

Mobilizing Data for Talent Development: Partner with CREC's National Networks

To address data gaps limiting talent development efforts, CREC is working alongside the Council for Community and Economic Research (C2ER) and the Labor Market Information (LMI) Institute to **offer a year of dedicated support and collaboration for organizations ready to:**

- Harness data-driven decision making for better talent development outcomes
- Align talent development systems with regional growth and development
- Strengthen regional competitive advantage via investments in k12, college, and career pathways

Lead applicants must have a clearly articulated problem/opportunity that they seek to build capacity to address, including a plan to access education/training progression and employment/wage data. Membership in C2ER/LMI is not required for participation.

Support includes:

- 1:1 work with regional leaders and their state agency contacts to refine research agendas and data management plans
- Customized training and capacity building plans that align with current work streams, including access to LMI Institute training
- Support for travel and conference registration, including the 2026 C2ER/LMI Institute conference

And that's just the beginning! **In 2026, CREC will host three regional workshops to showcase innovative projects and spark collaboration.** CREC will cover travel expenses for your team lead to join one of these convenings.

Through this process, CREC is seeking to learn about and advance strategies for more secure and open data access, enhancing post-secondary pathways and addressing regional data gaps. Together, we can use and produce better data, open new pathways to success, and fuel our economic future.

Application Information

Organizations eligible to be *lead* applicants are state or local economic and/or workforce development organizations, public or private, as well as public or private educational institutions and training providers. To apply, fill out the application form [HERE](#) by **March 14, 2025**. Applicants will be asked to provide:

1. Organization and contact information for two participating individuals, including one team lead
2. Information on your post-secondary pathway partners and data partners
3. Six questions covering your organization's proposed projects, challenges, and expected outcomes:
 - How is your organization working to expand or refine post-secondary pathways in the state?
 - What data or storytelling challenges are your organization facing in your region?

- Please describe the problem/opportunity you would like to work on over the course of the next year.
- Does your project have a sector-specific focus?
- What kinds of targeted support and programming would help address this work?
- What outcomes do you hope to see in your region regarding post-secondary pathways, both short- and long-term?

Those who fill out a complete application will be entered into a raffle to receive a FREE conference registration for this year's [C2ER & LMI Institute Annual Conference](#) May 28-30, 2025, in Sacramento, California. Up to five winners will be selected!

Timeline

Date	Activity
March 14, 2025	Applications Due
April 1, 2025	TA cohort announced
May 30, 2025	Cohort launch
Spring 2026 (Dates TBD)	Regional convenings begin
June 30, 2026	Cohort close-out

Example Projects/Problems

Opportunities or challenges organizations may be seeking to address could include, but are not limited to:

- Connecting education and workforce data to track individuals through the K-12, college, and employment
- Developing internal data capacity to understand and evaluate post-secondary outcomes
- Ensuring different stakeholders in the region are utilizing disaggregated data to drive programs and policies
- Coordinating with employers on in-demand post-secondary pathways and developing curriculum to reflect workforce needs
- Advancing a shared research or evaluation agenda with other partners in the region around what post-secondary success looks like

Expected Outcomes

The goals will be unique for each team. At the conclusion of the initiative, however, each team should have:

- Demonstrated progress in accessing and utilizing public data sources for decision-making and strategic programming
- Stronger partnerships and increased collaboration with data producers and/or data users across your region
- Plans to jumpstart or advance post-secondary pathways work via an in-person regional convening in 2026

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please email sedwards@crec.net.