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Pulling Together the Threads of Learning

One word that might best characterises many systems of education could be fragmentation: fragmentation of the schooling system across age groups, between formal and informal learning, disciplines, learning and assessment, learning and teaching...

To compensate the actual disorder caused by this fragmentation, to help learners pull together the threads of their learning, new practices and technologies have emerged. Integrative learning and eportfolios are among the best known.

Yet, while eportfolios should contribute to reducing the fragmentation of learning, the world of eportfolios is also a victim of fragmentation:

- Fragmentation of information: where to find relevant and up-to-date information on eportfolio actors, initiatives, practices and technologies?
- Fragmentation of actors: where do eportfolio professionals meet, each other and with the actors from other fields who share similar questions?
- Fragmentation of initiatives and technologies: where are the incentives to working together, across disciplines, institutions, sectors, territories and technologies, to create a seamless eportfolio infrastructure?

It is to address this challenge that a group of partners have agreed to work together, with the support of the European Commission, to establish Europortfolio, a not-for profit association, dedicated to exploring how eportfolios and eportfolio-related technologies and practices can help us to achieve the following goal:

to empower individuals as reflective learners and practitioners, organisations as a place for authentic learning and assessment, and society as a place for lifelong learning, employability and self-realisation."

Europortfolio is an opportunity to go beyond the current fragmentations, to create the means to pull together the threads of learning, lifelong and life- wide.

You will find in this newsletter a presentation of Europortfolio and how you can contribute and benefit by becoming a Europortfolio Charter Signatory. You will also find an invitation to join us in London on the 10th of July 2013 for the launch of Europortfolio.

We look forward to working with you.

Serge Ravet & Igor Balaban, Europortfolio



Europortfolio. Designing the 21st century learning landscape

The learning ecosystem is in constant renewal. While the number of ePortfolio initiatives continue to grow and evolve, emerging initiatives create new challenges, and opportunities: Open Badges, Tin Can, Personal Learning Environments, learning analytics, etc. Moreover, the inexorably increasing amount of personal digital data questions our understanding of the issues associated with ePortfolios, eventually putting forward the question of the relationships between digital technologies and identity construction: how do ePortfolios contribute to the construction of our identities?

Join the Steering Committee

You want to be involved in shaping the future of the Europortfolio? You would like to be selected as a member of the Europortfolio Steering Committee?

Sign the Charter!

[\(read p. 10\)](#)

Goal

The goal of Europortfolio is to empower individuals as reflective learners and practitioners, organisations as a place for authentic learning and assessment, and society as a place for lifelong learning, employability and self-realisation.

A number of debates among ePortfolio professionals, researchers and technologists have much in common with the discussions among professionals working in fields as diverse as healthcare (healthfolio), digital identity, trust networks and even Vendor Relationship Management (VRM).

Working with professionals beyond the ePortfolio 'silo' might be the way to finding solutions to some of the ePortfolio challenges. And Conversely!

Looking for National Co-ordinators

Europortfolio is looking for partners willing to take the role of National Co-ordinator to lead the work involved in the identification of ePortfolio initiatives, actors and policies in Europe and beyond.

Europortfolio will provide the tools to collect the data and produce reports, as well as the human and technical support.

As national co-ordinator, you will join the Europortfolio Council which is leading the work of special interest groups.

Sign the Charter!

[\(read p. 10\)](#)

Mission

To achieve its goal, the mission of Europortfolio is to support and promote innovation and research in the field of eportfolio and eportfolio-related technologies and practices.

As a result of years of exchange and collaboration across a large number of eportfolio initiatives, in different sectors and countries, a group of European partners has decided to create a network to support and promote innovation and research in the field of eportfolio and eportfolio-related technologies and practices.

The name of this network is Europortfolio. The participants comprise experts, practitioners, professionals, researchers and organisations across Europe and beyond.

How to join Europortfolio?

