Trains of Innovation to Transform the Learn and Work Ecosystem

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Credential As You Go

To Inform and facilitate the development of a nationally adopted incremental credentialing ecosystem that improves education and employment outcomes for all learners.

Digital Learn and Work Ecosystem Library

To inform folks about the US learn and work ecosystem with 3 types of content:

1) Knowledge about key components and sub-components in the ecosystem including links to other websites for further information
2) Key projects working in these areas, to improve aspects of the ecosystem
3) Networks/alliances focused on various of those components

Current 4-Tiered Degree System

- Partial degrees are not recognized – students treated as though they have no learning
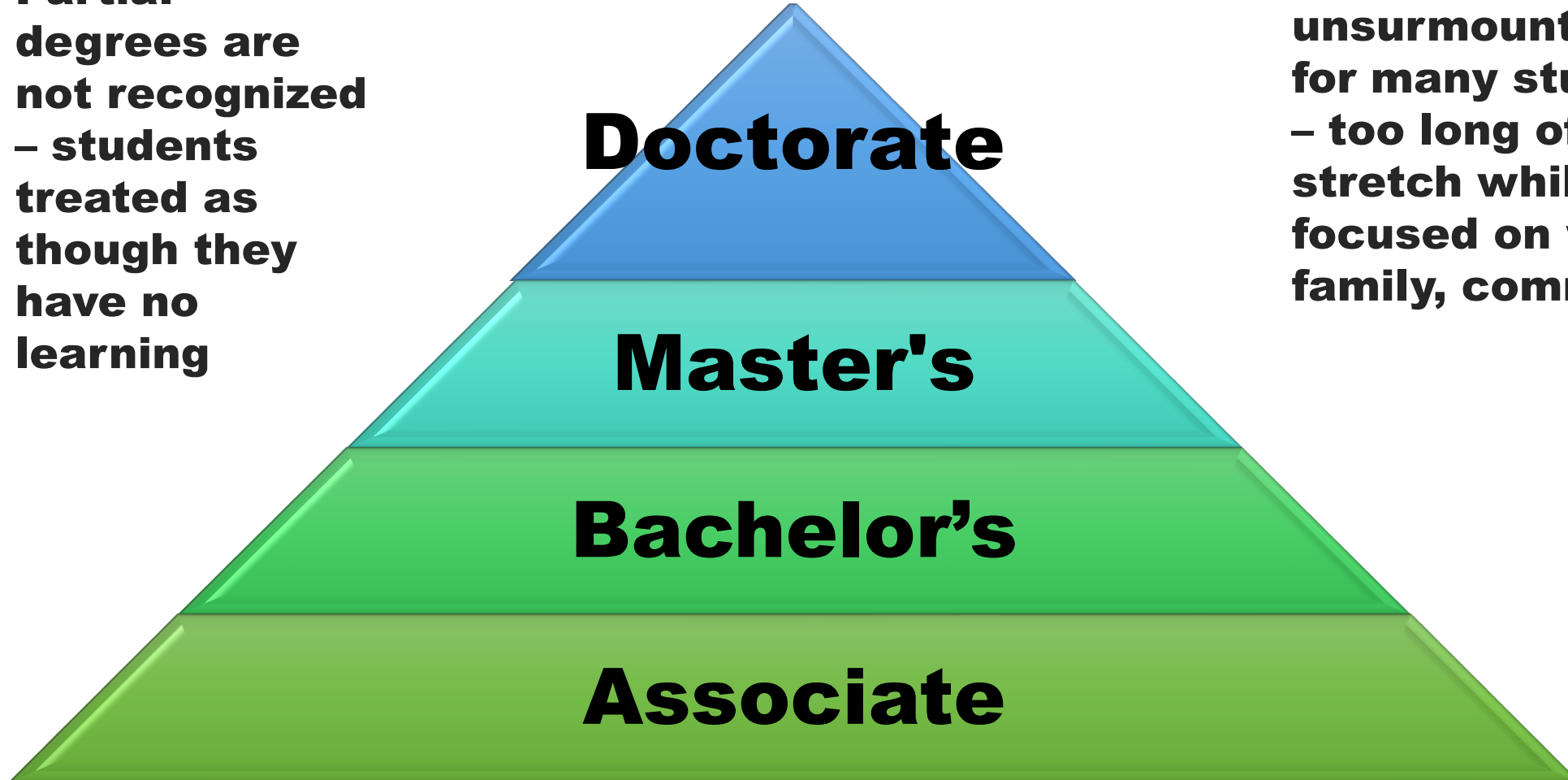
- Degree lengths unsurmountable for many students – too long of a stretch while focused on work, family, community

