Workshop:

Designing the New Skills-Based Economy: How Visibility is the Linchpin to Equity

How might we shape the emergent skills ecosystem to optimize equity?

Education Design Lab

April 5, 2022 - 4:40 - 5:20 pm
Cityview A, 32nd Floor

ASU +GSV SUMMIT

Vision

We imagine a skills-based economy where l(earners) are digitally visible with equitable opportunities to obtain meaningful work and sustaining wages.

What is your role in making sure the new skills-based hiring innovations like tools, platforms, digital wallets, micro-credentials, learning models, and more actually create more visibility for learners and earners? Whether you're an employer, an ed tech entrepreneur, a nonprofit or a college administrator, you have a role in shaping the emerging skills-based ecosystem. The Lab's framework articulates a clear vision, rationale, and roadmap for how each stakeholder can do their part to unlock the visible learner-earner in the new skills-based economy. As we continue to unbundle traditional degrees and integrate machine learning, AI, AR/VR, metaverse, and more to democratize, personalize and incentivize learning, training and hiring, there is one common thread that is the linchpin to ensuring an equitable future: **visibility**. Join the Lab for a boundary-spanning workshop to align on a vision and map the jobs-to-be-done by the various ecosystem stakeholders including states; higher education and workforce development entities; employers; ed tech; philanthropy; and others.

Session Objectives

During this interactive session, participants will be able to...

+ Describe what it means to enhance (l)earner visibility
+ Identify personal contributions to the skills economy
+ Identify the stakeholders engaged in the skills ecosystem (by major themes)
+ Specify the jobs to be done within the skills ecosystem
+ Analyze missing or needed jobs that must be filled

Session Flow

1. **Hot Start**
   (before session starts)
   + Introductions and Role Call
2. **Pop-up Presentations**
   + Learner Visibility
   + State of the Talent Crisis
3. **Activity 1**
   + Jobs to be done
4. **Pop-up Presentation**
   + Education Providers and Meeting the Current Needs
5. **Activity 2**
   + Who should be doing the Jobs
6. **Pop-up Presentation**
   + Capturing Credential Data
7. **Activity 3**
   + Gaps in the Ecosystem
8. **Group Sharing and Lessons**

Skills Visibility

Why and How a Skills-Based Economy can be More Equitable

The Next Frontier of the Learner Revolution

A Letter from Kathleen deLaski, Founder and CEO, Education Design Lab

It's been eight years since we introduced the construct of the Learner Revolution with the Lab's first white paper. We predicted that technology and changing learner attitudes would force the unlocking of degrees to empower all learners to disintermediate their education, choosing their learning pathways on their own terms. By 2019, our second Learner Revolution white paper named the beginning of the shift from degrees to skills as a more equitable, inclusive currency for being hired and promoted and suggested how colleges could transform to serve learners in this new paradigm.

Now it's 2022, and the Learner Revolution has joined forces with the Skills Revolution. Who would have predicted then a global pandemic? Or the national racial reckoning after the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and many others? Both sets of events accelerated the pace of interest toward more inclusive, skills-based learning and hiring models. They coincide with the readiness of a set of national standards and technology capabilities that still need "human trials" before being ready for prime time. If you haven't heard about "learner wallets" yet, several major pilots are coming on line by the end of 2022. If we can get those trials right over the next few years using the equity vision of many players, we could begin to close the wage and skills gaps that plague this country.

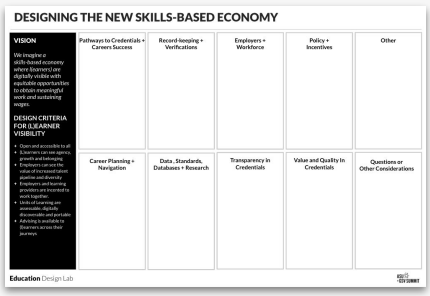
Do we understand this opportunity? Do we see the potential? Are we mitigating the risks? This paper attempts to organize that thinking as more than the sum of the interesting parts that are emerging. We attempt to organize it into a new talent ecosystem vision made possible by the skills-based learner revolution. And to urge that we act now to consider the promise and the risks as these tools, standards, and practices begin touching humans. And to design accordingly before it's too late.