The incorporation of Europortfolio is a two stage process:

- Stage 1: the function of this stage is to invite all those willing to take part in the creation of Europortfolio as a not-for-profit association. This is achieved by signing the Europortfolio Charter (c.f. [p .10](#))

Sign the Charter!

www.eportfolio.eu

- Stage 2: the incorporation of Europortfolio as a self-sustainable organisation will be based on the recommendations and decisions made during stage one under the supervision of the Steering Committee.

If you want to join Europortfolio, the only requirement at this stage is to sign the [Europortfolio Charter](#). There is no fee attached to become a Signatory. Once you are a signatory, you will be able to participate in the future governance of the association — Europortfolio Statutes and Bye-Laws — and will have the opportunity to be invited to join the Steering Committee. You will be also able to contribute to the establishment of regional or national chapters.

EUROPORTFOLIO CHARTER

The scope of the Europortfolio Charter is to set out the principles and guidelines that will govern the co-operation of the Parties hereto concerning the creation of Europortfolio as a not-for-profit organisation.

Goal

The goal of Europortfolio is to empower individuals as a reflective learners and practitioners, organisations as a place for authentic learning and assessment, and society as a place for lifelong learning, education and self-realisation.

Mission

To achieve its goal, the mission of Europortfolio is to support and promote innovation and research in the field of eportfolio and eportfolio-related technologies and practices.

To accomplish its mission, the signatories of the Europortfolio Charter have agreed to work together towards:

- Establishing a European network of eportfolio practitioners, professionals and organisations;
- Mobilising the human, financial, operational and technical resources required to achieve its mission and create the conditions for a self-sustainable organisation;
- Maintaining a public knowledge base of eportfolio initiatives, technologies and practices;
- Supporting research activities and the dissemination of research outcomes to the wider public;
- Supporting continuing professional development through a community of practice;
- Working with relevant initiatives, networks and organisations, in Europe and beyond.

Benefits for Signatories

When signing the Charter, a Signatory will be entitled to:

- Contribute to the strategic direction of Europortfolio and influence future developments;
- Get support for establishing regional and national chapters;
- Join special interest and working groups;
- Have full access to the resources produced by the Europortfolio community;
- Review and approve the Statutes and Bye-laws of the future Europortfolio Association;
- Vote at the first Annual General Meeting.

After the incorporation of Europortfolio, the benefits for Europortfolio Members will be defined in the Europortfolio Statutes and Bye-Laws: www.eportfolio.eu/statutes.

Leadership

The leadership of the Europortfolio Charter is insured by:

- The Steering Committee, leading the incorporation of Europortfolio
- The Council of National Representatives, leading the work of special interest groups and working groups.

Until the incorporation of Europortfolio, the members of the Steering Committee and Council will be co-opted by the initiators of Europortfolio. After the incorporation, the leadership will be defined by the statutes and bye-laws voted by the Charter Signatories at the first Annual General Meeting.

Signature

The signing of this Charter does not constitute any legal rights or obligations other than those defined in this Charter.

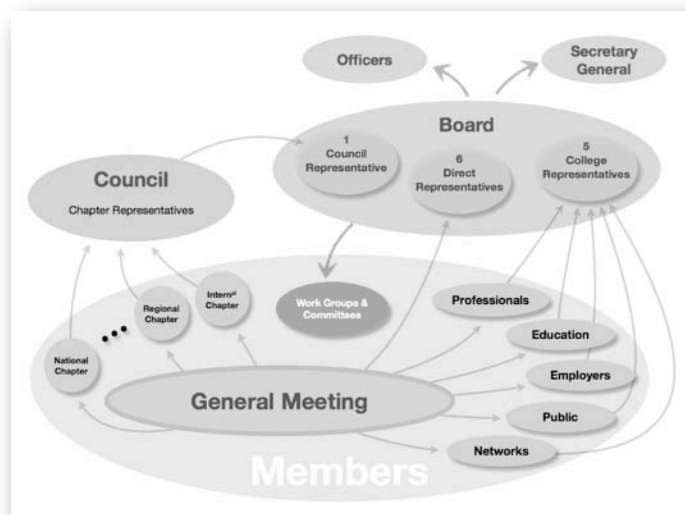
To sign the Europortfolio Charter, please go to www.eportfolio.eu

NB: for organisational Signatories, the Charter should be signed on behalf of an organisation or company by an authorised representative.

