with the support of Open Workshops hosted across Europe to promote and disseminate project materials to 2,000 people. These included the following pan-European events:

No.	IO	Event Focus	Date	Location	Lead Partner
E1	O1	Open Badge Needs/ Priorities	26 Oct 14	London	DIGITALME
E2	O2	Open Badge Infrastructure	14 April 2016	Krakow	ITeE
E3	O3	OB Individuals/ Organisations	2 Dec 2015	Berlin	BEUTH
E4	O4	Quality of Open Badges	29 Oct 2016	London	DIGITALME
E5	O5	Competencies and Learning Outcomes, Credit Transfer	Dec 2016	Gliwice	ITeE
E6	O1	Increasing Uptake	June 2017	Groningen	DUO

The OBN project has also built the network via localised events coordinated by individual partners. These included:

Event	Location	Date	Partner
EDEN 2014: “Open Badges for competence recogniTion and employment application”	Zagreb, Croatia	13-Jun-2014	BEUTH
OER Konferenz 2014, Wikimedia Deutschland	Berlin, Germany	12-Sept-2014	BEUTH
DeLFI 2014 Open Badges als Elemente von digitalen Lernumgebungen	Freiburg, Germany	16-Sept-2014	BEUTH
Open Education Challenge www.openeducationchallenge.eu	Berlin, Germany	28-Oct-2017	BEUTH
DIVERSITY-TAG / Diversity Day	Dortmund, Germany	31-Oct-2014	BEUTH
International PLA Network (IPLAN) Workshop - “Quality Assurance in RPL: What are the barriers to quality RPL and the supports needed for people who use RPL in their work?”	Ottawa, Ontario, CA +online	02-Nov-2014	CamProf
FERNUNIVERSITÄT HAGEN / MOBILE LEARNING DAY X(TENDED) / OPEN BADGES	Hagen, Germany	06-Nov-2014	BEUTH
WIKIMEDIA DEUTSCHLAND / DIGITALE KOMPETENZEN / OPEN BADGES ZUR ANERKENNUNG DES NON-/IN-FORMELLEN LERNENS	Berlin, Germany	17-Nov-2014	BEUTH
HOCHSCHULTAG DER BEUTH HOCHSCHULE FÜR TECHNIK BERLIN: “Der digitale Wandel in der Bildung und in der Arbeitswelt am Beispiel der digitalen Kompetenzabzeichen - das Ende der Zertifikate?”	Berlin, Germany	19-Nov-2014	BEUTH

Kompetencje Zawodowe Nauczycieli; Rozwój zawodowy nauczycieli; Nauczyciel jako kreator europejskich innowacji edukacyjnych	Jedlnia Letnisko, PL	20-Nov-2014	ITeE
Cedefop Conference STEPPING UP THE PACE The next stage of European tools for transparency, recognition and quality for learning and work	Thessaloniki, GR	27-Nov-2014	DUO
Fachtagung "eQualification: Lernen und Beruf digital verbinden - 2014" : Lernen und Beruf digital verbinden mit digitalen Kompetenzabzeichen	Berlin, Germany	01-Dec-2014	BEUTH
Open Educa Berlin 2014: "Open Badges for JOB application"	Berlin, Germany	04-Dec-2014	BEUTH
eMadrid2015/Badges for the Recognition of Learning in the Digital Age: "Open Badges for Recognition of Learning and Online Reputation", Keynote at University of Madrid	Madrid, Spain	27-Jan-2015	BEUTH
VFH Annual Symposium: "Moodle Badges"	Lübeck, Germany	18-Jun-2015	BEUTH
University-Industry Interaction International Conference	Berlin, Germany	24-Jun-2015	BEUTH
13. Koblenzer eLearning-Tage http://www.elearningtage.org : "Open Badges ein der Lehre - eine Taxonomie und Anwendungsbeispiele"	Koblenz, Germany	01-Jul-2015	BEUTH
Open Badges in Higher Education: "Cultural localisation of Open Badges - Insights from the German Community"	Online webinar	07-Jul-2015	BEUTH
Open Education Ideas/The Digital Turn Berlin: "Open Badges for Open Education"	Berlin, Germany	07-Sept-2015	BEUTH & DME
FH Münster E-Learning Day: Open Badges	Münster, Germany	22-Sep-2015	BEUTH

