

Learning lab in Dutch youth work

using open badges in the youth organizing method

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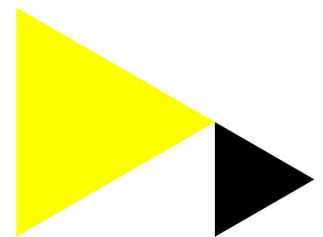
Publication date

2022

[Link to publication](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Koetsenruijter, R. A., & Hilverdink, L. J. (2022). *Learning lab in Dutch youth work: using open badges in the youth organizing method*. Poster session presented at ECSWR, Amsterdam.



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Learning Lab in Dutch Youth Work

Using Open Badges in the Youth Organizing method

CONTEXT

In a society with increasingly unequal access to opportunities and an expanding pressure on youngsters to perform, safe spaces where socially vulnerable youngsters are allowed to learn and develop valuable skills are highly important.

In the Youngsterdam project, professional youth workers support these youngsters in organizing their own activities through applying the method *Youth Organizing*. This youth work method invites and motivates youngsters to organize their own activities.

Through these non-formal learning experiences, they experience positive encounters with peers and others from their neighborhood – increasing their social participation – have the opportunity to develop their talents, and gain insights into their future (Metz et. al., 2016). In addition, they could learn to bear responsibility and gain useful communication and organization skills.

Innovative in this Youth Organizing method is the application of Open Badges: a digital and motivational instrument for the (international) recognition of non-formal learning experiences. This instrument can enhance youngsters' learning process by motivating them to learn and allowing (self-)recognition of skills and experiences. Currently, it is still unclear how the use of Open Badges within the Dutch youth work context is experienced and valued by young people and youth workers.

RESEARCH QUESTION

To what extent does Youth Organizing, in combination with Open Badges, motivate youngsters to gain new learning experiences in a voluntary, non-formal learning environment?

METHODS

In a learning community of youth workers, researchers, students and social work educators we aim to co-create knowledge on the presented research question. Under the supervision of researchers, various 2nd and 4th year Social Work students couple with youth workers that apply the Youth Organizing method and are experimenting with Open Badges. Students will obtain empirical data through structured observations and in-depth interviews with youngsters and youth workers.

Through the insights gathered by the students in the field, youth workers can reflect on and further strengthen their practice and actions.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Summer 2022

- the principles of the Youth Organizing method in the Youngsterdam context and how to further improve this
- the opportunities and pitfalls for using Open Badges in Dutch youth work practice
- how this instrument can further strengthen the Youth Organizing method

Learn more about Youngsterdam



Learn more about Youth Organizing