What comes next?

In the following weeks, Europortfolio Signatories will be granted access to the Europortfolio portal to contribute and exploit an extensive database of ePortfolio resources — initiatives, tools, publications, experts.

Signatories will also have the opportunity to review the Statutes and Bye-Laws, and subsequently attend the first Annual General Meeting, once Europortfolio is incorporated as a not-for-profit association.



Planned Europortfolio Governance

Statutes	
General Provision	
1. Name	1
1.1. The name of the non-profit association is: "Europortfolio"	1
1.2. Europortfolio is a non-governmental, independent, non-racial, non-sexist association, 1921 on non-profit activities, non-profit international associations and foundations (Art. 45-49)	1
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EUROPORTFOLIO LAUNCH 10 JULY 2013

JOIN US!

15h00 - 18h00
2 Savoy Place,
LONDON

Registration
www.eportfolio.eu

Open Badges vs Tin Can

Serge Ravet, ADPIOS

Two interesting initiatives are working on solutions aimed at making the learning process and its outcomes more visible and more exploitable. One is Open badges: it is lead by The Mozilla Foundation with the objective to facilitate the *informal recognition of informal learning*. The other is Tin Can: it is the offspring of the SCORM community and is aiming at providing a flexible framework to record learning events and outcomes.

What is a badge?

A digital badge is an online representation of a skill you've earned.

Open Badges takes that concept one step further, and allows you to verify your skills, interests and achievements through a credible organization.



And because the system is based on an open standard, you can combine multiple badges from different issuers to tell the complete story of your achievements — both online and off. Display your badges wherever you want them on the web, and share them for employment, education or lifelong learning.

Source: www.openbadges.org/

One way to elicit the difference between the two approaches is to explore the type of statements that can be expressed in each world:

- Tin Can: "I did this"
- Open Badges: "She can do this"

As one might infer from these statements, Tin Can is more *learner centric* (she is the one generating the statement) while Open Badges is more *organisation-centric* (most badges, so far, are issued by organisations). Such inference would probably raise the hair of many members of the Open Badges community who see themselves as the champions of individual empowerment. Yet, the fact is that most Open Badges are issued to the learner, for the learner, not by the learner.

It is true that issuing a Badge to oneself does not make much sense. yet, issuing a statement such as "I can do this" is worth recording as it could be used at a later stage to deliver a badge. In a sense, one could say

that a Tin Can statement is like a badge (to record data) without a badge (to display).

When looking in detail at the data structures of the two specifications, one can see the following differences:

- Tin Can statement: actor, action verb, object
- Open Badge metadata: issuer, owner, assertion, evidence

What was missing in the initial Tin Can specification was the link to evidence. It is now corrected with the option to add attachments to a Tin Can statement. On the other hand, Tin Can does not seem to provide a field to capture the relationship between the issuer and the owner which is what contributes to making Open Badges a native trust network.

Open Badges	Tin Can	Statement
Issuer		She
Earner	Actor	I/She
Assertion	Action Verb	Can do
	Object	This
Evidence	Attachment	Proof

Open Badges, Tin Can and ePortfolios

Another way to approach the differences/complements between Open Badges and Tin Can is to explore how each specification could contribute to the building of an ePortfolio. Let us imagine that an eportfolio narrative contains a number of statements such as "I did this", "I did that", etc. When writing a narrative with an eportfolio today, you use a word processor for which statements are just a sequence of meaningless characters —sometimes connected to external elements through an hypertext link.

Now, imagine that to compose a narrative, the eportfolio author has access to the complete database of statements contained in a Tin Can Learning Record Store (LRS). The narrative would not be a mere sequence of character strings, but a composition of granular statements generated during the learning/working process. We would have de facto a semantic editor (4th of the 10 eportfolio challenges published by ElfEL in 2009).

