Showcase: Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness

Credential Engine and the national nonprofit Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness (CREC) are collaborating to create authoritative accounts of the rapidly changing credentialing landscape in the U.S. — all with the goal of greater transparency in mind.

Called Counting Credentials, these customized, state-specific reports help state leaders take stock of available credentials, lay the groundwork for a more transparent credential landscape, provide benchmarks with other states, and guide investments in education and training. Each report updates state-specific counts for five credential types offered by in-state providers: high school diplomas, apprenticeships, licenses, certificates, and degrees. The reports also estimate attainment and earnings levels by credential for specific demographic groups at the state level, and provide occupation- and industry-specific counts of credentials as available. And they identify data gaps that may exist in providing complete, accurate, and timely data on credentials, competencies, and pathways available to stakeholders.

One benefit of the state-specific Counting Credentials reports is that they identify the credentials delivered, issued, funded, or governed by the state that could be published to Credential Engine’s Credential Registry using the Credential Transparency Description Language (CTDL). The CTDL provides a common set of terms that define the “rules of the road” for describing credentials. But to make use of a common language and consistent, comprehensive linked open data about credentials and competencies, states must first understand what credentials are offered in their state, what data is currently available and in what formats, and work to map and publish that data to the Registry.

Industries need skilled workers to fill in-demand jobs, and states must work with education and training providers to develop those skills more efficiently. To align state investments in education and training more closely with the demands of the workforce, states need a better understanding of what programs they’re investing in and how well they’re meeting the needs of a fast-changing economy.

Creating an inventory of credentials is a first step toward answering critical questions about the availability of high-quality credentials that link students and job seekers to key industries, occupations, and technology areas.

The first customized state report was developed in collaboration with the Alabama Governor’s Office of Education and Workforce Transformation. To arrange purchase of a state report, read more [here](#).