

# L.A. Credential Data Project

Comprehensive Data To  
Power Better Decisions

UNITE-LA and Credential Engine began a partnership in 2018 to bring greater transparency to the credential marketplace in the L.A. region by harnessing technology to make information about credentials publicly available.

## Today's Credential Marketplace Is Confusing...

L.A. County is home to:



**At least 250**  
credential providers



**Offering 11,000+**  
unique credentials

The United States is home to:



**Almost 40,000**  
credential providers



**Offering 730,000+**  
unique credentials

**This means that learners in L.A. have tens of thousands of options to meet their education and career goals.**

But information about these credentials is housed in multiple systems and tools making it difficult for learners, employers, policymakers and others to understand and make decisions about what to pursue, who to hire and what to fund.

## What Is A Credential?

A credential is a qualification issued by a third-party provider as proof of an individual's accomplishment, competence and/or qualification in a given subject or occupation. There are 17 different types of credentials in the U.S. including high school diplomas, degrees of all levels, badges, certificates, certifications, licenses, apprenticeships and others.

## ...But It Doesn't Have To Be

As education and training options expand and change, people need access to comprehensive and up-to-date information about their choices. Building off of Credential Engine's work in nearly 20 states, the L.A. Credential Data Project is working to demystify the credential marketplace in L.A. by bringing transparency and common understanding to credentials for the first time. **Access to this information is more important than ever as students and displaced workers economically affected by COVID-19 look for expedient on-ramps to middle-skilled, family-sustaining jobs and career pathways.** Credential transparency will support students and workers in navigating labor market shifts and respond to employers' need for talent.

**Funded By:**

**ECMC**  
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# L.A. Credential Data Project

## Overview

The L.A. Credential Data Project aims to ensure information on all credentials in the region is housed in an open-source registry to support credential transparency and literacy.

In 2019, **Phase One** introduced Credential Engine's mission and work to stakeholders in the region, collected insights from employers, training providers, and end-user serving organizations, and developed an implementation plan for the region.

From 2020 through 2021, **Phase Two** focuses on publishing rich information about credentials offered by community colleges – with plans to expand to other credential providers in the region – and making that data available in user-friendly applications.

## Our Approach

- Public service project aimed at full access to linked, open and transparent data
- Open tools to publish data
- No fees for non-commercial use
- Language uses an open, Creative Commons licensed schema
- NOT a vendor
- Does not collect or track individual-level data – only data about the credentials themselves
- Does not define quality – our aim is to provide appropriate ways to have quality described and determined by appropriate entities (i.e. accreditors, state agencies, etc.)

## Timeline



## Phase Two Action Plan

Our work takes a two-pronged approach to map and publish data from statewide postsecondary systems and work with local institutions to provide richness and added context. Once credential data is published, the project will identify opportunities to build registry data into tools that are already in use and work to expand the applications marketplace to support end-users.

## Advisory Process

An ongoing advisory process is central to our work to ensure the products of the L.A. Credential Data Project meet the needs of end-users. To guide the initiative, input will be sought from key stakeholders including students, prospective students, training providers, employers and end-user serving organizations via convenings, focus groups, interviews and surveys.

## Building On Existing Efforts

Our aim is to build on and connect to other statewide initiatives in California, including the implementation of the California Cradle-to-Career Data System. While there is no comprehensive source of data about all credentials in L.A., there are many important initiatives and tools to help residents make informed decisions about their education and training choices such as: [the Community Colleges of Los Angeles website](#), [College Next](#) and [Bakersfield College Program Mapper](#). Right now, these and other tools are pulling from disparate data sources, but utilizing Credential Engine's infrastructure will reduce duplicative data collection efforts and break down data silos.

## Want To Get Involved?

Contact Heddy Nam at [hnam@unitela.com](mailto:hnam@unitela.com) for more information.

## Follow Us