Open Badges, Tin Can: towards one specification?

While Open Badges is well suited to recognise learning, in its current implementation (the need for a badge issuer, a badge displayer and a backpack) it is not suited to track the elementary components and activities related to learning. While Tin Can is well suited to track the elementary components of a learning process, it does not seem well suited to authenticate the claims related to the recognition of competencies: for that, you need to elicit the relationship between the issuer and owner of the claim, something that Open Badges does well.

Could we imagine that a single specification would be able to cover different levels of granularity and authentication? Yes. In Fact, Open Badges has all the structures needed to support a mechanism similar to Tin Can.

But in order to do so, the first thing would be to think out of the Badge frame, and imagine how the Open Badges infrastructure could be used for other things than displaying badges.

In the context of Open Badges, a Tin Can statement is like a Badge, without a Badge, or more precisely, a set of metadata that is stored in the backpack but not displayable as a badge.

On the other hand, having a series of Tin Can statements in the Backpack could be exploited to deliver a badge or to construct the narrative of an

eportfolio, eportfolio that could be used to obtain a badge...

Tin Can

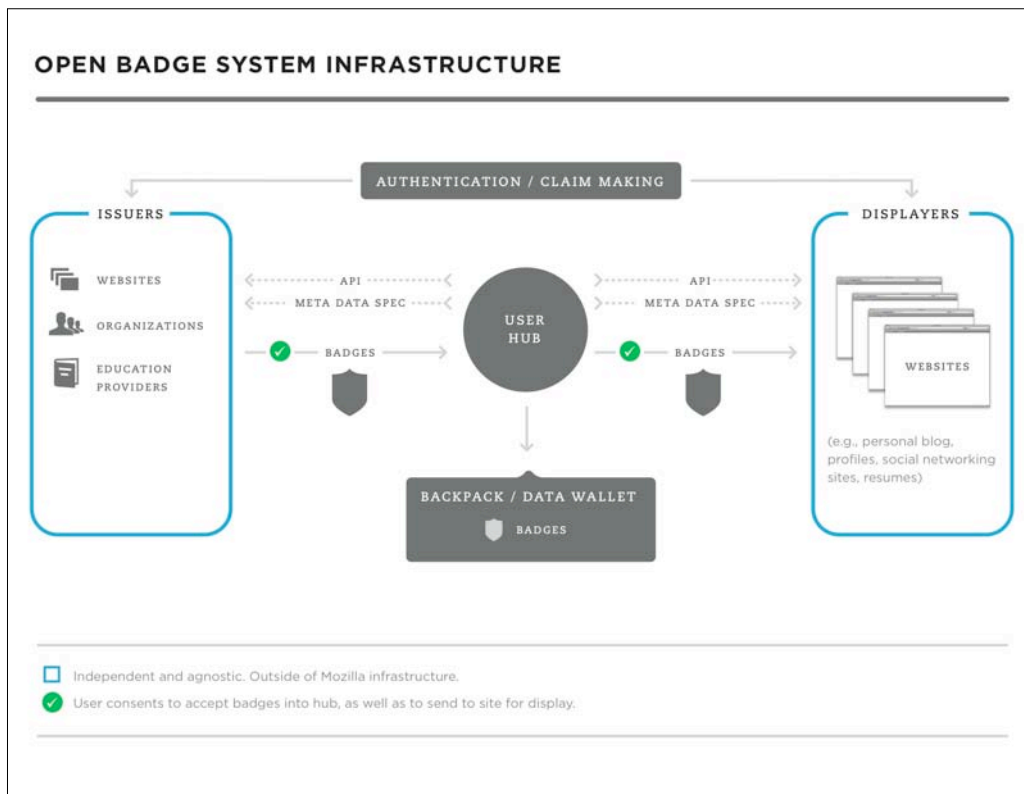
“Jack completed safety training.” “Christie experienced the Berlin Wall in Second Life.” These statements can be simple or complex. The actors, verbs, and objects can vary widely, and can be described with varying levels of detail. Actors/learners can also be described in various different ways.

