

Guiding Principles for a New Learning Ecosystem

For all people to thrive in the work of the future, they will need communities and stakeholders to mobilize differently and work together to design a new learning ecosystem, centered on the needs and experiences of working learners. At Strada, we believe that any new learning ecosystem must be based on these **five** guiding principles:

- **NAVIGABLE.** People need a bird's-eye view of the current and future job market, including all of the career pathways open to them based on their interests, skills, past training, and experiences. **Navigation** will give adults better information to guide them through complex systems, and better assessments to help them make sense of their skills and experience and figure out how to translate and transfer their capabilities into better jobs.
- **SUPPORTIVE.** To stay focused on their education and career goals, learners need comprehensive **wraparound supports**, be they person-to-person or tech enabled, to help them overcome hurdles and manage multiple commitments and competing priorities. Better support services will foster the success of all working learners, from the beginning of their explorations all the way through their new working lives and subsequent career transitions.
- **TARGETED.** Learners need access to **targeted education** tailored to their needs: the right skills, the right pathways, at the right time. They also need to know that the education they choose will be worth the investment—and clearly signal value to a prospective employer. More precise and relevant learning experiences must not only provide the knowledge but also the human and technical skills, professional networks, and hands-on practice that equip learners to be ready to work.
- **INTEGRATED.** Working learners need the time, the funding, the confidence, and the resources to juggle education and training *on top of* their existing responsibilities. **Integrated earning and learning** will reduce education friction and make advancement achievable by offering better funding options, new opportunities to incorporate learning and work, and, ideally, more portable benefits.
- **TRANSPARENT.** The hiring process must be unbiased, open, and fair, enabling job seekers to prove their competence and skills. When skills become the primary currency of the job market, credential or degree requirements will no longer overlook qualified job seekers. Ultimately, **transparent hiring** will reduce credential bias and better connect companies to more diverse candidates who have proven they have what it takes for the work ahead.

To serve people better, a new learning ecosystem will require a more robust **data infrastructure** to strengthen connections between learners, employers, learning providers, funders, and policymakers in any given community. An improved and more integrated data infrastructure will not only create a shared language, but it will also empower groups to move toward a common vision and integrate resources, solutions, and services to make each step along the working learner's journey a seamless experience.

With no end in sight for the rapid changes in work ahead, we cannot continue to innovate in silos or piece together fragmented resources or unscalable solutions that address only one aspect of the ecosystem. A new learning ecosystem must pull together all five of these core principles to ensure that working learners' time and resources are spent making measurable progress toward their next career goal, rather than staying stuck, guessing at limited options or taking unwanted detours down dead-end paths. No matter how an individual moves through an ecosystem, the goal is the same — to help working learners discover a stronger sense of purpose and personal thriving through better or more meaningful work.