EVALUATION AND RECOGNITION IN EDUCATION: ALTERNATIVE WAYS: “Open Badges as Open Portfolios?”	Odense, Denmark	24-Sep-2015	BEUTH
INTERNATIONAL DAY OF OPEN BADGES: OPEN BADGES IN EUROPE: “Open Badges for Migrant Academics ”.	Online webinar	17-Nov-2015	BEUTH
Online Educa Berlin 2015: “Open Badges for Individuals and Organisations”	Berlin, Germany	02-Dec-2015	BEUTH
Presentation OB and discussion at Diakonie Bremen	Bremen, Germany	14-Dec-2015	DUO
Open Education Week 2016	Online webinar	07-Mar-2016	ITeE
Open Badges in HE Conference	Southampton, UK	08-Mar-2016	DME
Grundfragen Multimedialen Lehrens und Lernens / Die offene Hochschule	Berlin, Germany	10-Mar-2016	BEUTH
RIDE2016: “Open Badges - the missing link in Open Education” keynote at University of London	London, UK	11-Apr-2016	BEUTH
Conference „e-Technologies w kształceniu inżynierów” (e-Technologies in Education for Engineers)	Krakow, Poland	11-Apr-2016	ITeE
Open Badges for Employability Webinar	Leeds, UK	27-Apr-2016	DME
Meeting and discussion OB in HEI, Hanzehogeschool Groningen	Groningen, NL	12-May-2016	DUO
Meeting with Commission, DGEMPL.	Brussels, BE	17-May-2016	BTH, DUO
IV International Conference "doradztwo Zawodowe w Procesie Tranzycji z Edukacji na Rynek Pracy"	Częstochowa, Poland	19-May-2016	ITeE
How to centrally assist HEI in the NL in use of Open Badges	Utrecht, NL	06-Jun-2016	DUO

JFMH2016: “Experiment Open Badges”, Keynote at University of Darmstadt	Darmstadt, Germany	11-Jun-2016	BEUTH
EDEN 2016 Annual: “Establishing Open Badge Network in Europe”	Budapest, Hungary	17-Jun-2016	BEUTH
ALT-C Annual	Coventry, UK	06-Sep-2016	DME
EC-TEL 2016: “Open Badges for Distributed Assessment”, Presentation at University Jean Moulin Lyon	Lyon, France	16-Sep-2016	BEUTH
EDEN Research Workshop: “Open Badges for Digital Soft Skills for Employability” - joint/synergy workshop with Erasmus+ project eLENE4WORK	Oldenburg, DE	05-Oct-2016	BEUTH & EDEN
FUSCIA2016: “Open Badges as Open Credentials for all Skills”	Online webinar	18-Oct-2016	BEUTH
NordPlus Webinar	Online webinar	19-Oct-2016	DME
USDLA National Distance Learning Week: How to design open badges	Online webinar	10-Nov-2016	EDEN
Online Educa Berlin 2016: “Open Badges for Distributed Assessment of 21st Century Skills”	Berlin, Germany	02-Dec-2016	BEUTH
LunchTalks@Beuth - “Open Badges: Rethinking Educational Credentials in the Digital Age”	Berlin, Germany	11-Jan-2017	BEUTH
Open Education Global Conference 2017: “Scaling up Open Badges for Open Education” Action Lab	Cape Town, South Africa	08-Mar-2017	BEUTH
Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU): “Open Badges for Open Education”: International Workshop on Open Badges STRIDE	Delhi, India	17-Mar-2017	BEUTH
EDEN2017: 26th Annual EDEN Conference: “Addressing Diversity with Open Badges”	Jonköping, Sweden	14-Jun-2017	BEUTH