Doctorate

Master's

Bachelor's

Associate

CREDENTIAL AS YOU GO

Counting U.S. Postsecondary and Secondary Credentials

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Credential Engine

www.credentialengine.org

967,734 UNIQUE CREDENTIALS IN THE U.S.
16 detailed credential categories across 4 types of credential providers:

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS –
359,713 degrees and certificates

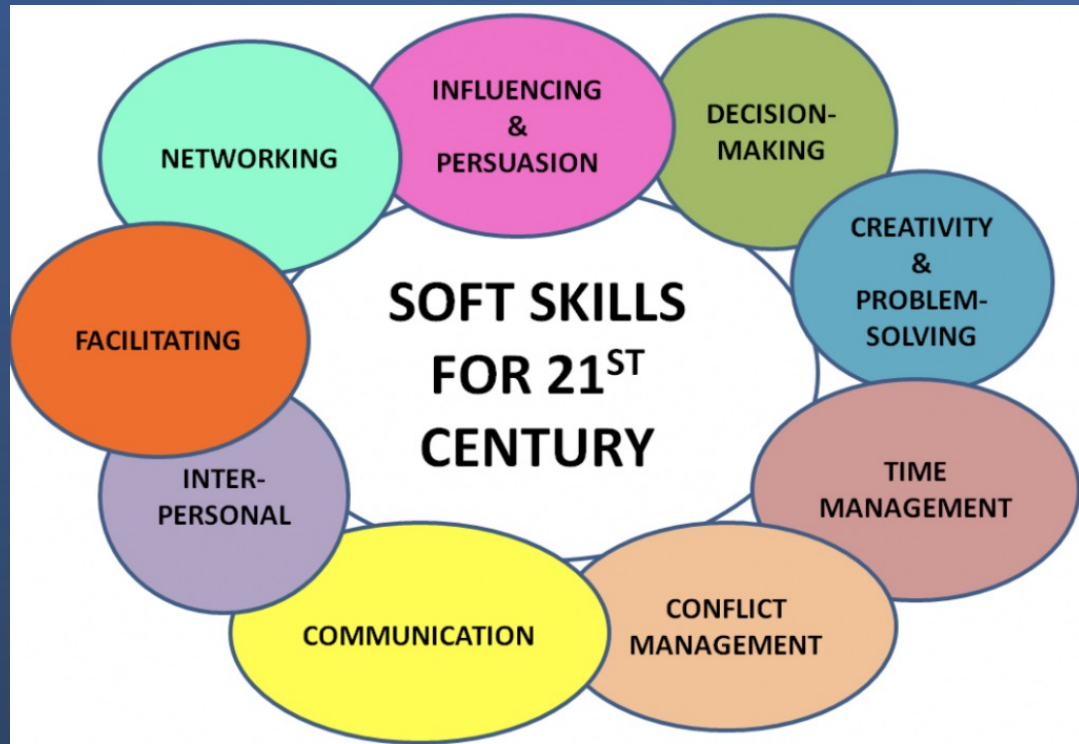**MASSIVE OPEN ONLINE COURSE (MOOC) PROVIDERS** –9,390 course completion certificates, microcredentials, online degrees from foreign universities

NON-ACADEMIC PROVIDERS –
549,712 badges, course completion certificates, licenses, certifications, apprenticeships

