



Data for the American Dream – D4AD

The Data for the American Dream (D4AD) initiative aims to support innovative efforts to expand access to education and career data through partnerships that might include both public and private agencies and organizations. The goal of the D4AD initiative is to help students and jobseekers make better career decisions in a changing economy through data-driven information, and especially to help low-income, lower-skilled, underemployed, and unemployed Americans access better jobs and education opportunities.

Three projects were selected for the inaugural phase of the D4AD initiative via a two-stage process. Interested applicants submitted a letter of intent. Letters of intent were reviewed by the Advisory Committee and projects that were most aligned with the goals and objectives of the D4AD initiative were invited to submit a full proposal. The three projects in the first round were selected from 58 Letters of Intent and 12 full proposals received.

- My Colorado Journey
- Michigan Department of Technology, Management & Budget
- New Jersey Department of Labor

Support for D4AD is provided by

- Schmidt Futures
- Lumina Foundation
- Walmart
- Walton Family Foundation

NCHEMS is the D4AD implementation partner.



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Implementation Partner:



Colorado

Project Overview



People of all ages and backgrounds face challenges in envisioning a career pathway and navigating the postsecondary and working world. My Colorado Journey is a collaborative effort to provide personalized, timely, and relevant information to help individuals make better informed education and career planning decisions. My Colorado Journey will join the power of multiple agencies sharing tools and data with an application interface that is personal and private for each user.

A Multi-Agency Task Force (MATF) has been laying the groundwork for success for My Colorado Journey for approximately two years. The participating agencies, through a partnership agreement under the Colorado Workforce Development Council, began in 2017 to explore the need for, and feasibility of, an online tool to provide commonly needed resources regarding education and career planning.

My Colorado Journey is powered by a new, multi-agency, public-private data trust that, over time, will unite the existing fragmented ecosystem of data and allow for the creation of new datasets that connect services, programs, and education and employment opportunities. Similarly, the My Colorado Journey platform takes a fragmented set of end user experiences across agencies and provides a unified and personalized user interface.

Based on information in the user profile, the system will recommend outcomes that a user may wish to add to their journey. Each outcome has related goals and each goal carries with it specific and actionable steps that are presented using combined data on available pathways and actions from across agencies. A user may elect to set aside or add any outcome, goal or step they wish to accomplish and collaborating professionals, such as case workers, counselors and job coaches, may also recommend these to a user journey. Within the steps to reach a goal, users are directed to activities or resources in related partner agency websites to complete their work. Defined milestones indicate whether a user has completed their goals and all data, documents and artifacts associated with their work are saved to their profile.

My Colorado Journey will provide education and career planning services to all individuals making decisions about education and career pathways in order to transform lives of a wide swath of Coloradans while strengthening the state's job pipeline.

Lead Organization

Colorado Workforce Development Council (CWDC)

Partner Organizations

Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) / Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE)

Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE)

Department of Human Services (CDHS)

PAIRIN

BrightHive

Ligature Creative

Maher & Maher

Michigan



Project Overview

High-quality data are critical to improving the economic well-being of vulnerable populations, but data alone do not lead to action. To bridge the gap between data and labor market success, the State of Michigan will create an interconnected set of products and tools to provide data-informed, personalized support to assist underrepresented and low-income individuals in making the transition to sustainable employment.

The goals of the project are threefold. First, to enhance available employment outcome data and provide a more comprehensive listing of education and training options available to the target population.

Second, to provide the target population with personalized recommendations for optimal career pathways. This will be achieved through better data sharing mechanisms to foster policy innovations, as well as the development of two web-based tools that provide information tailored to each individual. One tool will be for job seekers and will provide information on which career pathways present the greatest opportunities based on an individual's education and work history. The other tool, for case managers, will use administrative data on job seeker characteristics and machine learning algorithms, to provide critical information regarding which support services are most likely to help each job seeker make a successful transition to employment.

Third and finally, the project will deliver personalized career pathway recommendations using intuitive, user-friendly designs to maximize understanding and limit impediments to action.

Combined, these products will present a powerful resource to help underrepresented populations bridge the gap between employment information and successful employment outcomes.

Lead Organization

Michigan Department of Technology, Management and Budget

Partner Organizations

Michigan Department of Talent and Economic Development
Upjohn Institute for Employment Research
Michigan Works! Southwest
Coleridge Initiative at NYU

New Jersey



Project Overview

Individuals—especially low-income individuals, customers of state human services programs, and individuals from other disadvantaged populations— preparing for the workforce face a high degree of uncertainty about what is the optimal training to acquire the skills they need to secure their desired job that will provide a family-sustaining wage. Relatedly, individuals that make hiring decisions face a high degree of uncertainty about how well any given candidate will be able to fulfill the responsibilities of the position. In an era of machine learning, however, it is possible to provide helpful information about whether a training program is or is not a good fit for a specific person and if there is alignment of the knowledge, skills, and abilities imparted by the program with the demands in the regional labor market.

The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, its strategic partners, and private vendors will address these problems by expanding its collection of open data about training programs and using these data to build a “smart disclosure” tool.

Two innovations distinguish New Jersey’s project from similar smart disclosure tools in the education and training arena: the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning to match people to training opportunities to help them achieve their goals, and the incorporation of competency frameworks that help both jobseekers and employers understand the skills that are associated with a training program.

Although the proposed tool will be available to the public at large, it will be designed with and for low-income individuals, customers of state human services programs, and individuals from other disadvantaged populations.

The project will result in a set of open source tools that will accomplish a three-fold goal of helping jobseekers obtain their desired employment and earnings outcomes; employers find better qualified employees; and regulators make data-informed decisions that weed out fraudulent and low-quality training providers.

Lead Organization

New Jersey Department of Labor

Partner Organizations

Governor’s Office of Innovation

Governor’s Office Policy Division

John J. Heidrich Center for Workforce Development, Rutgers University

New Jersey Council on County Colleges

New Jersey Department of Education