

The Emerging Credential Ecosystem

How Colleges and Universities Can Compete

Dr. Michael K. Thomas | President & CEO | New England Board of Higher Education



Maria Spies
Co-CEO
HolonIQ



Holly Zanville
*Co-Director, the Program on Skills,
Credentials and Workforce Policy*
George Washington Institute for Public
Policy



Jonathan Finkelstein
Founder and CEO
Credly

Next-Gen Digital Learning Infrastructure (NGDLI) Project

Build understanding of the digital future of the postsecondary learning enterprise and to strengthen strategic governance by institutional executives, governing boards and policy leaders.

NGDLI Research Briefs

tiaainstitute.org

 TIAA Institute



Presidential perspectives on building next-generation postsecondary digital learning enterprises: Survey report

November 2021

Dr. Michael K. Thomas
New England Board of Higher Education



 TIAA Institute



Fast forward: Forces defining the future of postsecondary learning

November 2021

Dr. Michael K. Thomas
New England Board of Higher Education



 TIAA Institute



NGDLI and strategic governance: An action framework for boards and senior higher education leaders

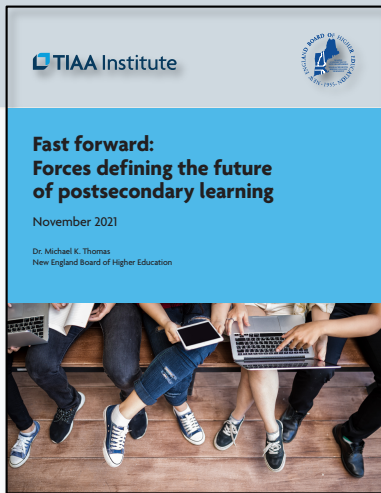
June 2022

Dr. Michael K. Thomas
New England Board of Higher Education

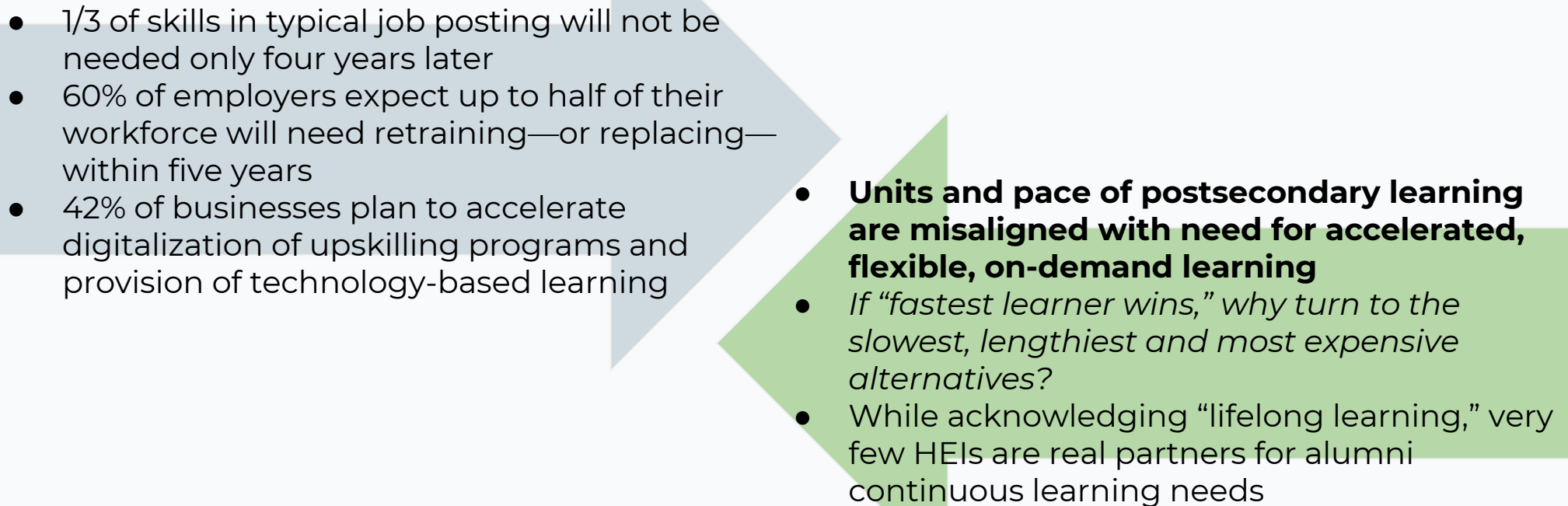


Four Forces Defining the Future of Postsecondary Learning

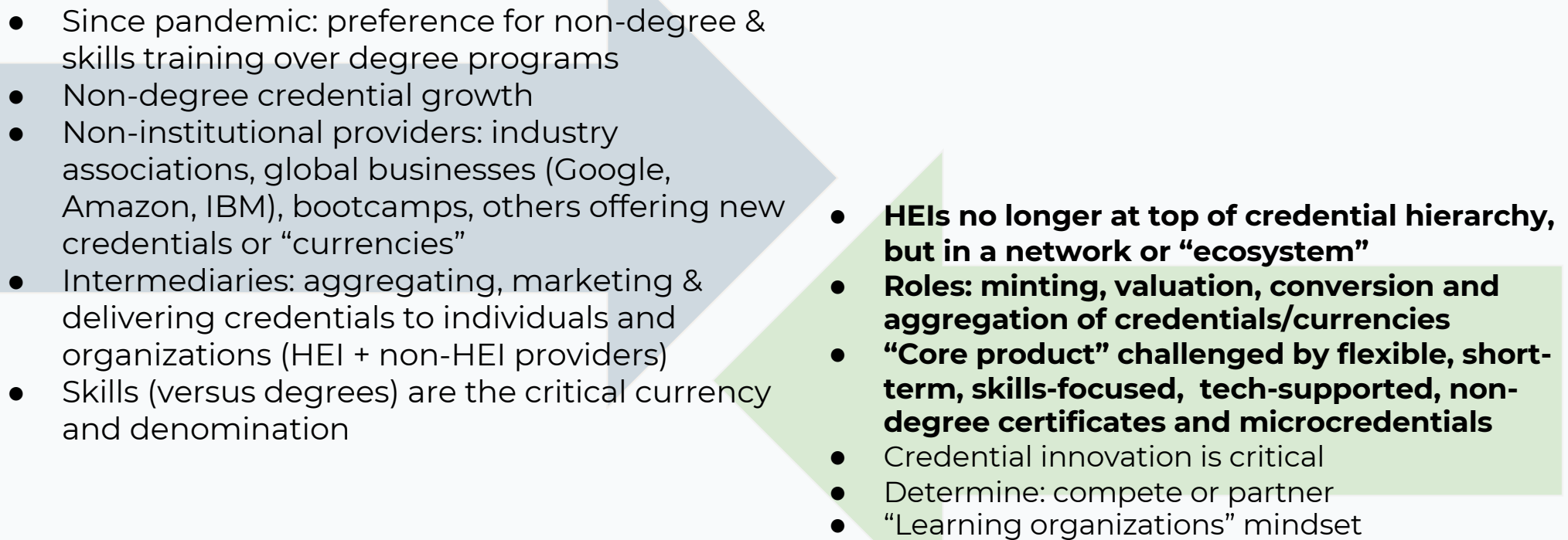
- Digital transformation
- **The evolution of work**
- The education technology boom
- **The changing currencies of learning**



