The 66ᵗʰ C2ER + LMI Institute Annual Conference
2026 Call for Sessions

The Council for Community and Economic Research (C2ER) and the Labor Market Information (LMI) Institute are currently soliciting proposals for **2026 Annual Conference** in **Memphis, TN.**

Breakout sessions and individual presentations are a key component to the success of our conference. They enable attendees to share, learn, converse, and interact with one another on topics of mutual interest and compare research methods, data collection practices, visualization tools, and lessons learned in the field. **We invite members and non-members to submit session proposals by Tuesday, September 30, 2025.**

Theme: This year we will consider the theme based on commonalities between the proposals received, consensus of the Conference committee and conference hosts, and relevance of current industry trends.

About the Conference

The 2025 C2ER + LMI Institute Annual Conference drew over 300 attendees: primarily professionals and researchers from labor market, economic development, and workforce development organizations. The 2026 in-person conference will feature individual breakout sessions, keynotes, and roundtables, offering a chance to present your work, expand your network, and explore data-driven development in action.

Structure & Format

We seek to create dynamic and memorable learning opportunities for attendees and encourage proposals that bring fresh approaches and knowledge, spark engaging dialogue, and highlight emerging practices. We are open to a variety of session formats, including traditional sessions (i.e. individual presentations, panels, etc.), workshops, facilitated roundtable discussions and lightning rounds, as well as extended feedback sessions regarding developing tools and methodology.

Skill building workshops: Do you have a **FREE** data tool, website, or skill to share with economic and workforce researchers? We're seeking presenters for 45-minute to 2-hour workshops that provide an introduction and hands-on experience, giving participants practical skills and resources to apply in their own work. which participants can take back to their own work.

We encourage researchers and analysts from a variety of backgrounds to share their experiences. We also want to hear from professionals newer to the field. We're always looking for new leaders and a fresh set of contributors.

Session Ideas

Proposals must address a topic relevant to economic and workforce development research and practice, Labor Market Information, or otherwise identified at the discretion of C2ER and the LMI Institute. Listed below are some examples of sub-topics, research questions, and ideas for inspiration:

- **R&B (Research and Breakthroughs):** Innovation in the practice of data methodology and dissemination.

- **Greatest Picks for '26:** Updated or upcoming datasets, series, research tools, data sources, or practices in community, economic, and workforce research.

- **Rated R (for Research):** Discussion on projects or initiatives that highlight **R**eliability, **R**epresentativeness, **R**eadiness, **R**eporting, and **R**eplicability… now joined by **R**elevance and **R**esponsiveness.

- **Impactful Data:** Research projects and initiatives that and its impact on community welfare and promotion of access to economic opportunity.

- **Bot Talk:** Focus on A.I. and its interactions with economic and workforce development research.

- **Real-time Rhythms:** Innovative real time data, unemployment insurance data, etc.; technical Skills Workshops.

- **Blue Suede Reviews:** Economic and workforce development research, policy analysis, or projects implemented as a follow-up to state or regional policy.

- **Pipeline Goes Platinum:** Best practices in talent pipeline development (e.g. internship programs, skills training, entrepreneurial development, etc.)

Instructions

- Please submit proposals via our submission portal. This helps keep the committee organized and ensures no one is inadvertently overlooked. Only proposals submitted via the submission portal will be considered. If you are having trouble with the proposal process or completing the form, please let us know.

- Sessions must center on economic and/or workforce development research or the use of data to make economic and/or workforce development policy decisions.

- Proposals should mention how it relates to topics in economic and workforce development research.

- Full panel Sessions (usually with three presenters) are approximately 60 minutes. Individual presentations are typically 15-20 minutes long.

- Session proposals are due by **COB on Tuesay, September 30, 2025**.

Guidelines

- C2ER and LMI Institute members and nonmembers alike are invited to submit a proposal.

- **Proposal descriptions are limited to 200 words.** Proposals with descriptions beyond 200 words will not be considered.

- Each organization can submit a maximum of three proposals.

- Proposals may not be submitted on behalf of another organization.

- **Vendors are eligible to propose "Vendor Sponsored Sessions." They will not be considered for other sessions.** For a proposal to be accepted as a Vendor Sponsored Session, it should be topical and informative. Sales or marketing sessions will not be considered. We will happily work with vendors seeking to make a proposal to ensure their idea meets our conference programming goals.

- There will be no financial compensation for speaking at the event.

- If you are proposing a panel, you will be responsible for confirming that panel's speakers, managing topics of focus, and organizing bios to submit to C2ER/LMI Institute prior to the event.

- C2ER/LMI Institute reserves the right to edit or make changes to proposed session titles, descriptions, modes of presentation, panels, and moderators. This includes combining proposal ideas that complement each other into one session.

- Speakers do not need to pay a fee if only presenting. If you are interested in attending the full conference, contact Spencer Abrams (sabrams@crec.net) for the prorated speaker registration fee.

- C2ER/LMI Institute will provide a response to all submitted proposals no later than **December 8, 2026**.

- Please contact Cameron Njomo (cnjomo@crec.net) with content questions.

Questions Preview

- Contact information

- Are you currently a member of C2ER or the LMI Institute?

- What is the structure of your proposed session?

- Which of the following tracks best describes your session? (Economic Development; Workforce Development; Community Development; Data Tools/Methodology; Other)

- Proposed session title

- Please provide a description of your proposed session.

- Please indicate who else will be a part of your proposed session (panels are a maximum of 3 speakers).

- How will your proposed session use data to inform community, workforce or economic development researchers? (200 words max)

- What other information would you like to provide about your proposal?

About C2ER

Founded in 1961, the Council for Community and Economic Research (C2ER) is a membership organization that promotes excellence in community and economic research by working to improve data availability, enhance data quality, and foster learning about regional economic analytic methods. C2ER's 1,000+ members span a broad range of specialty skills and collectively touch all aspects of community and economic development in the U.S. and Canada. C2ER accomplishes this mission by:

- Conducting training, advocacy, and research.

- Delivering innovative products and services for researchers.

- Developing professional networks.

About the LMI Institute

The Labor Market Information (LMI) Institute is the pre-eminent resource for supporting the development, interpretation, and use of labor market information. The LMI Institute supports and promotes the production and use of high-quality workforce and employment information by:

- Providing training and professional development to state and other LMI professionals.

- Improving the knowledge, skills, and understanding of LMI customers.

- Offering management, staffing, and coordination to support the nationwide LMI infrastructure.

- Fostering and encouraging the use of local, state, and national LMI in decision-making related to workforce development, economic development, education, and other relevant policy areas.