



INDIANA COMMISSION *for*  
HIGHER EDUCATION



For Immediate Release

## National Science Foundation Funds Initial Work to Create Stronger Connections Between Education and Workforce in Indiana

*Phase 1 award will support a collaborative effort to identify and tackle statewide data challenges*

September 12, 2019 (Washington, DC) – Today, Credential Engine announced it has been awarded a National Science Foundation (NSF) Phase 1 grant to support a partnership with the Indiana Commission for Higher Education and Lumina Foundation aimed at identifying and building critical data exchanges between education and workforce systems in Indiana. This kickoff project will result in a Phase 2 proposal to support state-level guidance on how to break down data silos between education and workforce and empower policymakers with the information they need to make strategic economic and programmatic investments as well as provide students and workers with the data to make informed decisions about their learning and career pathways.

"We know that data exist within Indiana on career pathways, credentials, competencies, jobs, and individual learner's records of achievement, we just need to be able to effectively access it and harness it," said Ken Sauer, senior associate commissioner and chief academic officer for the Indiana Commission for Higher Education. "With this grant, we'll be able to identify key data gaps and potential solutions for streamlining and leveraging data into new tools."

"Adults engage in learning throughout their lives and this project shows how education providers, employers, and state leaders can build shared value using connected data exchanges," said Credential Engine executive director, Scott Cheney. "We're excited to kickoff this work and hopefully build a model that states can use to empower their residents with the information they need to reach their goals."

"Thanks to the NSF, Indiana will be able to build new tools and ensure Hoosiers are ready for the 21st century learn and work ecosystem," said Holly Zanville, strategy director for the future of learning and work at Lumina Foundation. "No state can prepare well for the future of learning and work without a solid understanding of the data infrastructures that support and connect education and workforce."

This grant is part of NSF's Convergence Accelerator, a new capability within NSF to accelerate use-inspired, convergence research in areas of national importance via partnerships between academic and non-academic stakeholders. Included among the 21 organizations engaged in this work are the Competency-Based Education Network (C-BEN), Ivy Tech Community College, Skillful Indiana, and the Indiana Business Research Center.

Credential Engine, the Indiana Commission for Higher Education, and Lumina Foundation will kick off the project with several workshops in Indiana to identify key data exchanges, define evaluation criteria, and document important use cases for workers, employers, education providers, and quality assurance agencies. These activities will help define an Indiana roadmap for connecting data exchanges and a corresponding multi-year Phase 2 NSF proposal to be presented by Winter 2020.

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[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. Credential Engine receives support from Lumina Foundation, JPMorgan Chase & Co., Walmart, Northrop Grumman Foundation, ECMC Foundation, and Microsoft.

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The [Indiana Commission for Higher Education](#) is a 14-member public body created in 1971 to define the missions of Indiana's colleges and universities, plan and coordinate the state's postsecondary education system, and ensure that Indiana's higher education system is aligned to meet the needs of students and the state. The Commission includes representatives from each Congressional district, three at-large members, a college faculty representative and a college student representative. Learn more about the Commission's Reaching Higher, Delivering Value strategic plan at [www.in.gov/che/](http://www.in.gov/che/).

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Lumina Foundation is an independent, private foundation in Indianapolis that is committed to making opportunities for learning beyond high school available to all. The foundation envisions a system that is easy to navigate, delivers fair results, and meets the nation's need for talent through a broad range of credentials. Lumina's goal is to prepare people for informed citizenship and for success in a global economy.

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