

LinkedCreds

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This presentation introduced LinkedCreds, an open-source software tool developed through the United States Chamber of Commerce Foundation's T3 Innovation Network to address persistent gaps in the recognition of skills within learning and employment ecosystems. Positioned within the All Skills Count initiative (allskillscount.org), the work emphasized that skills developed through any life pathway—formal, informal, or experiential—should be visible and valued in skills-based hiring and advancement. The session highlighted how LinkedCreds empowered individuals to document, describe, and seek validation for skills that were rarely captured by traditional credentials.

The presentation described the broader context of the T3 Innovation Network, established in 2018 to support experimentation with digital credentials, learning and employment records (LERs), and open standards. While earlier efforts focused on exploratory working groups, the network had shifted toward producing deployable, open-source tools for employers and learners. LinkedCreds was presented alongside related projects, including LinkedCreds for Business and the Resume Author tool, which leveraged the Learning and Employment Record Resume Standard (LERRS) developed by HR Open.

LinkedCreds was explained as a two-stage workflow. First, individuals self-issued skill credentials by naming the skill, describing how it was acquired, and attaching evidence such as files, links, or videos. Second, learners could request endorsements from peers, supervisors, or mentors who had observed or supported their skill development. These endorsers reviewed the self-claimed credential, documented their qualifications to validate the skill, and digitally signed a recommendation that became attached to the learner's credential. This endorsement process was framed as a mechanism to increase trust while preserving learner ownership and privacy.

The presentation argued that self-recognition was a necessary response to the reality that the vast majority of skills—well over 99 percent—were not formally recognized by digital credentials. Examples such as workplace-acquired barista skills illustrated how LinkedCreds supported meaningful documentation of skills learned on the job, where formal credentials were uncommon or nonexistent.

Beyond individual use, the session explored applications of LinkedCreds within business contexts, including employment verification, recognition of work beyond core job duties, performance reviews, skill documentation, and identity verification. For small businesses, LinkedCreds for Business offered guided workflows tailored to these use cases.

In conclusion, the presentation positioned LinkedCreds as a practical bridge between institutional credentialing systems and the full range of skills people actually possessed. By combining self-documentation, peer endorsement, and open standards, the tool contributed to more inclusive, skills-forward hiring and advancement practices while reinforcing learner control over their own data.

Keywords: LinkedCreds, self-issued credentials, skills-based hiring, learning and employment records (LERs), peer endorsement