SECONDARY SCHOOLS –
48,919 diplomas from public/private secondary schools

SOFT SKILLS FOR 21ST CENTURY

NETWORKING

INFLUENCING & PERSUASION

DECISION-MAKING

CREATIVITY & PROBLEM-SOLVING

FACILITATING

INTER-PERSONAL

TIME MANAGEMENT

COMMUNICATION

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Stackable Credentials

Embedded certifications in degree programs

Guided Pathways

CREDENTIAL TRAINS

Digital Badges

Career & Technical Education

Apprenticeships

Reverse transfer associate degrees

QUALITY ASSURANCE TRAINS

Learning Outcomes Frameworks

Accreditation Reforms

Standards Boards

Licensing Boards

Unions

Performance Testing

Pass rates on exams to receive credentials
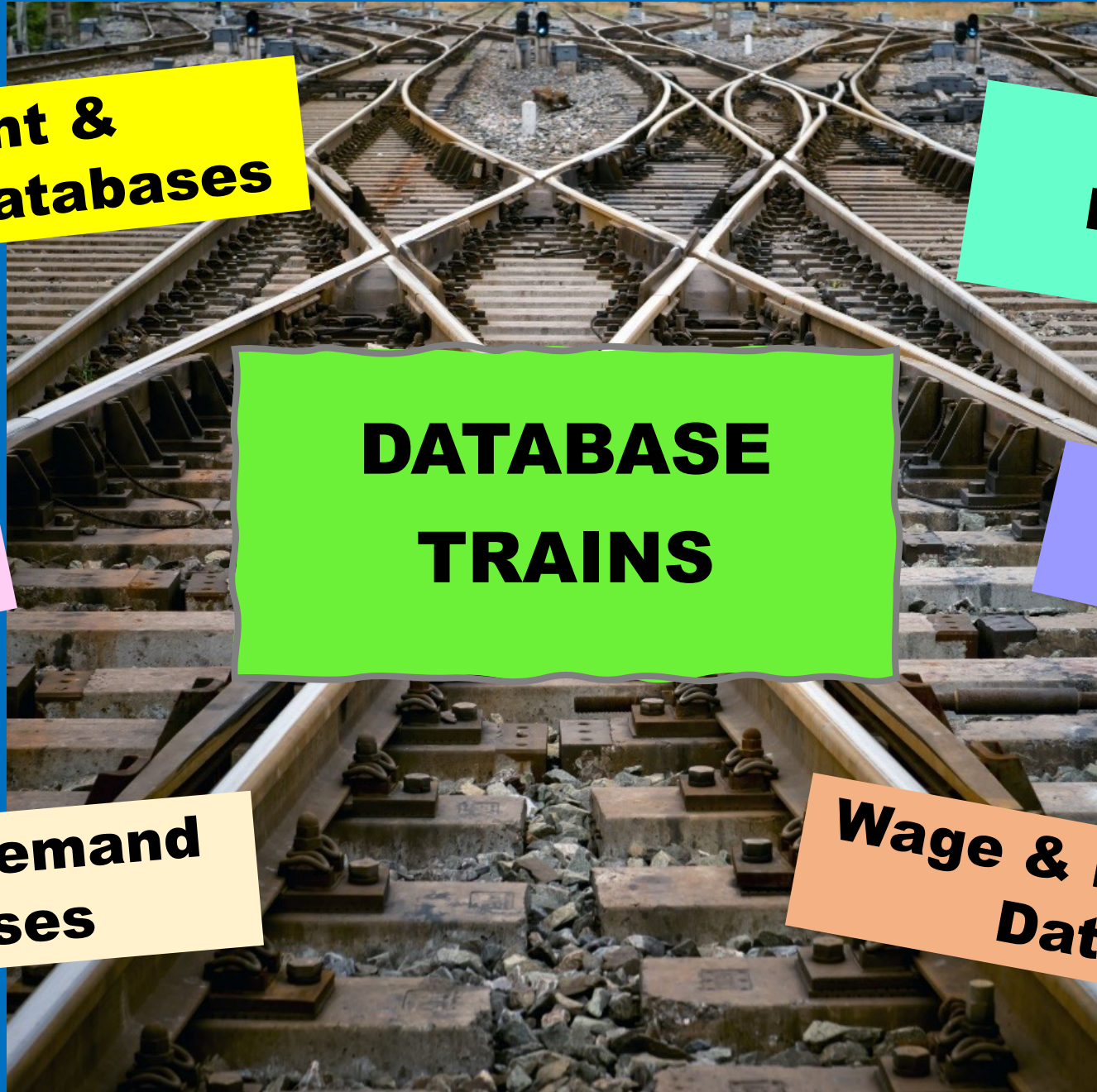
RECORD KEEPING & VERIFICATION