Social Media Skills for Professional Online Reputation of Migrant job-Seekers	Vilnius, Lithuania	03-Jul-2017	BEUTH
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The development of the Open Badge Network and dissemination of project materials was also supported by the following activities:

- OBN MOOC (Massive Open Online Course): <http://www.openbadgenetwork.com/mooc>
- The OBN Community Portal: <http://www.openbadgenetwork.com>
- Social Media Channels like Twitter @OpenBadgeNet <https://twitter.com/openbadgenet>

More information can be seen in the OBN Communication Plan [here](#)

2.2 Open Badge Network Stakeholders

In August 2017 there were 111 OBN members delivering Open Badge projects across Europe. The key stakeholder groups outside project partners are described in the Business Plan. The OBN partnership consisted of 7 partner organisations:

Organisation	Country	Purpose
Beuth University of Applied Sciences	Germany	BEUTH UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES is one of oldest Berlin's universities of applied sciences with the largest offering in engineering studies in Berlin area.
Digitalme	UK	Digitalme is an award winning social enterprise with a unique combination of learning design and technical expertise. Our mission is to enable people to get recognition for the skills and competencies they need to thrive in work and life
Camprof	UK	CamProf was established by Nigel Lloyd in 1994 (originally in the UK) and has become a leading, innovative consultancy, particularly concerning professional and vocational competency issues, operating in the UK, Canada, Europe and internationally
Eden	UK	EDEN is the most comprehensive European association in the field of open, flexible, distance and e-learning. Its official membership consists of 178 institutional members and 1101 individuals representing 414 institutions from 52 countries in Europe and beyond
ITEE	Poland	The Institute for Sustainable Technologies - National Research Institute for nearly 30 years already has been specialising in building up innovation performance in the areas of machine construction and maintenance, and technical and environmental safety.
Artes	Italy	Applied Research into Training and Education Systems (ARTES) is an Italian no-profit research Institute recognised by the Ministry of Research and National Education MIUR (code number 60884CS).

DUO	Netherlands	DUO is part of the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science.
SUPSI-DEASS (Associate Partner)	Switzerland	SUPSI-DEASS is the Department of economics, health and social care of University of applied sciences of Southern Switzerland - SUPSI. It offers basic learning in nursing sciences, physiotherapy and ergotherapy, social work, economics and postgraduate courses and applied research.

The different stakeholder groups within the OBN network included:

A. Organizations:

- Schools, colleges, universities
- Charities and informal learning organisations
- Employers
- Government agencies
- Awarding bodies and training providers

This group of stakeholders is addressed by the Outputs:

O1: Associate Partners

O3: Individuals and organizations

O2: Use cases

B. Individuals:

- people with disadvantages
- professionals working with disadvantaged groups
- educational professionals
- human resource professionals

This group of stakeholders is addressed by the Outputs:

O1: Associate Partners

O3: Individuals and organizations

O6: Massive Open Online Course on open Badges

O2: Use cases

C. Initiatives:

- Sister projects
- European standardisation processes (EQF, ECVET etc)
- Territorial networks

This group of stakeholders is addressed by the Outputs:

O4: Open badges in territories

D: Policy-makers:

- on global
- European
- national & regional levels

See full list of policy stakeholders in the Policy Discussion Paper. (O5-A1)

This group of stakeholders is addressed by the Output

O5 Policy Discussion Paper & Policy White Paper

O1: Associate Partners

O2: Use cases

2.3 Vision for the future

The Open Badge Network is envisioned to:

- Remain an active and visible network representing the needs of the European Open Badge community (both across Europe and globally)
- Remain a growing resource bank providing information on Open Badge developments, guidance and best practice to support organisations and individuals to implement badges
- Play an active role strategically to stimulate and influence discussions on Open Badges across education, employment and policy settings
- Facilitate a community of practice to develop via the OBN portal, on-site and online events.

