DATA USER

I N S I G H T S

LMI Data User Insights Academy
Overview and Important Information

Overview

Participants: State labor market information (LMI) offices and data users seeking to improve their strategic collaboration and communication.

Conveners: The Labor Market Information Institute (LMI Institute) and Projections Managing Partnership (PMP)—managed by the Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness (CREC)—with support from the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration (ETA).

Application Deadline: May 17, 2024

Selection Announcement: May 31, 2024

Estimated Timeline: July 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025

In-Person Convening: July 9 – 10, 2024

Purpose and Goal

The purpose of the *LMI Data User Insights Academy* (Data Insights Academy) is to provide a process and space for state LMI agencies and LMI data users to collaboratively improve awareness, access, and utilization of LMI to generate insights and make decisions related to statewide and regional economic growth, development, and equity/mobility. The Academy's cohort learning model promotes the sharing of knowledge, experience, resources, and insights across states as each team of LMI producers/users plan and act to improve data access and use in their own state alongside others doing the same.

Selected state teams receive facilitation support, technical assistance, and consultation with subject matter experts through a robust process that will:

- Build relationships and identify obstacles that impede optimal data use as well as opportunities for improved data access.
- Develop insights about the best approaches to address specific data use and access obstacles/opportunities.
- Create goals and an action plan for addressing obstacles/opportunities.
- Begin implementing formulated policies and/or programs to improve data user-producer communication and collaboration.

State-level strategies and plans will also inform the LMI Institute's development of resources, technical assistance, and training offerings that will be deployed more widely to data producers and users in other states.

While the broad goal of this process is to facilitate improved LMI data access and use, the specific challenges, opportunities, and user groups each state team chooses to address will depend on their unique data ecosystem. Areas of focus could include (but are not limited to): data publications and dashboards; websites and public data systems; stakeholder outreach and engagement; general marketing and communications; user training/data literacy; or secure microdata access and use.

Team Participants

The Policy Academy process will be driven by meetings and activities involving a "Core" team and a "Home" team. The **Core Team** should include four representatives per state, with two representatives from the state's LMI agency and two leaders representing a specific data user constituency in the state. This Core team will have the most direct involvement in the Data Insights Academy and will participate in multi-state meetings.

For example, a Core team could include any mix of the following participants that meets the above criteria:

(1) The appointed head of the state LMI agency or a member of their management team.
(2) A program lead from the state LMI agency who is responsible for data distribution.
(3) A state workforce agency staff member serving in a program or data leadership role.
(4) A program manager from another state agency that relies on LMI for evaluation/reporting.
(5) A senior staffer for the state legislature who utilizes data to develop and inform policy proposals.
(6) The head or member of a local workforce development board.
(7) A research or education partner, such as the director of a training provider institution, or head of institutional research for a college/university.

Up to two members of the **Core Team** (one state LMI agency participant and one data user representative) should be designated as team co-leads. These individuals will take on responsibility for managing the state team's activities and ensuring the team meets its proposed goals and objectives. Team leads will participate in regular video calls with their facilitators and monthly calls with team leads from all participating states.

The larger **Home Team** should include up to 12 additional members whose input is critical for the success of state LMI/data user strategic collaboration. These additional members should include a mix of state agency staff (either from the LMI agency or other agencies relevant to data production and communication/sharing) and data user representatives (holding either leadership or technical roles in their respective organizations). The 12-person limit is offered as

guidance to help keep the size of the home team to a manageable number for regular meetings, but the applicant has flexibility to create a home team that is appropriate to their own context. All team members should be willing to commit to working together over a nine-month timeframe from **July 2024** through **March 2025**.

Data User Constituencies and Priorities

Based on an initial survey of LMI directors, state LMI agencies serve a wide range of data users with varying levels of priority. For instance, some state LMI agencies ranked policymakers as the most important consumer of LMI data while others prioritized students and job seekers. Given that the needs of these different constituencies are often unique, *each state team will be asked to select a priority data user constituency around which to focus its efforts and problem solving*:

☐ State and/or local workforce agencies
☐ Economic development agencies/organizations
☐ Elected officials or other state/local government agencies
☐ Community colleges or other vocational training providers

☐ Researchers/universities
☐ Direct service providers/workforce intermediaries
☐ Jobseekers
☐ Businesses or professional associations

Of course, strategies, resources, and outcomes developed through the Academy process may also be developed with an eye towards the broader data user community. Selection of a priority constituency will serve primarily to help focus engagement and coordination efforts.