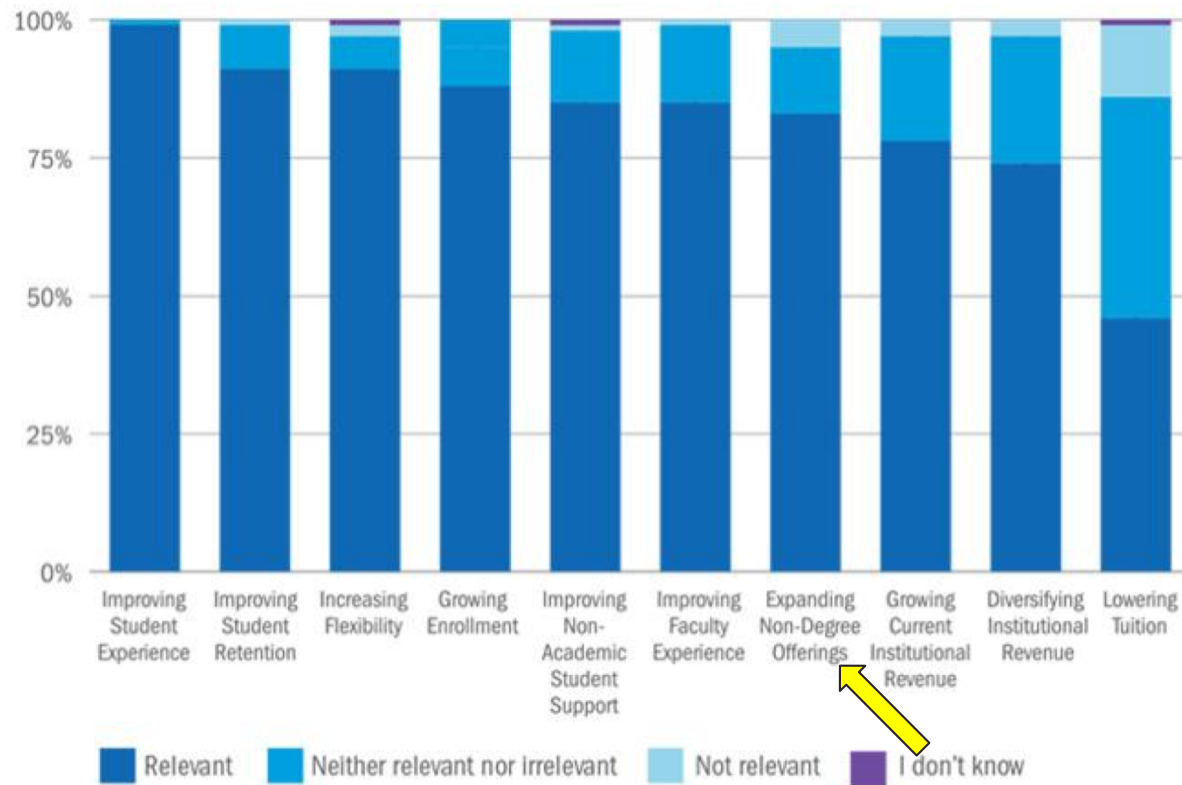
EVOLUTION OF WORK: Faster Learner Wins

- 
- 1/3 of skills in typical job posting will not be needed only four years later
 - 60% of employers expect up to half of their workforce will need retraining—or replacing—within five years
 - 42% of businesses plan to accelerate digitalization of upskilling programs and provision of technology-based learning
- **Units and pace of postsecondary learning are misaligned with need for accelerated, flexible, on-demand learning**
 - *If “fastest learner wins,” why turn to the slowest, lengthiest and most expensive alternatives?*
 - While acknowledging “lifelong learning,” very few HEIs are real partners for alumni continuous learning needs
-

CHANGING CURRENCIES OF LEARNING

- 
- Since pandemic: preference for non-degree & skills training over degree programs
 - Non-degree credential growth
 - Non-institutional providers: industry associations, global businesses (Google, Amazon, IBM), bootcamps, others offering new credentials or “currencies”
 - Intermediaries: aggregating, marketing & delivering credentials to individuals and organizations (HEI + non-HEI providers)
 - Skills (versus degrees) are the critical currency and denomination
- **HEIs no longer at top of credential hierarchy, but in a network or “ecosystem”**
 - **Roles: minting, valuation, conversion and aggregation of credentials/currencies**
 - **“Core product” challenged by flexible, short-term, skills-focused, tech-supported, non-degree certificates and microcredentials**
 - Credential innovation is critical
 - Determine: compete or partner
 - “Learning organizations” mindset
-

NGDLI Presidents' Survey: Objectives driving digital infrastructure improvements



NGDLI Presidents' Survey: Relevance of factors to digital infrastructure improvements

