

# **Montana's Micro Pathways: Year to Career**

**Montana Board of Regents  
September 2023**

## Ed Design Labs

### Objective

To design and promote equitable and accessible micro-pathways to high growth careers that have been endorsed by employers and made visible to learners. (Adapted from Education Design Labs)

By engaging campus leaders and campus team members with industry leaders, Montana will establish 13-20 separate Micro-Pathways across all two-year institutions.

Montana will be the first state in the country to intentionally establish micro-pathways at all two-year campuses.

## Anticipated Outcomes by Spring 2024

13-20  
Separate  
Micro-  
pathways

Development  
of Campus-  
Level  
Workforce  
Development  
Dashboards

Development  
of Campus-  
Based Roll  
Out and  
Marketing  
Plans

## Lasting and Systemwide Outcomes

System Change  
in Practice in  
Working  
Together

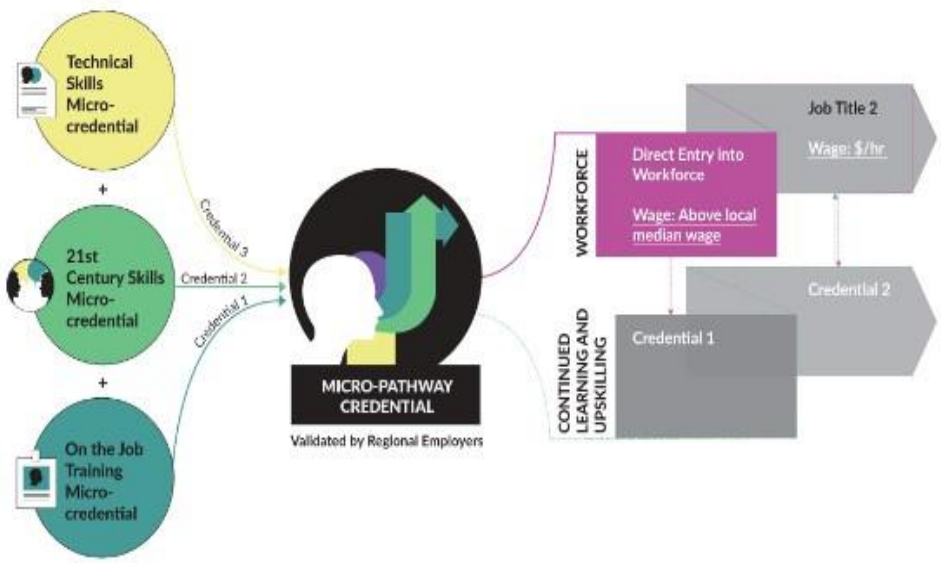
Change in  
Evaluation of  
the MUS  
Collection and  
Dissemination  
of Workforce  
Data

Working as a  
System with Ed  
Design Labs to  
Reach  
Innovative  
Outcomes

# Defining Micro-pathways

In this new time, we need a new class of credential that is more aligned to the market, designed for learner needs, and faster than traditional offerings...

**Micro-pathways:**  
 A new model to better address program **affordability, flexibility, relevance, portability, and visibility** to meet the needs of a rapidly changing knowledge economy.



## Voices and Vision of Montana's Micro-pathways

- Lisa Larson, Ph.D., Ed Design Lab, Head of Community College Growth Engine Fund
- Brian Obert, Executive Director, Montana Business Assistance Connection

## Next Steps

- Starting September 26- Pre-Design/Design of Micro-Pathways
- Ed Design Labs Presentation at Future at Work Summit
- Continued engagement with economic and workforce development partners at the local and state level
- Establish data dashboards
- Micro-Pathway Roll Out and Marketing Spring 2024

## **For More Information:**

Please contact Angela McLean at [amclean@montana.edu](mailto:amclean@montana.edu)





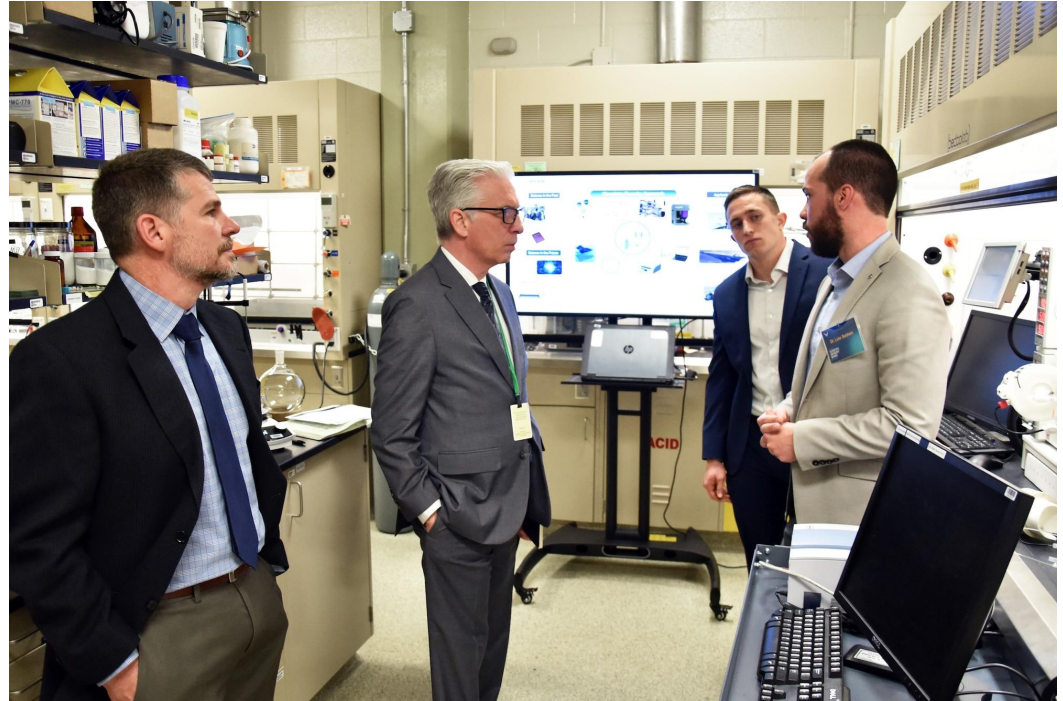
# The Community College Growth Engine Program

#Micropathways

Education Design Lab

# Designing Education to the Future of Work

- The Great Decline
- The Great Unknown
- The Great Unbundling



# Together, We Must Demonstrate **Three** Proof Points:

1. Community colleges can be drivers of employment solutions.
2. Employers and learner/earners will see that value proposition.
3. **Designing new credentials - MICRO-PATHWAYS** can be a “gateway” to broader transformation for colleges.

## The “Design Accelerator” Question

---

**How might we design equitable and accessible micro-pathways toward high-growth careers endorsed by employers and visible to learners moving from post-secondary education into the workforce?**

# Key Employer Strategies

- Foster symbiotic partnerships with employers
- Emphasize collaboration with entire sectors
- Cultivate a workforce readiness mindset that extends to the institution(s) and employer(s)
- Maintain effective communication and momentum
- Prioritize data driven decisions to drive quality

# Thank You!

To learn more about the Education Design Lab  
and to sign up for our Innovator Network,  
please visit [eddesignlab.org](https://eddesignlab.org)

 @eddesignlab  
 Education Design Lab  
 [connect@eddesignlab.org](mailto:connect@eddesignlab.org)

Lisa Larson, Ed.D.  
[llarson@eddesignlab.org](mailto:llarson@eddesignlab.org)

Rachel Kahn  
[rkahn@eddesignlab.org](mailto:rkahn@eddesignlab.org)