Credential Engine and Concentric Sky (makers of Badgr) combine forces to connect education, individuals, and the workforce by exporting stackable, skills-aligned credential pathways into the CTDL registry

WASHINGTON, D.C. (September 29, 2020)—Concentric Sky (makers of Badgr) and Credential Engine have announced a pioneering new collaboration that will make it possible for credential issuers worldwide to export their open badge-backed professional learning achievements from Badgr's stackable, credential pathways and then publish them into Credential Engine's global Registry. This unprecedented integration will empower learners and issuers to better understand how their credentials and professional learning journeys connect with opportunities for career advancement, continued learning, and the more expansive world of open data.

Badgr, the world's fastest-growing digital credential network, currently supports over 25,000 digital badge issuers, including organizations like Walmart, Facebook, Microsoft, Western Governors University, the University of North Texas, and thousands more spanning over 160 countries. Every year these learner-centric organizations award millions of open, skills-aligned micro-credentials (sometimes referred to as digital badges) to millions of learners around the world in recognition of their growing and evolving skills and competencies.

Many of the micro-credentials issued through the Badgr platform are assembled into stackable learning journeys using Badgr's easy-to-understand Pathways tools. These pathways are stackable both within and across organizational boundaries and can combine

awards from multiple issuing platforms, allowing issuers to build programs that include credentials and certifications from a wide array of trusted, third-party organizations. For example, the Upskill San Antonio program addresses the needs of frontline workers by scaffolding their upskilling and reskilling programs into pathways that guide learners while providing them with portable, digital credentials that they may use to send verifiable signals of success to employers. If the steps in a learner's journey are thought of as individual threads, when combined into interoperable learner records, they can be seen as creating a rich tapestry of skills and proficiencies that have previously been difficult for employers to visualize and for learners to communicate.

This tapestry can be made even more useful to learners by combining data from many different types of credentials, skills, and other components of education and career pathways expressed using the Credential Transparency Description Language (CTDL), a vocabulary of over 500 terms that are useful in making assertions about a credential and its relationships to other entities. Within the Registry, credentials are linked to other parts of the credentialing ecosystem such as assessments, learning opportunities, and a myriad of conceptual frameworks such as competencies, job skills, and formal classifications of occupations and instructional programs.

Badgr's collaboration with Credential Engine leverages the power of Open Badges, CTDL Pathways, and Badgr's open infrastructure which all share a common digital format. This mutually-beneficial alignment facilitates the discovery of new and emerging opportunities across the open Web and among system integrations, including those among the hundreds of thousands of existing distinct data points related to credentials and competencies that Credential Engine has already established.

Soon, credential issuers will have the ability to connect their machine-readable digital badges and learning pathways from Badgr with Credential Engine's expansive structure of open data. Not only will this powerful combination of data help learners, professional development providers (like universities and colleges), and employers access a shared registry of verifiable professional credentials, it will also unlock new opportunities critical for helping the economy rebound from a catastrophic worldwide recession.

"The value of credentials and skills are increased when they are clearly understood in the context of education and career pathways," said Jeanne Kitchens, chief technology services officer for Credential Engine. "Combining the power of Badgr Pathways and Credential Engine technologies provides innovative solutions to address the needs of learners, workers, employers, and credential offerers who want better information and data that impacts life, hiring, and how education and training are developed. These technologies support the capabilities desired by all of these users for interoperability and search and discovery on the open Web."

"The interoperability of learning pathway and skill data is critical in building an education-to-career pipeline that works to fill positions quickly, with increasing equity and opportunity for workers. Concentric Sky is proud to work with Credential Engine and a wide community of educational institutions, employers, and public entities to develop and implement the data interoperability standards that will drive the next generation of skills-based education and hiring." Says Nate Otto, Director of the Badgr Platform.

To learn more about this collaboration, visit badgr.com or credentialengine.org.

###

About Badgr and Concentric Sky:

Badgr is a global ecosystem of digital credentialing and stackable pathway tools designed for individuals and organizations of all sizes. Badgr serves millions of users and provides recognition from over 25,000 issuing organizations spanning more than 160 countries. Badgr is a registered trademark of Concentric Sky, an award-winning software development firm with a 15-year track record of enterprise product design and innovation around open technology standards. For more information about Concentric Sky, visit http://www.concentricsky.com

About Credential Engine:

Credential Engine is a non-profit whose mission is to create credential transparency, reveal the credential marketplace, increase credential literacy, and empower everyone to make more informed decisions about credentials and their value. To discover credentials in the Registry, visit the Credential Finder https://credentialfinder.org.

For more information, please contact:

Robert Bajor
(917) 972.1785
rbajor@concentricsky.com

Erick Montenegro
(773) 936.3703
emontenegro@credentialengine.org