An actor doesn't have to be a learner — it can be an instructor that's asserting a statement, or even a software agent. It's up to the end user to decide the level of complexity that is needed.

Source: scorm.com/tincanoverview/

Conclusion (temporary)

The Open Badge Infrastructure seems to have all the features required to implement the equivalent of Tin Can. In order to make it happen, the Open Badges community will need to dissociate the records stored in the Backpack from their representations as a Badge. This will be discussed in a following article.



Source : ledutoolkit

Ireland: Department of Education & Skills hosts first meeting of the European eportfolio project group

The Department of Education & Skills has hosted the first meeting of the European eportfolio project consortium.



The project is a trial of the use of eportfolios in teaching, learning and assessment. Working with Ireland on this European project are representatives from Ministries of Education and their agencies in six countries: Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Lithuania, Slovenia and Spain. Representatives from all seven countries have been meeting 9th and 10th May.

The seven-country consortium was successful in applying for a grant under the European Commission's "Creative Classrooms" call for proposals.

This project is estimated at just over €1 million, with the EU providing funding of €790,000.

Read the full press release [here](#).

New Mahara Release

After 6 months of development and bug fixing, we are proud to announce the final release of Mahara 1.7:

<https://launchpad.net/mahara/1.7/1.7.0>

While this release has focused on bug fixing, it also includes the following new features:

- Add license metadata to individual artefacts
- Log masquerading sessions of an administrator and send notifications about them
- Filter by login date in the administrator user search
- Search only for groups you can join
- Retractable blocks
- Configuration setting for the registration expiry time

Other notable changes and bug fixes include:

- Relocation of the "Shared pages" to the portfolio section and renaming that option to "Shared with me"
- Renaming of "Share" in the personal portfolio to "Shared by me"
- Display up to 10 collections per page
- Display up to 100 members on the group homepage



Totara launches Open Badges functionality with new Release

PRESS RELEASE – 5/1/2013 - Totara Learning Solutions, provider of the powerful packaged distribution of Moodle, released Totara LMS 2.4 today. Wellington, New Zealand.

The release of Totara 2.4 means [Totara](#) and [Moodle](#) will be the world's first Learning Management Systems to include Open Badges functionality. Last month [Mozilla](#), the free software community, announced the release of Open Badges version 1.0. [Mozilla's Open Badges](#) project aims to provide a technically smart, web savvy, open access framework whereby any organization can offer tangible recognition to learners who demonstrate achievement in a given area whether that be a soft or hard skill.

Consistent e-portfolio system could improve career development (UK)

6 April 2013

A single e-portfolio system should be used across all medical schools, students agreed.

The BMA medical students conference heard how different schools used different systems for students to prepare their professional development portfolios.

There were also inconsistencies between schools in their approaches to teaching students about preparing their portfolios, students heard, prompting them to agree that such teaching should be included in the curriculum.

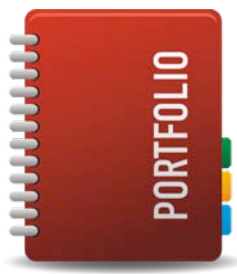
Leicester third year Sasha Marie said students would benefit from best practice examples of portfolios and guidance on how to compile them.

'I think we need a single portfolio across medical schools. The one used in [Brighton and Sussex medical school] is really good and focused towards our careers as doctors,' she said.

BMA medical students committee co-chair Alice Rutter pointed out that the way e-portfolios worked did not make them uniform across the UK.

The conference agreed the MSC should work with medical schools to provide clear guidelines on creating career-relevant portfolios. Trained tutors should also provide feedback on the portfolios to students, the conference decided.

Source: <http://tinyurl.com/buvesrz>



Over the past year more than 600 organisations, including Disney-Pixar and NASA, have created and designed Badges. That number is about to increase exponentially with the release of Totara 2.4 and upcoming release of Moodle 2.5. Over 70 million users will have access to the use o Open Badges.

