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General Questions

What kind of information does the Registry capture? Do you include individual-level data?

The Registry captures credential information on over 400 different data points in important categories such as cost, time to complete, requirements and recommendations for obtaining the credential, quality assurance information, and the competencies related to the credential. In order to be comparable, the data is captured in a common language— the Credential Transparency Description Language (CTDL). You can learn more about all of the ways the CTDL describes credentials and credentialing organizations here. The Registry does not capture individual-level data.

What will the data be used for? What is the App Marketplace?

Credential data can be used to provide important context and information that help organizations tackle some of the biggest education and workforce challenges of our time. For example, Registry data can create stronger career

guidance tools, provide employers with real-time information about the credentials referenced on resumes, and serve as a state's backbone for internal and external education and workforce databases used to make policy and funding decisions. The open-source Registry data will support an open applications marketplace—just as Apple and Android have apps marketplaces where users can download apps that speak to their particular interests or questions, Credential Engine will also support an open applications marketplace that will allow organizations to build their own apps that use the Registry's data to pull tailored credentialing information to meet a particular user need, such as particular credentials within a geographic area, or specific competencies associated with a credential regardless of location. For more technical use case examples, click here.

Who benefits from Credential Engine?

We believe that information is power. By revealing the credential marketplace—and the information within a credential—we believe that we are benefiting everyone. For more specific information about how our work impacts students, job-seekers, policymakers, credential providers, employers, and others, you can review our fact sheets here.

How is Credential Engine working with similar projects in education and workforce?

Credential Engine is part of a large network of both public and private credentialing, research, standards, employer, and workforce organizations all working on issues surrounding credentials and credential data. While we frequently collaborate and support related initiatives, what makes Credential Engine different is that we are creating the standards by which credentials will be described with the first-of-its-kind common language (CTDL) and the framework needed to be able to collect, connect, and compare credentials of all types through the Credential Registry. This infrastructure can be the backbone of projects and initiatives in the learn and work ecosystem and can connect the dots and mitigate duplicative data collection efforts.

Credential Registry Questions

How does the Registry work?

The Credential Registry uses technology and our common language to capture, link, update, and share up to date information about credentials so it can be organized and centralized within the Registry, made searchable by customized applications, and linked to from anywhere on the open Web. For a more technical explanation, please click here.

What do you define as a "credential?"

The CTDL defines a credential in the following manner:

- Qualification, achievement, personal or organizational quality, or aspect of an identity typically used to indicate suitability.

A credential can be acquired in a number of different ways, such as a degree, badge, certification, licensure, apprenticeship, diploma, microcredential, or as an employer-based program. Definitions for other terms in the CTDL can be found here.

How does Credential Engine treat quality?

Credential Engine, describes—but does not define—quality. The CTDL has many terms that can be used to describe quality, including information about and linkages to quality assurance processes. We adhere to strict Minimum Data and Currency Policies in order to ensure that the information within the Credential Registry is correct and up-to-date. Data that does not meet our requirements is not able to be published to the Registry. We also audit the data in the Registry to ensure it is factual and accurate, and reserve the right to remove any data that does not meet our terms of use. We also provide user friendly tools that credential providers can use to maintain clear lines of communication between their data and our Registry. Credential Engine itself does not, however, rank or rate data as "positive" or "negative."

Is there a fee to use the Credential Registry?

Credential Engine will not charge users to publish data to the Credential Registry, access data from the Credential Finder, or utilize data for a non-commercial purpose. Credential Engine offers free resources as well as fee-based services for organizations, institutions, agencies, and others who are looking for additional support.

Technical Questions

What is the Credential Transparency Description Language?

The Credential Transparency Description Language (CTDL) provides a dictionary of terms that define the "rules of the road" for how credentials, credentialing organizations, quality assurance bodies, and competencies will be described in the Registry. By creating a common language to describe this information, CTDL supports comparability across all credentials. For a more technical explanation, please click here.

How does CTDL Work with the Registry, on the Web, and the Open Applications Marketplace?

Think of all the information about credentials sitting out there on the Web—on web pages, in databases, and on various platforms. The Registry is like a big cloud-based library where all the credentialing information can be housed and organized, and the CTDL is the credentialing language dictionary that defines all the words and terms so the information within the library can be read and understood by both humans and machines.

Outside of the Registry, the CTDL can still be useful. We know that words exist everywhere—not just within libraries—and the dictionary is a useful tool to help define words wherever they are found. Much the same way, the CTDL will provide the first common credentialing language dictionary that will allow credentials using our language to be more easily discovered across the Web—even if they are not in our Registry.

The Open Applications Marketplace then allows organizations to build customized apps that act like librarians who can search the Registry to retrieve the information that you need.

For a more technical explanation about the CTDL, please [click here](#).

How does the Credential Registry link to other standards?

The Credential Transparency Description Language (CTDL) is relevant to users of other standards across each of the key ecosystem domains, since the CTDL can be used to provide information about credentials offered by an organization to complement the other evidence or claims of evidence in a transcript or portfolio. Essentially, the CTDL is complementary to other standards including Common Education Data Standards (CEDS), IMS Global, Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council (PESC), HR Open Standards, Schema.Org, and the World Wide Web Consortium. CTDL is filling a gap by providing metadata infrastructure for describing credentialing organizations, quality assurance organizations, and their related credentials.

What is Linked Data? How does it work?

- The World Wide Web is quickly expanding from a web of "linked documents" to a web that also includes raw data that can be "linked" to other bits of data or documents that are scattered across the Web. Linked data is what enables your search for flights and hotels on travel aggregators such as Travelocity or Expedia. It is also what enables your Google queries.
- Google, job and travel aggregators, and product sellers use common terminology (metadata) that has been accepted as a web standard (e.g., Schema.org). Similarly, using consistent metadata for key features of

credentials, the Credential Registry enables job seekers, students, workers, and employers to easily search for and compare credentials.

- Linked data is a vital component of Web 3.0, which is expected to be the next step in web evolution where the internet will be able to connect information in context (much like the human brain does) and provide a user experience that is more intuitive.
- For additional information, please click here to visit our fact sheet.

Does Credential Engine use blockchain?

The Credential Engine infrastructure does not currently include blockchain. The CE infrastructure supports describing credential information, not the personally identifiable information of a person associated with the instance of an issued credential. The Credential Registry utilizes a secured API accessible only to authenticated/approved credential information publishers to publish to the Credential Registry and also utilizes APIs for consuming from the Registry.

What is an API?

An application-programming interface (API) is a set of programming instructions and standards for accessing a Web-based software application or Web tool. For example, a software company releases its API to the public so that other software developers can design products that are powered by its service.

To learn more, please visit www.credentialengine.org or contact info@credentialengine.org