2.4 Sustainability Requirements

In order to deliver this vision, the key activities that will need to be sustained are:

Results to sustain	Potential beneficiaries	Means/tools	Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Responsible partner - Possible resources
A series of outputs to help with establishment and uptake of open badges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disadvantaged groups - Those at risk of exclusion - Migrants - Unemployed people 	Guidelines: Organisational and individual; Networks; Quality Portal MOOC	Org to manage the portal, with IOs Org to sustain MOOC outputs

<p>Trust in the open badges ecosystem and consensus that open badges provide a reliable tool for recognising achievements and skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Institutions - educational and government - Employers - 3rd sector 	<p>Quality outputs Policy paper The Open Badge Network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Associate Partners - Steering committee <p>Support organisations in developing quality outputs</p>	<p>Policies and open support of the open badges standard A community of excellence to provide support</p>
<p>Increased number of people and organisations engaging with the open badges standard and issuing badges</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Badge issuers - Badge earners - Badge consumers - Badge platform providers 	<p>MOOC Networks Events, dissemination Multiplier effect of case studies</p>	<p>IMS Community Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - feed in from other networks around the world
<p>Management of the OBN Portal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hosting and updating content - Managing members - Responding to enquiries - Technical hosting & maintenance (tools & infrastructure, Competency Repository) - Inventory of european badge projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - projects looking for verification - people looking to build open badge knowledge and services - people looking for projects to join or collaborate with in their country or across europe - IMS - EU Commission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Badge the World - OBN Portal (extending functionality) 	<p>Partner to host then shared responsibility to manage content via Steering Committee</p>

<p>Advocacy & guidance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creating/ updating/ translating materials and guidance - Representing OBN within the global OB community - Influencing/ stimulating discussion across education, employment and policy settings 		<p>OBN Portal</p>	
<p>Events & Liaison</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - partnership building - membership events - MOOC / webinars 		<p>EDEN events, Mozfest etc.</p>	
<p>Competency Repository</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Future badge issuers - Matching employers +job seekers - Policy makers - VET and employer bodies managing competency frameworks - CEDEFOP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For identifying relevant badges for self development - For using other organisation's competency frameworks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exemplary use case - proof of concept - Need crawler - Need some competencies in acceptable form

3. Sustainability models

There are a number of potential sustainability models we explore in this Green Paper. The key four models analysed for the purpose of ensuring the sustainability of the Open Badge Network include:

- A. Sponsorship
- B. Membership / Merger
- C. Marketplace
- D. Advocacy

All these four models have been systematically analysed in the OBN partnership using the SWOT-analysis as method to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of each option in view of sustaining Open Badge Network. The four sustainability models and the results of the SWOT-analysis per model are presented below.

3.1 Sponsorship Model

Description

Open Badge Network is a not-for-profit network, therefore maintaining its activities depends on obtaining sponsorship of one or more of its partners or members.

This could include:

- Providing venues or sponsoring refreshments for events
- Web hosting and maintenance of the community portal
- Staff volunteers managing the network
- Dissemination support via localised networks
- Financial support for maintaining core OBN activities or tools
- Micro-sponsorship from members

Key considerations for the sustainability model include:

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Simple solution which maintains non-profit ethos and requires no “legal status” ● Many resources that could be given are time-based or low cost to the organisation or individual ● Contributions could come from many sources which makes it less risky ● Enables an open approach to developing partnerships with other open badge service providers which will add further value 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ongoing resources would be needed to obtain sponsorship ● Difficult to forward plan and grow the network without secured resources ● Significant momentum and value would need to be established by the end of the project in order to attract sponsors
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We create a network effect where many people contribute small amounts of time, money or materials to support the network to flourish in a decentralised way 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There is not enough resource to maintain the network and activity decreases

Examples

The Groningen Declaration aims to increase the mobility of students and skilled workers across Europe. Organisations across Europe are directly invited to sign the Declaration and participate in the network by voluntarily sharing data and cooperating with other members. The network is not for profit and run entirely on a voluntary basis, managed by an Executive Committee and Secretariat. See: <http://www.groningendeclaration.org/about-network>

3.2 Membership / Merger Model

Description

Open Badge Network would charge an annual membership fee for people to be part of the network. Organisations would value a verified source of information and updates about the Open Badge Standard. This model enables core funding to be generated via affordable contributions from a wide membership base to fund time to maintain and support the network.