Totara Learning Solutions has developed a Badge issuing and management system for both Moodle and Totara LMS. Moodle is the most popular LMS in the world, with more users than any other learning platform. As of March 2013 it had a user base of close to 80,000 registered and verified sites, serving over 68 million users in over 7 million courses with 1.2 million plus teachers.

Totara is Moodle's corporate cousin, a distribution of Moodle designed specifically for the needs of workplace training as opposed to Moodle's primary focus on the education sector. Totara is a mere two years old but already adds another two million users, including many government departments and health agencies, plus major corporations such as Vodafone, Sony, Safeway, Tesco and more.

Soon schools, colleges and universities will be issuing badges the world over. So too will community organisations, not-for profits, professional bodies, government departments and the many businesses which use Totara.

Richard Wyles, CEO of Totara Learning said, "The world needs this innovation. Modern economies are concerned about skill gaps at the same time as having entrenched unemployment. Open badges heralds an exciting future. As well as the education environment, employers will soon be issuing badges, and we believe some badges will gain recognition quickly because merit from credible organisations has currency. Badges will emerge which focus on the specific skills employers are looking for. Taking our own recruitment processes as an example; badges for collaboration, innovation, client focus, and PHP skills would trump a generic computer science degree. By integrating new badge functionality into Moodle and Totara, educators and employers now have access to practical low-cost solutions which recognise and reward learners with more precision, flexibility and portability.... Totara 2.4 and the upcoming release of Moodle is a game-changer."

Source: tinyurl.com/bsmfon4

LiveText's 2013 e-Portfolio Contest

Submission Deadline: May 28, 2013

Have you assessed e-Portfolios that have gone above and beyond in demonstrating the application of knowledge and skills, problem solving, communication, and collaboration? Have you yourself developed an e-Portfolio that displays your learning progress over time and highlights engagement with key learning outcomes?

Then, we're looking for your e-Portfolio. e-Portfolios are about making connections – connections with others as well as connections to your own learning experiences. e-Portfolios help you reflect and integrate thinking, learning, and performance across the curriculum. It enables you to enrich your learning experiences, prepare you for your field of work, and sharpen your technological skills.

In your e-Portfolio contest entry, we ask you to present through words, images, videos, assignments or projects — or other artifacts and mementoes from your academic or professional career — how the variety of experiences you've had both in and out of the classroom have enriched your learning.

Source: <http://tinyurl.com/d78fzhh> .

ePIC 2013

Join us at ePIC 2013, 8-10 July in London, to shape the future of learning.

In these times of uncertainty, nothing is more certain than the need for learning and innovation. It is why we have chosen as the umbrella theme for this year's event: "Open Me" (open education, open source, open data, open learning, open badges, etc.).

ePIC 2013 will feature a special track on Open Badges, an emerging technology that has already started to change the landscape of learning and employment as well as health care. A series of hands-on workshops, presentations and keynotes will provide a unique opportunity to understand why and how to implement Open Badges in your organisation, network or territory.

More presentations and keynotes will address literacy, assessment, employability, identity construction, learning analytics, etc.

www.epforum.eu/programme

Among the keynote speakers and panel members are the following experts:

- Kirstie Donnelly MBE, City & Guilds Group Director of Product Development
- Philipp S. Mueller, Dean of the Business School (SMBS) of University of Salzburg, Austria, author of *machavelli.net*
- Alan Davis, President and Vice-Chancellor, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Canada
- Russel Francis, University of Gothenburg, Sweden, author of *The Decentring of the Traditional University: The Future of (Self) Education in Virtually Figured Worlds*
- Darren Cambridge, American Institutes for Research, USA, author of *Electronic Portfolio 2.0*
- Serge Ravet, ADPIOS, Europortfolio, France, author of *The Internet of Subjects Manifesto*
- Helen Barrett, eportfolio consultant, USA, author of *eportfolio for Learning*

Submission of contributions

If you would like to contribute with a presentation and/or a paper, the deadline for the submission of abstracts has been extended until May 27th (only an abstract is required at this stage): www.epforum.eu/call

About ePIC

Founded in 2003, ePIC has established an excellent track record as an important forum for connecting practitioners, researchers, technologists, employers and policy makers in the fields of educational technologies and identity construction. Our conference is appreciated for the ability to explore current issues in depth, whilst leading the path towards possible futures. Last year, 25 countries were represented, from Japan over Russia to Canada.