CARER PLANNING & NAVIGATION

POLICY & INCENTIVES

COMMUNICATIONS FOR PUBLIC & NICHE AUDIENCES

Key Areas of Learn and Work Ecosystem

❖ **Credentials & Credential Providers**
❖ **Employers**
❖ **Quality Assurance**
❖ **Databases and Research**

❖ **Record Keeping and Verifications**
❖ **Policy and Incentives (Federal, State, Local)**
❖ **Career Planning and Navigation**
❖ **Communications for Public and Nuance Audiences**

KEY STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

❖ Learners, students
❖ Policy, governmental / quasi-governmental (federal, state, local)
❖ Education & training providers: higher education institutions, state systems of higher education, independent colleges and universities, K-12 Schools
❖ Business & industry employers including workforce organizations & professional associations
❖ Accrediting and standards organizations
❖ Data and learning management industry, research organizations
❖ Direct service intermediaries and advocacy organizations
❖ International organizations
❖ Foundations, investment groups (philanthropy)
❖ Communications, media

What are Incremental Credentials?

INCREMENTAL CREDENTIALS capture learning as it is acquired along the learning pathway and formally recognizes and connects that learning to a larger context. Incremental credentials can be:
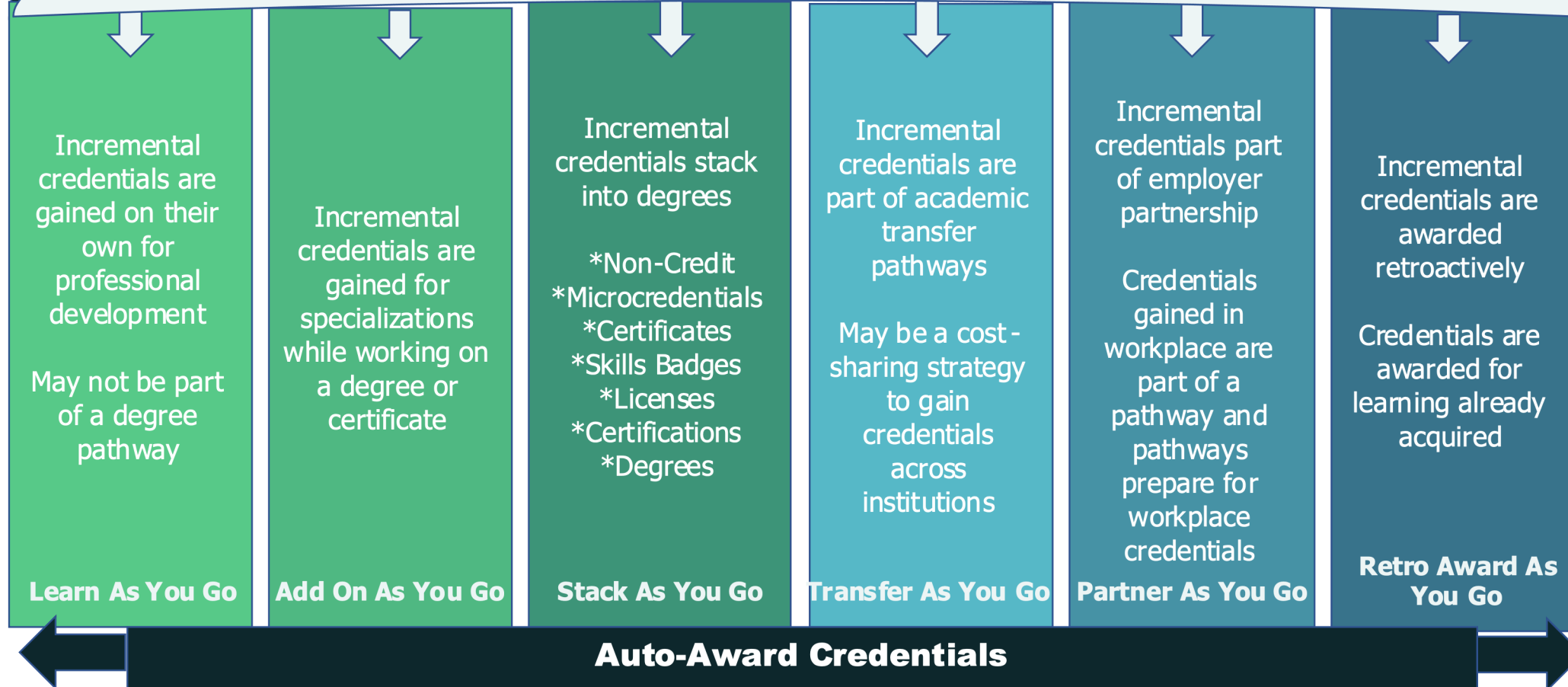
- non-credit or credit-bearing
- undergraduate or graduate
- any size, from small units of learning through degrees

