

# *gala*

Gala is an open platform for collaborative authoring, revising, and sharing interactive learning modules and case studies.

gala

Catalog Create a Case Deploy a Case

Search Cases...

FEATURED CASES

Guns or GPS Units?  
How should African protected areas combat the ivory poaching crisis?  
Mariette De Jong and Bilal Butt

Profits vs. Preservation  
How can shepherds balance the social and ecological costs of livestock grazing on Naxos?  
Chelsea Lisicki and Johannes Foufopoulos

Guardians of the Forests  
How should an indigenous community in eastern Bolivia defend their land and forests?  
Yifan He, Juan Pablo Baldívar, Arun Agrawal, et al.

Struggles over 'Science'  
What is the role for science in community forestry in Nepal?  
Rebecca Rutt and Meghan Wagner

Assembling Our Transportation Future  
How could policies in the early 20th century have shaped more sustainable transportation systems?  
Eamon Fetherston, Michael Klyza, and Shelle Miller

Reclaiming Wood, Lives, and Communities  
How do we turn a waste stream into an asset that revitalizes cities?  
Sarah Hines, Neha Srinivasan, Lauren Marshall, et al.

# The Gala team is based out of the University of Michigan School for Environment and Sustainability



Core team Members:



**Rebecca Hardin**  
Principle Investigator  
(UM-SEAS Faculty)



**Carly Hagen**  
Developer  
**Patrick Killian**  
Quantitative Research  
(Grad Students)



**Deepika Ganesh**  
Qualitative Research



**Ed Waisanen**  
Platform and Program Manager  
(Staff)

## We are focused on providing a tool that is:

*Open*

- Minimal barriers to use
- Open licensing
- Accessible
- Transparent

*Delightful*

- Fun and simple to create and share
- Inspires a community of teachers, authors, and learners

*Collaborative*

- Quick prototyping and updating
- Easy to co-author and review

# Gala makes it easy for anyone to create a learning module

Make an account and start authoring  
in seconds.

The screenshot shows the Gala platform's interface. On the left, there's a sidebar titled "My Case" with a "TABLE OF CONTENTS" section containing three items: "Untitled", "Untitled", and "Untitled". Below this are buttons for "Page", "Podcast", and "Activity". At the bottom of the sidebar is a green button labeled "Prod/Pilot Assessment". The main area is titled "gala" and has a "Page Settings" header with a "Title" field and a "Delete Page" button. Below this are two card components, each with a title "Write something..." and a "Next" button at the bottom.

Collaborate with multiple authors  
in real time with an intuitive,  
dynamic, editor.

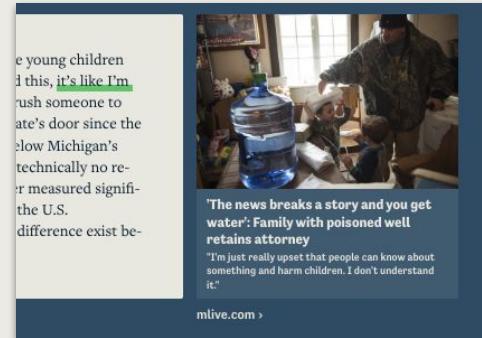
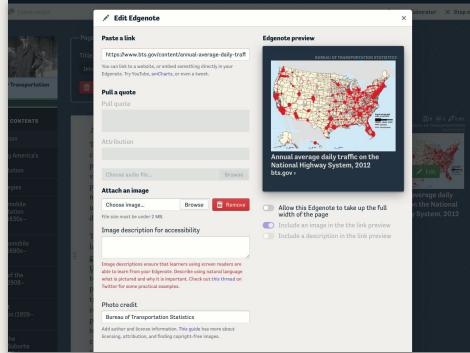
This screenshot shows a more advanced version of the Gala platform. The sidebar includes sections for "Disease Plume Pollution" and "A Knock at the Door". The main area features a card with a map titled "Disease Plume Pollution" and another card with a photo and text about "A Knock at the Door". To the right of the cards, there are two callout boxes with text and small images. The top box discusses GEA's consulting services, and the bottom box discusses regulatory needs and health effects.

## Authors can integrate multimedia and data tools

Embed images, audio, video and more.  
Choose from a growing list of embeddable content, visualizations, and tools.

Customize previews of resources from anywhere on the web, with thumbnails, captions and pull quotes, or auto-generate a preview card à la Twitter or Facebook.

Easily add accessible captions for screen readers.



## Publish and share modules as widely as you like



Link directly to your published module from anywhere. With one click, generate offline .pdf modules.



