

# Using OpenSocial Gadgets

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## Overview

### What can you do?

Your site administrators can configure a collection of "gadgets" for your VIVO installation. From that collection, each faculty member can decide which gadgets he will show on his profile page, and how they should be configured.

Perhaps it would be better to describe the gadgets as "page sections", because you can use CSS styling to make the gadget seamlessly match your theme. The result is profile pages that still look unified, but are at least partially configurable by the individual faculty member.

### An example

Here is a portion of a profile page from UCSF Profiles. Each gadget is there because the page owner selected it and configured it.



The Clinical and Translational Science Institute at UCSF created a project to host OpenSocial gadgets in the Harvard Profiles system. In keeping with the cross-platform origins of OpenSocial, the CTSI team decided to adapt their gadgets for use in VIVO as well.

## ORNG

Social networking systems provide very little information about their participants. The group at CTSI wanted to combine the display tools of OpenSocial with the data structure of VIVO RDF. They accomplished this through an extension to the standard, which they called Open Research Networking Gadgets, or ORNG.

## Adding gadgets to VIVO

The gadgets used at UCSF are provided in a library. Some are written specifically for UCSF, or specifically for the Harvard Profiles platform. However, many are available for use in VIVO.

You can also create your own gadgets. The gadgets are written in JavaScript, and you can use the existing gadgets as coding examples.

## Under your control

The VIVO administrators select which gadgets will be available for the site. They also decide where the gadgets will appear on a profile page, if enabled.

## Under control of your faculty

Each page owner may choose to enable individual gadgets for their page. A gadget may be written to accept settings that allow further configuration of its content and appearance.

## Getting started

The VIVO Installation Instructions contain a section on how to add OpenSocial gadgets to a VIVO site. This will require some setup, and re-deploying VIVO. Once those steps are completed, your gadget library is configured by settings in a MySQL database table, and the gadget appearance is controlled by your Freemarker templates and CSS files.

For more information about Open Research Networking Gadgets, see the [ORNG web site](#).