Mahara UK

The MaharaUK conference presents the perfect opportunity to communicate, collaborate and innovate with the global Mahara community.

July 4-5 2013, Birmingham, UK – Learning Technologists, Developers, Administrator, Educators and Enthusiasts will have an opportunity to explore developments of Mahara at the MaharaUK 13 Conference, the only UK conference dedicated entirely to the development and cutting-edge ideas surrounding use of Mahara in education and work-based learning.



The MaharaUK 5th annual conference is organised by TDM & Catalyst IT and this year takes place at the Custard Factory, Birmingham, West Midlands, July 4 through July 5. The conference features dynamic speakers, exhibitors and events designed to provide Mahara technologists, developers, educators, administrators and eportfolio enthusiasts with an unparalleled opportunity to explore, learn and network.

If you are interested in presenting or running a workshop or training session, please register on this site, enrol yourself in the [Submissions course](#) and submit your proposal.

Submissions close 21st May 2013

maharauk.org

2013 AAEEBL Annual Conference

July 29 August 1, 2013, Boston, USA

The eportfolio Field Coming of Age: Knowledge, Research and Practice

The eportfolio community is a major global learning movement. The use of electronic portfolios, as learning spaces, is roughly in its tenth year and, in honor of this anniversary, the 2013 Annual AAEEBL Conference in Boston highlights the phrase "Coming of Age." Therefore, this CFP invites proposals about using eportfolios to encourage deeper and more learner-centered practices. Six conference tracks represent a wide array of possibilities for sharing and discussing a multiplicity of eportfolio topics from start-ups to the latest innovations:

- Practice: Teaching and Learning with eportfolios
- Transitions: eportfolios, Employability and Support of Change
- Research and Scholarship: Evaluating and Documenting the Effectiveness of eportfolios
- Assessment: Using eportfolios to Learn about Student Learning
- Portfolio Start-Ups: First Steps and Beyond
- What's New? Open Learning and Alternative Credentialing for eportfolios

www.aeebl.org/2013conference

eportfolio Australia

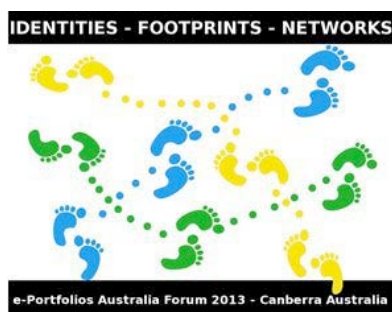
3 October 2013, University of Canberra, Australia

Digital Identities, Footprints and Networks

2013 Eportfolio Forum aims to support our digital identities, footprints and networks through eportfolio practice with a combination of presentations, workshops, 20x20 sessions, posters and facilitated conversations on Thursday 3 October.

This Forum will be complemented by Pre-Forum Workshops on Wednesday 2 October, from 9.30 am-12.30 pm & 1.30 pm-4.30 pm to allow new and experienced eportfolio supporters to gain some 'hands-on' experience with using eportfolios. More information to follow.

<http://tinyurl.com/brywdpz>



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Sign!

www.eportfolio.eu

Europortfolio Initiators

- University of Zagreb, Croatia
- Internet of Subjects Forum, France
- Centre for Recording Achievement, UK
- AGH University of Science and Technology, Poland
- Danube University Krems, Austria
- University of Southern Denmark, Denmark
- Open University of Catalonia, Spain
- The Inter/National Coalition for Electronic Portfolio Research, USA

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