Contribute to a growing collection of open educational resources with Creative Commons-licensing.  
*(alternative licensing available for partners)*



Gala works responsively across devices, including cell-phones and laptops.



Create versions of modules in multiple languages.

*Cree versiones de módulos en varios idiomas.*

# Share curated collections

Institutional and organizational partners can create branded libraries of modules.

**MICHIGAN SUSTAINABILITY CASES**



Michigan Sustainability  
Cases center on real-world problems with multiple possible solutions. They are co-designed by teams of students and faculty from across campus, in partnership with practitioners from various sectors. As the very first and one of the finest libraries on gala, they seek both to transform case-based learning itself, and to widen participation in solving environment and sustainability challenges. They have benefited from the input of our interdisciplinary curricular advisors, and from the editorial oversight of Dr. Meghan Wagner.

[Learn more >](#)

**SEARCH RESULTS**

- Guns or GPS Units?**  
How should African protected areas combat the ivory poaching crisis?
- Profits vs. Preservation**  
How can shepherds balance the social and ecological costs of livestock grazing on Naxos?
- Guardians of the Forests**  
How should an indigenous community in eastern Bolivia defend their land and forests?
- Struggles over 'Science'**  
What is the role for science in community forestry in Nepal?
- Assembling Our Transportation Future**  
How could policies in the early 20th century have shaped more sustainable transportation systems?
- The Cost of Sustainable Palm Oil**  
Should an Indonesian smallholder farmer get RSPO certified?
- The All-Too-Common Reed**  
How can an urban wildlife refuge sustainably manage the invasive reed Phragmites?
- Green vs. Gray**  
What is the best path to sustainable stormwater management in Washtenaw County?

Anyone can customize reading list of modules to share, with optional commentary.

**Climate and Land**



'Climate Change and Land', a new IPCC special report highlights the need for sustainable land managements to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions. The cases listed here relate to that theme.

Is there a topic missing that you would like to see here? Create your own case at [learninggala.com!](#)

[Edit Reading List](#)

Share your reading list with anyone you'd like by copying the link and sending it to them.

**Guardians of the Forests**  
How should an indigenous community in eastern Bolivia defend their land and forests?

What is the role for science in community forestry in Nepal? Demands are growing for approaches to manage forest resources, but some claim that 'science' does not always support these demands.

**Struggles over 'Science'**  
What is the role for science in community forestry in Nepal?

What is the role for science in community forestry in Nepal? Demands are growing for approaches to manage forest resources, but some claim that 'science' does not always support these demands.

**The Cost of Sustainable Palm Oil**  
Should an Indonesian smallholder farmer get RSPO certified?

Should an Indonesian smallholder farmer get RSPO certified? Mr. Hanif must choose between sustainable practices to continue selling palm oil to his current mill but he would also like to sell to a company that offers him a better price. Should he stay with RSPO certification or weigh the costs?

**Coping with Cocoa Complications**  
How do economic factors impact land usage decisions of Ghanaian cocoa farmers?

How do economic factors impact land usage decisions of Ghanaian cocoa farmers? Between maintaining their farms or selling their land to illegal miners, the decision is more about survival than anything else.

**Biofuels: Beneficial or Bad?**  
Should a Ghanaian chief sell his land for biofuel crop cultivation?

Should a Ghanaian chief sell his land for biofuel crop cultivation? A biofuel company wants to grow Jatropha, but their operations could create problems in addition to socioeconomic opportunity.

[+ Enroll](#)



# Teach any module from a growing list of open libraries

- Use or create Gala modules in flipped or conventional classrooms; remote, hybrid, or field learning environments.
- Deploy across courseware platforms: Create review or discussion groups and invite members with a single link.
- Add and customize pre- and post-assessments to check reader progress.

**Guns or GPS Units?**

**Deploy this Case**

Deploy this case in a group of any size: a classroom, a workshop, a town, or a team. You'll get a private forum for collaborative annotation and the option to configure a pre-/post-quiz.

**Study Group**

School Group

Create Deployment

1996, when the tax creating the Superfund was allowed to expire, and Superfund cleanups decreased to a mere 8 in 2014. As a result, EPA typically negotiates consent orders with PRPs to study sites and develop cleanup alternatives, subject to EPA oversight and approval of all such activities.

