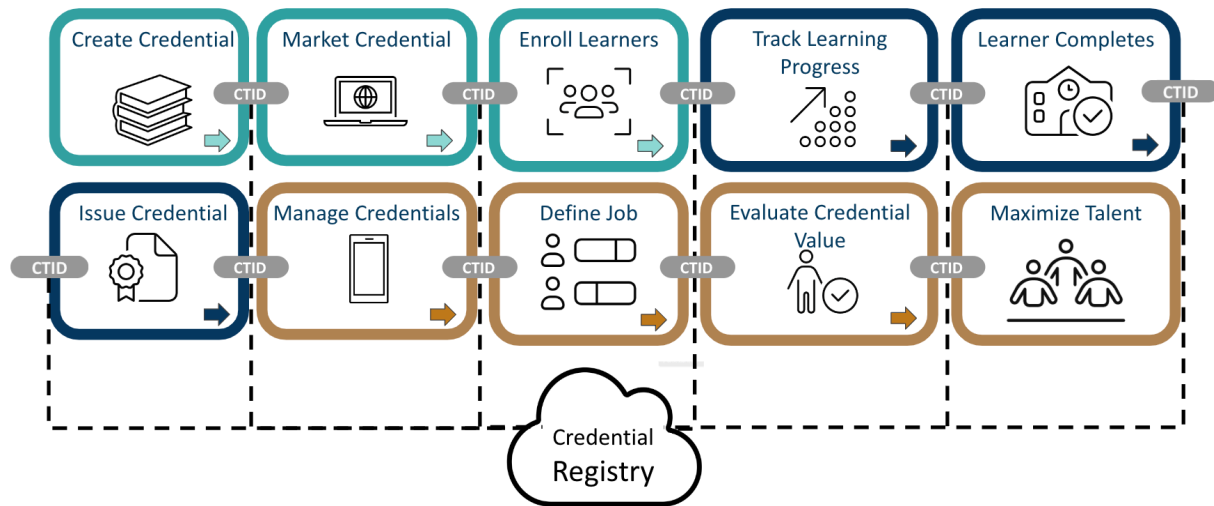# The Value of CTDL Throughout the Credential Lifecycle

With over a million educational and training credentials available in the U.S. alone, and millions more globally, the credential landscape is both vast and complex. This diversity, while beneficial, often leads to confusion and inefficiencies as everyone struggles to understand the meaning, value, and relevance of these credentials in specific contexts.

The Credential Transparency Description Language (CTDL) provides a standardized language and structure for describing and linking information about credentials. With CTDL, the meaning of credentials is illuminated with detailed, accessible metadata that clarify their characteristics.

Using CTDL across the credential lifecycle enhances transparency by providing a clear and consistent framework for understanding what each credential represents. This clarity helps reduce confusion, enabling credential providers to differentiate their offerings, learners to connect to relevant opportunities, and employers to find the talent they need to compete.

For example, when an institution creates a new program or course, they can generate globally unique Credential Transparency IDs (CTID) using CTDL and publish this information to the Credential Registry - a centralized, online repository that collects, connects, and shares information on all types of credentials. CTIDs make this data easily accessible and comparable, by linking a wide range of applications from student advising and enrollment management to job placement and workforce planning.

Opportunities for Transparency in Phases of the Credential Lifecycle

Curriculum Development
- Create Credential
- Market Credential
- Enroll Learners

Learning Processes
- Track Learning Progress
- Learner Completes
- Issue Credential

Jobs and Employment
- Manage Credentials
- Define Job
- Evaluate Credential Value
- Maximize Talent

Identify your role in phases of the credential lifecycle and use CTDL to provide meaningful connections.