

## The Challenge

Most people can't easily prove what they know. A diploma says where you studied, not which skills you gained, and the certificate, the on-the-job training, and the military experience all live in separate places. Employers can't tell what's real, schools re-verify records by hand, and the skills people already have go to waste. A Digital Credential Wallet, a Learning and Employment Record (LER), and a Talent Marketplace are three connected pieces that fix this, turning verified skills into a gateway to opportunity for learners, workers, institutions, and employers alike.

## What Each Side Brings



### Learning and Employment Records

An LER is a single, trusted record of everything an individual has learned and done (degrees, courses, certificates, skills, work experience), checked at the source so it can't be faked.

Think of it as: a credit report, but for your skills and achievements instead of your loans.



### Digital Credential Wallets

A secure app where individuals keep their verified credentials from their LER.

Each item is digitally signed, so anyone can confirm it's real in seconds.

Think of it as: the app on your phone that holds boarding passes, but for your credentials.



### Talent Marketplaces

A place where verified skills from an LER get put to work, matching people to jobs, apprenticeships, or programs based on what they can actually do.

Think of it as a matching platform that connects proven skills to the right opportunities.

## What Changes

### Today, without it

- Achievements scattered across transcripts, PDFs, and emails
- Employers can't easily trust or read what a candidate actually knows
- Skills learned in college, on the job, or in the military go unrecognized and unverified
- Moving between schools or states means starting paperwork over

### With an LER, Wallet & Talent Marketplace

- One verified record the person owns and carries for life
- Employers hire on proven skills, confirmed instantly
- Prior learning counts toward jobs and toward college credit
- Records move with the learner across schools, states, and jobs

## Where It Helps Most In Real Life

### Transfers Between Colleges

The receiving college reads verified courses and credits instantly, so far less credit is lost, and transfer decisions are much more efficient.

### Credit for Prior Learning

Verified work, military service, and training become evidence that a college can map to credit, so students skip what they've already proven they know.

### Identity Verification Built In

Every record is digitally signed and tied to a confirmed identity, so colleges and employers know it's really you, and that you have verified skills.

### One Record, Even Across Many Colleges

Most students now attend two or three institutions. The wallet keeps a single, complete record that follows the learner.

## Why This Is Happening Now

### Federal Funding

Roughly half a dozen federal grant programs now reward, or in some cases require, verified credentials, skills-based hiring, and systems that connect education to employment: WORC rural-workforce grants, career-connected programs, Perkins CTE, the EDA Good Jobs Challenge, and WIOA. The common thread: programs must show real skills gained and real jobs reached.

### State Policy: California

California is linking its education and workforce data and piloting a learner-held Career Passport so records can be trusted and shared instead of getting stuck in outdated systems. The state's Master Plan for Career Education pushes colleges to recognize verified skills and prior learning for real academic credit.

## Who Benefits



### Learner

Own a lifelong, portable record and get credit for what they already know.



### Colleges

Verify records instantly, award credit for prior learning, and cut admissions paperwork.



### Employers

Hire on demonstrated skills with confidence and fill open roles faster.



### States

Connect education and workforce data and direct funding where it pays off.

**Bottom line:** a record people own, easy to trust, and connected to opportunity is how education finally links to the workforce.