For a site to be designated as a Superfund site, the EPA and state agencies first use the Hazard Ranking System (HRS) to calculate a site score (ranging from 0 to 100) based on the actual or potential release of hazardous substances from a site through air, soil, surface water or groundwater. A score of 28.5 places the site on the National Priorities List (NPL), making the site eligible for long-term remedial action (i.e., cleanup) under the Superfund program. The HRS uses a structured analysis approach to scoring sites that assigns numerical values to factors related to risk based on conditions at the site. The factors are grouped into three categories:

1. Likelihood a site has released or has the potential to release hazardous substances into the environment;
2. Characteristics of the waste (e.g. toxicity and waste quantity);
3. People or sensitive environments affected by the release.

I wonder where Ann Arbor would score...  
A 1 comment  
New Comment Thread

What does it mean to be on the National Priorities List?  
epa.gov

# Gala has been used in a range of teaching contexts

## Place-based learning



### Place-Based Narratives **Detroit River Story Lab (DRSL)**

The Detroit River Watershed is one of the nation's most deeply and visibly implicated in the troubling legacy of the carbon economy. The DRSL project is working with Gala to research and amplify stories of the Detroit River, and to make the rich history and current challenges facing the river and adjoining communities more present, palpable, and real. The modules, which are piloted at the University of Michigan and in schools or sites in the Detroit area, focus on themes of Indigenous relationships to water and land and connecting decolonization with decarbonization. are piloted at University of Michigan and in schools or sites in the Detroit area.

## Online labs



### Enhancing Ecology Learning **Online Content for Experiential Learning of Tropical Systems (OCELOTS)**

OCELOTS is an international network of tropical ecologists, educators, media specialists, instructional designers, and software developers, exploring best practices in research-based modules for teaching tropical biology and conservation. Funded by a National Science Foundation Grant (RCN-UBE proposal ID: 2120141), members of the network have integrated interactive data applications into cases to create online labs, used video and sound to capture place-based experiences, and pioneered collaborative online "networkshops" to exchange feedback on cases in progress.

## Remote Masters Programs



### Sustainability and Development for Global Learners **Sustainability and Development MasterTrack™ Certificate**

This online masters program focuses on the United Nations' Sustainable Development goals and has students analyze three Gala cases and synthesize their lessons for sustainability and development, before creating their own cases and developing an instructional component for the case of their choosing with a faculty member. This program was created by University of Michigan School for Environment and Sustainability (SEAS) faculty who have gone on to create a new, and more modular curriculum for an in person field of specialization at U-M SEAS on Sustainability and Development.

## Student module authorship



### Grounded Engagement **U-M SEAS Environmental Justice Education**

Cases in this library have been created in the University of Michigan's Environmental Justice Certificate and Masters Degree programs, by a combination of students, faculty and alumni and other professionals in advocacy, policy and research sectors. Each case addresses an environmental justice topic, from ableism in the environmentalist movement to indigenous rights and resource development.

## ...and work that bridges research and practice

### Collaborative workforce training

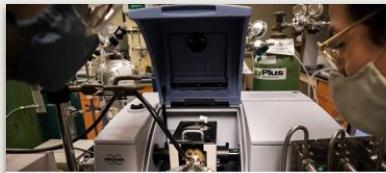


Accessible Data Science Tools

#### Data Learning for Better Drinking Water in Small Utilities

In partnership with the U-M School of Civil & Environmental Engineering with funding from Public Interest Technology University Network, in collaboration with SEAS professor Kyle Whyte, the City of Ann Arbor, the BlueConduit startup, and U-M's Blue Sky Initiative for water sector engagement the team is using Gala to make learning tools for classrooms, communities and workforces facing challenges in the monitoring and improvement of quality drinking water distribution systems. These tools can be shared among utilities in cities like Michigan's Benton Harbor and Flint—and eventually, shared with rural communities and tribal water utilities.

### Broader research impact



Learning at the Edge of Applied Research

#### Distributed Solar Energy Harvesting for Carbon-Free Ammonia Synthesis

Funded by the National Science Foundation (EFRI DChem award #2131709), this project aims to provide the scientific and technical foundation for producing fertilizer close to the farm and avoid the enormous greenhouse gas footprint of the industrial Haber-Bosch ammonia synthesis process. As the research group, based at the University of Michigan, works to pioneer the concept of photo-enhanced thermal catalysis in the lab, they are also prototyping, piloting, and assessing training modules to convey the innovations to stakeholders, inspire students, and move towards implementation.