PURPOSE — ensure learners are recognized for what they know and can do as they acquire their learning and not leave learners without formal documentation of that learning

Incremental Credentialing Framework

CREDENTIAL AS YOU GO

External & Prior Learning

Incremental credentials are gained on their own for professional development

May not be part of a degree pathway

Learn As You Go

Incremental credentials are gained for specializations while working on a degree or certificate

Add On As You Go

Incremental credentials stack into degrees

*Non-Credit
*Microcredentials
*Certificates
*Skills Badges
*Licenses
*Certifications
*Degrees

Stack As You Go

Incremental credentials are part of academic transfer pathways

May be a cost-sharing strategy to gain credentials across institutions

Transfer As You Go

Incremental credentials part of employer partnership

Credentials gained in workplace are part of a pathway and pathways prepare for workplace credentials

Partner As You Go

Incremental credentials are awarded retroactively

Credentials are awarded for learning already acquired
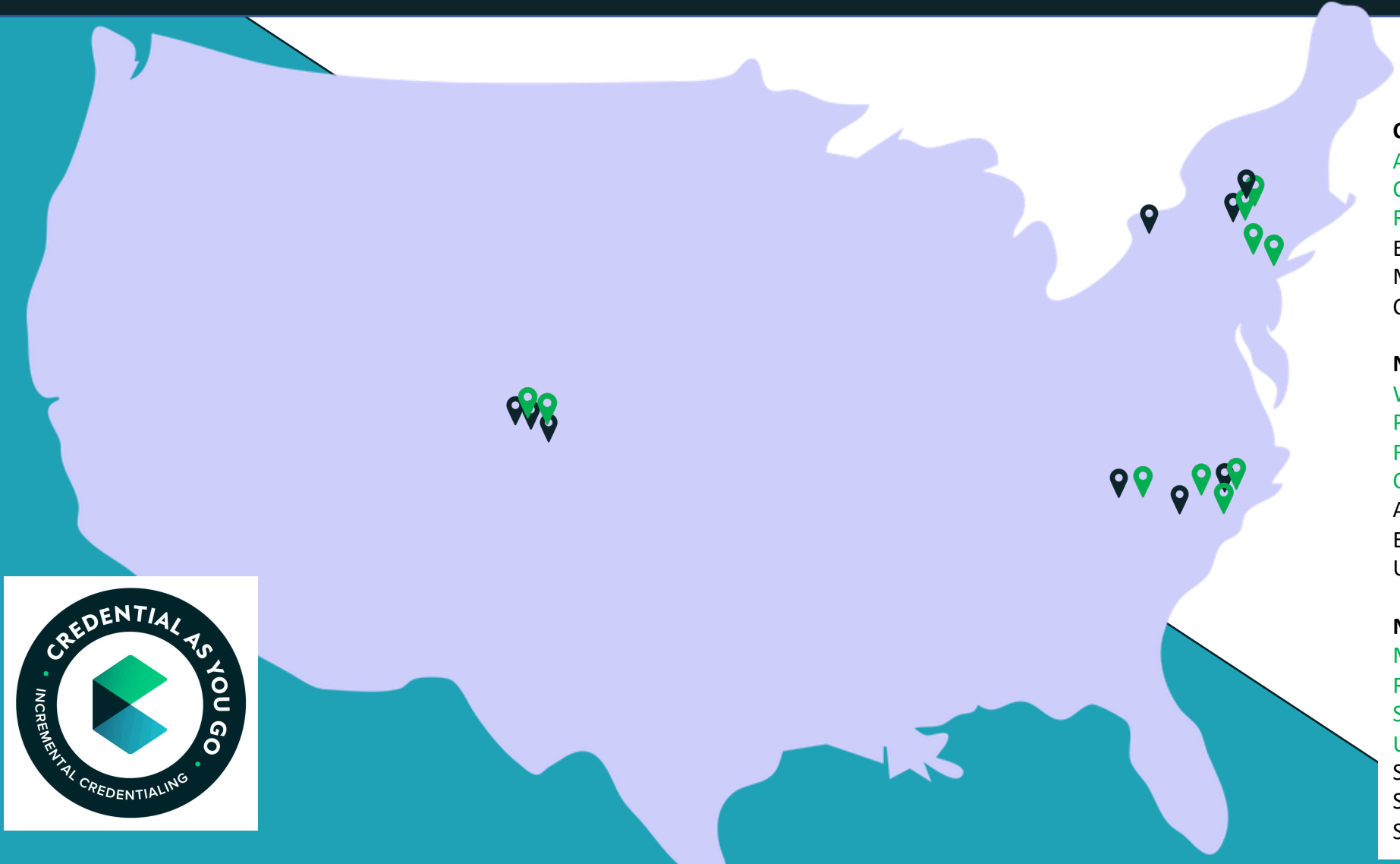
Retro Award As You Go