Think about it. We move away from a world where a $200,000 history degree gets me a job interview because blue-chip companies only come to the best campuses to interview candidates. We are now tantalizingly close to a world where my skills are telegraphed digitally to any employer around the nation, or even the world, looking for that skills cocktail. And it works the other way: all employers looking for certain skills can feed into a real-time skills ticker tape, signaling to learners and the learning providers that serve them what combination of skills will yield employment. The magic of this vision, coming to a job market near you in the next two to five years, is "visibility."

Download our latest white paper, **Skills Visibility**, along with other prior publications and materials from this session on our website here.

https://eddesignlab.org/

Session Poster



Skills Visibility

Why and How a Skills-Based Economy can be More Equitable

You may not see it happening, but several sectors are leaning in. Technologists are creating the data infrastructure and "digital wallets." Machine learning companies are scaling skills translation and assessments. Learning institutions are ramping up micro-credentialing strategies with competency-based stacks and one-off badges, attempting to translate their degrees and learning outcomes to a language that speaks to employers. Employers are open to looking at talent differently; in fact, they have to, with the labor shortages and 10-year outlook for new entrants to the workforce. And perhaps most importantly, to enable all of this, learner views about degrees are changing.

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated these changes with millions of people leaving lower-wage jobs and positions that do not align with their career goals or economic needs. The call for more skills training and programs that closely align to employer needs is being heard at local, regional, and national levels. Without a shift to skills, politicians see the economic growth drag that is predicted to slow the economy down by $1.3 trillion by 2030.

Before we turn to the paper, let us honor the degree and its important signal value for a learner's confidence and (for now) required entry to regulated fields such as medicine, teaching, and law. Nothing we have said should be construed as disrespecting the degree. We simply recognize that expecting it as the gateway to professional success has been an exclusionary practice for so many, and we need alternatives.

These alternatives must be driven by the needs and goals of learners most harmed by the existing system, and not just by their needs and goals, but by these learners themselves. People are incredibly resilient, and many of the learners we've worked with over the last eight years have solved for their problems despite operating within a system setting them up to fail. It is on us as systems leaders and decision-makers to change the system itself, and to capture this turning point — this moment — so that all people have what they need to succeed on their own terms. This paper addresses what that will take at the ecosystem level.

The virtuous circle of visibility is centered on the l(earner) in a design construct that supports equitable hiring outcomes with individual agency and opportunity.

Education Design Lab

Special Thanks to our Presenters

Join us for a **Virtual Post-Session Follow Up** as we share back what we learned from you here today and chart a path forward for this critical work.

Friday, April 22, 2022
2:15pm ET; 45 minutes

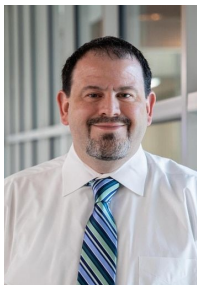
Sign up here: bit.ly/designing-skills

JASON TYSZKO
VICE PRESIDENT
U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FOUNDATION

U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation

JEANNE KITCHENS
CHIEF TECHNOLOGY SERVICES OFFICER
CREDENTIAL ENGINE

Credential Engine



LUKE DOWDEN
CHIEF ONLINE LEARNING OFFICER
ALAMO COLLEGES DISTRICT

ALAMO COLLEGES DISTRICT

About the Lab

Education Design Lab (the Lab for short) is a nonprofit innovation engine that co-designs, validates, and scales education-to-workforce models through a human-centered design process focused on understanding learner experiences, addressing equity gaps in higher education, and accelerating economic mobility for new majority learners. Our biggest areas of work include improved career pathway visibility, micro-pathways, 21st century skills, micro-credentials, upskilling workers, and training college leadership teams in change management and agile prototyping.

To learn more about the work we do, visit **www.eddesignlab.org**, and follow us on Twitter (**@eddesignlab) and LinkedIn.**

Session Moderator

NAOMI BOYER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION
EDUCATION DESIGN LAB

Dr. Naomi R. Boyer is an educational strategist and innovative leader at the Lab, with over 20 years of education experience. Currently serving as Executive Director, Digital Transformation, she focuses on the future of work, 21st century skills, digital micro-credentials, the learner-earner data ecosystem, and competency/skill frameworks. Previous work roles included oversight of: all college/university technology as Chief Information Officer; strategy and innovation; high-quality, distance education; unique faculty technology professional development; talent pipeline development aligned to economic interests; global initiatives; and the creation and facilitation of continuing education. Dr. Boyer has expertise on competency-based education, leads many nonprofit boards, and maintains scholarship on self-directed learning.