# Gala is built for rapid prototyping and continuous improvement across networks



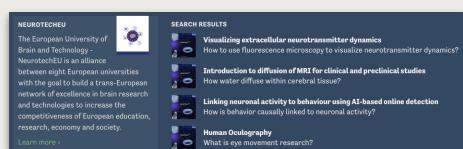
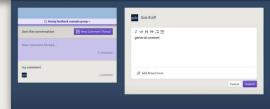
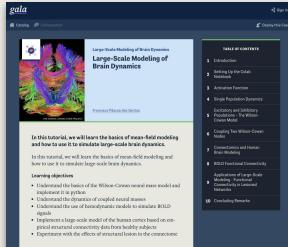
## Example workflow:

1. Author creates a draft module on Gala.

2. Author solicits feedback from network via feedback workshop and/or asynchronous comments.

3. Updated module is piloted with learners and assessed. Feedback is incorporated back into the module.

4. Module is published in a library and may be updated or adapted as needed.



# Flexible workflows for partner organizations and networks

Partners can create their own practices and guidelines for authorship and review, or draw from our growing knowledge base.

**OCELOTS Author Guidelines & Toolkits**  
How can I create a better OCELOTS module?

Chris Beck, Jennifer Bergman, Matt Cardinale, Kristin Douglas, Pete Evans, Carter Garcia-Abellido, Nadia Gatz, Rebecca Herde, Jeffrey Klemens, Jeff Klemens, Michael Lachowicz, Michael George Middendorf, Cesar Nuñez, Michelle Phillips, Alex Pineda, Ursula Moller, Ed Weevers, and Charles Wiles, et al.

**OCELOTS: An Invitation to a Participatory Process for Creating Modules in Tropical Biology**

A new network, OCELOTS (Online Content for Experimental Learning of Tropical Systems) brings together a diverse community of tropical biology researchers and experts in active-learning pedagogy, interactive data tools, and modular content creation. We invite you to join in crafting a process that enables research in tropical biology to create engaging online modules based on their own research. These *Author Guidelines* are designed to assist module authors throughout the process.

[Read more](#)

**Learning objectives**

- Create an authentic, research-based module that incorporates best practices in pedagogy and the Four-Dimensional Ecology Education (4D-EE) framework
- Evaluate which components of your module need some extra attention, including media and interactive data tools
- Collaborate with mentors and/or experts to make the most of the resources available for your module
- Share feedback on your experience, leading to future improvements in the process

**Getting Started Authoring on Gala**

With Gala's tools for authors, anyone can create a media-rich, immersive teaching case to communicate a complex sustainability topic. You can embed media resources, facilitate discussion in a forum, and moderate peer reviews to assess how well your cases are working. Publishing cases as data can be the first step to bring more attention to issues you care about, ready to affect the classroom.

All you need to do to get started is [join Gala](#) and click the "Create a Case" button in the footer. Once you're authoring some cases, they will be listed here. For now, click the big green "New Case" button to create one.

**Introduce your case in its overview**

The user is invited to introduce their case in its overview. The interface shows a preview of the module content, including a thumbnail image, a title, and a brief description.

Modules or Libraries can integrate into partner websites and Learning Management Systems

## Online Modules

Please register on [Gala](#) to access these modules. If you are interested in creating an OCELOTS module that is based on your peer-reviewed research in tropical biology, please contact [Chris Beck](#) ([galapagos@ucsb.edu](#)). Gala supports content in many languages – your module does not have to be in English! Please note that OCELOTS has a [hands-on peer-review process](#), which starts with the author “deploying” a draft of their module, thus enabling OCELOTS participants to post comments directly on the module. The module author then presents their module draft during a one-hour-long Zoom meeting – the Networkshop – which allows time for discussion and suggestions for improving the module. This participatory process enables authors to improve their modules, and for participants to gain insights about module creation in a congenial, collaborative way intended to grow the community.



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**Healing the Seare - Tropical rainforest carbon cycling**

Does it matter which tree species you plant?

Read the case. Then, continue reading.

**Restaurando Bosques Tropicales**

¿Plantar árboles es una estrategia efectiva en la restauración de bosques tropicales y económicos para restaurar bosques tropicales?

Read the case. Then, continue reading.

**Introducing the Rainforest**

Introduction to Costa Rica (in Spanish) lets students interpret bar graphs, use R Shiny to visualize seed rain in different restoration treatments, and learn about social obstacles to restoration

# Gala is open source and development ongoing.

We invite contributions from partners and users to:

 The Gala codebase

 Documentation/Guides

 Translations of modules and user interface

 Third-party tools that extend what modules can do

# *gala*

More about Gala:  
[about.learnngala.com](https://about.learnngala.com)

Try it yourself:  
[learngala.com](https://learngala.com)

Testimonials:  
<https://tinyurl.com/trygala>