Auto-Award Credentials

- **Incremental credentials** through rapid prototyping
- **National campaign** to build understanding and support
- **Research** base to inform implementation
- **Training/technical assistance** to provide expert advising and tools/web resources
- **Equity and inclusion** to build fairer system (learner options without dead-ends)
- **Policy** change to support incremental credentialing
- **Trust** in quality of incremental credentials
- **Building interconnections** with related initiatives (e.g., credential transparency, learner records, competency/skills platforms, work-and-learn)

Credential As You Go Initiative

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Credential As You Go Initiative

11 Categories in Learn and Work Ecosystem
Rated by Respondents as Extremely/Very Important

- ❖ Pathways to Credentials and Career Success (93%)
- ❖ Recordkeeping and Verifications (91%)
- ❖ Employers and Workforce (91%)
- ❖ Policy and Incentives (rules, accountability, resources) (82%)
- ❖ Career Planning and Navigation (75%)
- ❖ Data, Standards, Databases, Research (75%)
- ❖ Transparency in Credentials (71%)
- ❖ Value and Quality in Credentials (70%)
- ❖ Alliances, Networks, Intermediaries (61%)
- ❖ Global/International Developments (53%)
- ❖ Understandable Ecosystem through Communications (39%)

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LOOKING FORWARD

- **Growing recognition that many microcredentials like badges and certifications are critical in our learn-and-work ecosystem, contrary to view they are "add-ons" or "nice to do"**
- **Microcredentials will become more important in certain industry sectors**
- **Many graduates, employees, and employers will not be interested in obtaining more formal credentials; rather, be focused on skill domain development and certifications**
- **Navigating the ecosystem will be more confusing, especially for students and employers**
- **More efforts to embed microcredentials into traditional degree and certificate programs**
- **More growth in microcredentialing by providers outside higher ed, adding confusion**
- **With the range of providers, growing questions around quality and value; and accreditors will pay attention to/reassess their review approaches**
- **More growth at the graduate level**
- **More R&D on who is affected by microcredentialing, especially low income, race/ethnicity, gender, and age populations**
- **Growing pressure to digitize all valuable learning onto learner education and employment records that will be portable and earned over a learner's lifetime**
- **Developments will be global, not US only**