

REGIONAL DATA CONNECTIONS COHORT: **Call for Applications**



The Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness (CREC) and the Labor Market Information (LMI) Institute, with support from Ascendium Education Group, are launching a **six-month technical assistance cohort to strengthen the accessibility, usability, and impact of sub-state labor market information.**

Workforce boards and practitioners rely on accurate, localized labor market data to guide training investments and align education pathways with employer demand. While many states produce sub-state projections, data accessibility and usability vary widely. **This cohort addresses that gap by focusing on practical improvements in how sub-state labor market information is produced, shared, and used.**

This cohort is designed for **state LMI offices and regional workforce boards** ready to improve how localized projections and workforce data are produced, shared, and applied. Over six months, participating teams will:

- Strengthen collaboration between state LMI agencies and workforce boards
- Improve communication and alignment across state and local systems
- Advance sub-state projection methodologies
- Develop shared templates, tools, or guidance that can be applied beyond a single state

Support includes:

- Monthly technical assistance meetings, including an on-site facilitator visit to your state
- A two-day convening in Washington, DC to build relationships and problem solve together
- Engagement with subject matter experts during webinars tailored to cohort interests

Through this process, CREC aims to strengthen the public data infrastructure that enables workforce boards to align training programs with actual labor market demand.

KEY DATES

Application Deadline

April 10, 2026

Selection Announcement

May 5, 2026

Program Timeline

June – December 2026

In-Person Convening

July 9-10, 2026

EXAMPLE COHORT FOCUSES

Opportunities or challenges teams may be seeking to address could include:

- Developing interactive data visualizations that allow users to explore projections by region, occupation, or industry
- Improving communication feedback loops for workforce boards to share what data they need with state LMI offices
- Creating strategic plans that help workforce boards embed sub-state data directly into their local planning processes
- Designing data dissemination plans to translate dense data into clear guidance

TIMELINE	
Activity	Dates
Cohort Launch (Virtual)	June 11, 2026
DC Convening (In-Person)	July 9-10, 2026
Webinar #1	August 2026
Webinar #2	September 2026
Webinar #3	October 2026
Cohort Wrap-Up (Virtual)	December 10, 2026

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Each team should include *at least* **two representatives from the state's LMI agency and two leaders representing workforce board interests**. Teams must designate one co-lead from each entity to coordinate communication and serve as primary points of contact. This structure ensures both state-level data producers and local data users are directly engaged in shaping solutions.

To apply, fill out the application [HERE](#) by **April 10, 2026**. Applicants will be asked to provide:

1. Organization and contact information for two co-leads (one LMI and one workforce board)
2. Six questions covering your team's proposed projects, challenges, and expected outcomes:
 - Organization and contact information for four team members (two LMI and two workforce board).
 - Please describe the problem/opportunity you would like to work on over the course of the six-month cohort.
 - What kinds of targeted support and programming would help address this work?
 - What would success look like for your team at the end of the 6-month period?
 - What expertise or innovations could your state share with peer states in the cohort?
 - What are you hoping to learn from other states in the cohort?

EXPENSES

To facilitate participation, CREC will cover travel and lodging expenses for up to four people to attend the in-person convening in July. 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.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please email Sarah Edwards, Project Manager, at sedwards@crec.net.