Project Activities

The Data Insights Academy process will involve the following activities:

1. **Cohort Meetings**: All **Core Teams** will convene as a group twice during the nine-month Policy Academy – once in Arlington, VA (just outside Washington, D.C.) and once virtually. Each meeting will offer an opportunity for deep learning and information exchange. The meetings will provide access to subject matter experts, dedicated state team time for discussing issues and making decisions about next steps, and issue-specific, facilitated peer-to-peer exchanges to help teams identify strengths and opportunities for development in the existing LMI ecosystem.

   - The first meeting will be an orientation and will occur in Arlington, VA on July 9 – 10, 2024. At this meeting, Core team participants will be introduced to the Academy process and will begin identifying areas/issues of focus for their state. The teams will have an opportunity to meet with other states' core teams and to clarify their respective goals.

- A final virtual Core team meeting will be held in March 2025 and will allow state teams to share their progress and celebrate successes. The meeting will also feature additional resources, training, and technical assistance opportunities to overcome any barriers to implementation teams may have encountered throughout the process.

2. **Team Strategic Planning Meetings**: Each state team will also be matched with a facilitator team selected from CREC's staff/close partners who will help with meeting management, coordinate access to subject matter expertise, monitor the team's progress, and ensure that the team benefits from the national network offered by [CREC and its affiliated associations](). Each state's facilitator team will conduct a site visit to meet with the **Core and Home Teams** sometime in Fall 2024. The goal of these site visits will be to lead the state's home team through an action planning discussion that starts with the specific challenges or opportunities identified in each state and results in an implementation plan to improve strategic alignment and collaboration.

3. **Ongoing Technical Assistance**: The CREC team will coordinate the delivery of technical assistance to participating home teams throughout the Academy process. In addition to the on-site visits, on-going technical assistance may include webinars, expert consultations, and background research. The level and type of technical assistance provided will depend on needs and available resources.

3. **Team Leader Conference Calls**: Team leaders from each state's **Core Team** will participate in monthly conference calls throughout the Academy to keep one another briefed on their work and experiences to date. These calls provide opportunities for state teams to work together on common challenges or opportunities, and to learn from each other as each state team progresses through its strategic planning process towards implementation.

Proposed Timeline

Date	Activity
April 25	Informational/Q&A Webinar
May 17	Letter of Interest Submission Deadline
May 31	Selection Announcement
July 9 – 10	In-person Convening (Core Teams)
Fall 2024 (dates TBD)	On-site Visits (Home Teams)
March 2025 (date TBD)	Virtual Core Team convening

Expected Outcomes

The set of issues and potential actions needed to enhance strategic alignment and collaboration between LMI offices and data users will be unique for each state team. However, at the conclusion of the Data Insights Academy each team should have:

- Key takeaways, strategies, and action steps for state LMI agencies, data users, and other stakeholders seeking to improve LMI access and use.
- Access to targeted curriculum, product, and training offerings to meet identified needs, including:
  - Webinars providing discussion/resources focused on key findings and recommendations.
  - Training curriculum (in-person and via eLearning) addressing challenges/gaps in information-sharing.
  - Information products and resources
- A network of LMI agency officials/staff and data users in other states to share questions, resources, and insights with.

Expenses

To facilitate participation, CREC will cover travel and lodging expenses for up to four people to attend the in-person Core Team multi-state convening. State teams may send up to four additional members at their own expense. CREC is unable to cover in-state travel expenses for Home Team meetings. CREC will cover all fees and expenses for the facilitators supporting the team, as well as any additional subject matter experts employed as part of this engagement.

Letter of Interest

State teams who are interested in participating in the Data Insights Academy should submit a letter of interest that provides more information about proposed members of the state's core team (including both state LMI agency and data user group representatives) as well as the challenges or opportunities the team will seek to address through the Academy process.

The ***Letter of Interest and Selection Criteria*** document provides further instructions for submitting a letter of interest. More information and required documents can also be found on the LMI Institute website: https://www.lmiontheweb.org/data-user-insights/data-insights-academy/.

Contact and Informational Webinar

Please contact Marty Romitti <mromitti@crec.net> with any additional questions.

The LMI Institute/PMP will host a webinar to discuss the Data Insights Academy project and answer any questions from those interested in participating. If you would like to attend, please use the registration link below:

LMI Data User Insights Academy Q&A
April 25, 2024
2:00PM – 3:00PM (EDT)

Register Here!