The benefits to people in becoming a member of OBN are:

- Access Europe specific materials and guidelines
- Access up to date, verified information about Open Badge developments
- Be part of a community of practice
- Access communication channels to post information and events
- Attend events and webinars

Key considerations for the membership / merger model include:

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Proven funding model that could provide regular and consistent resources into OBN ● Simple to operate and could be based around a series of online & offline events and discussion groups ● Creates a sense of community and commitment within membership base ● Opportunity to plug into existing networks & platforms to reduce the resources needed to setup and maintain the network 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● OBN would need to continually develop and ensure that it was delivering value to it's members ● OBN would no longer be seen as a non-profit network which may make it difficult for certain organisations to play a role within the Steering Committee ● There would need to be a formal structure and governance in place to manage membership money and data ● A commercial model may make it difficult to develop partnerships with other open badge networks and service providers, fragmenting the community rather than connecting it ● Requires a large fee paying user base to generate the sustainability revenue
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The network could quickly raise funding allowing it to grow and develop further ● Options to expand the model in the future to include different levels of membership, within different territories 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We lose members to other similar networks that provide more value or are free to access

Examples

This membership model could be setup up and managed independently by OBN or could be linked to an existing membership group and model. For example the Association for Learning Technology (ALT) network charges organisations or individuals to join their network to access information and best practice, access communication channels and attend events. Individuals are charged £54 per year, with organisations having the option to purchase membership for their members from £200 - £1000 depending on their size. [More information](#) about ALT membership options.

OBN could create a Special Interest sub group as part of the ALT network and benefit from the existing user base, communication channels and events. OBN could also create it's own membership structure however more resource (including a secretariat) would be required to setup and maintain this model and it would largely depend on generating a large membership base during the remaining phase of the current project.

OBN could also use a platform like meet-up to manage registrations, communication and reach into an existing online community.

3.3 Marketplace Model

Description

Open Badge Network would provide free access to the portal but promote products and services from OBN or Associate Partners. Part of the fee charged for access to these services will be given to the steering committee and partners responsible for maintaining the network. This could either be a revenue share on the products/services sold or partners could pay a set annual fee to have access to the network to promote their services.

Services that could be charged for:

- MOOC
- Events/training (F2F & webinar)
- Badge design consultancy and architecture services (localised by territory)
- Open Badge technology platforms and support
- Access to guidelines and materials
- Validation of badge schemes by OBN (e.g. via QA of design process and the badges themselves)

Key considerations for the marketplace model include:

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Positions OBN as a valuable marketplace of quality open badge service providers ● Helps grow the OBN network through joint promotional activity with partners ● Potentially provides a source of regular income into the network 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● OBN may no longer be viewed as a trusted independent network which may mean some organisations choose not to be members ● A level of quality assurance and governance will need to be in place to select and manage the commercial partners and revenue generated
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Opportunity to drive revenue through commercial partnerships and develop OBN-owned products ● Create a ‘one-stop shop’ for open badge projects in Europe 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Partners may not see the value in promoting their services via OBN if the membership isn’t large enough or active enough.

Examples

Many educational networks in the UK use this approach to create a marketplace of preferred suppliers for schools and colleges such as SSAT and Whole Education.

3.4 Advocacy Model

Description

Provide free access to tools and funded partners/council continue to voice the views of the European community globally by merging with the global badge network. This work would be likely be funded through a grant.

One way to achieve this could be through merging with another existing network like the European Badge Alliance, <http://ebawebsite.net/> This is also an Erasmus+ project that is looking for opportunities to sustain its activities.

Grant funding could be accessed through a variety of sources including:

- Erasmus +
- IMS Global
- Mozilla

Key considerations for the advocacy model include:

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This would provide enough resource to keep key stakeholders proactively engaged in order to grow and develop the european eco-system 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not many funders provide extension funding for existing activities • Would need to identify partners able to commit to delivering a further grant funded project. • Would still need to consider a sustainability plan for when the next funded programme of work finished
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Merging with other networks could provide a way to quickly accelerate the growth of the network and the uptake of Open Badges across Europe • Connecting more formally with the global Open Badge community would provide the opportunity to influence the development of the OB standard and raise the profile of the needs of the European network. 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose and objective of the network may need to change to align with new funding requirements

Examples

The Badge Alliance was funded by MacArthur foundation to enable a network of organisations and individuals to work together to build and support an open badging ecosystem, with a focus on shared values including openness, learner agency and innovation. The Badge Alliance’s aim is to foster and grow the open badges ecosystem in

an intelligent, distributed, and sustainable way through supporting a series of working groups, community calls and online portal.

However, the Badge Alliance's current funding has ended and their activities will now be taken over by IMS Global as part of their licensing on the Open Badges standard from January 2017.

4. OBN Steering Committee

4.1 Members of the Steering Committee

- Three original Project Partners from the Management Board
- Up to fifteen organisations/individuals chosen **by the Management Board**, from the group of Associate partners (which can be project members too)
- One of the above should function as the “Secretariat of the Steering Committee”

A Steering Committee member could be a representative of the following stakeholder groups:

- Network leaders who can support the dissemination of OBN outputs across Europe (These will range across learning, employment, voluntary settings)
- A policy leader/National Agency, who can influence change at a national/ European level
- Thought leaders /influential individuals who can both inform and share OBN work within Europe and globally
- Employers or other organisations who have a certain “position” and can help raise awareness through recognising or endorsing badges
- A partner who is willing to invest some time (and maybe money) in managing the “Secretariat”

They can be found amongst:

- Organisations already providing badges, software providers, government bodies, national agencies of lifelong learning, quality assurance bodies, members of examination boards or independent publicists.

4.2 Rationale for becoming a member of OBN Steering Committee

The following rationale for becoming a member of the OBN Steering Committee has been identified by OBN partners:

- Have a strong intrinsic motivation to advocate for Open Badges
- Raise the profile of themselves/their organisations within the European Open Badge community
- The activities of OBN align with their strategic objectives

4.3 Foreseen activities of the Steering Committee

The foreseen activities after the project end include:

- Initiating projects and stimulating discussions on Open Badges at education, employment and policy levels
- Belonging to the ones influencing the evolution of Open Badges and policies around them
- Initiating new collaborations
- Acting as a speaker on seminars & congresses, especially their own networking event
- Stimulating and guarding the actuality of the content on the portal
- Publishing articles, blogs and papers and other dissemination activities
- Quarterly (Skype?) meetings of the Committee
- Preparing the agenda for the network meeting

4.4 Foreseen activities of the Secretariat

The foreseen activities of the OBN Secretariat taking the leadership over the Steering Committee include:

- Planning and organising the committee meetings
- Managing the Portal (on the technical and content and communication levels)
- Managing other Open Online resources (MOOC's + other resources on the portal)
- Organising a networking event
- Publishing a half yearly newsletter (before and after the networking event)
- Calling authors, for writing blogs for the website and newsletter.

5. Recommendations

Based on feedback received from OBN partners, the Business Plan will explore a hybrid approach that links 3 of the models outlined. The Advocacy model is the preferred model for sustainability but this could be linked with the Membership model through existing networks to provide access to a wider member base and benefit from their existing infrastructure. The Sponsorship model could also be applied as it is felt it would be possible for OBN partners to offer support for free through their existing activities e.g. events, webinars, technology.

The Marketplace model is the least preferred option as it does not align with the ethos of the project or many of the partners and it would demand more ongoing engagement and management from the Steering committee to make this model work.

This approach is expanded within the OBN Business Plan (O1-A6).