



# ENSURING EQUITABLE ACCESS & MAXIMIZING PARTNERSHIP POTENTIAL



## ADULT EDUCATION INNOVATION

DESIGN LAB

WORKSHOP 2




# Who's TalentFirst?

## Unmatched Collaboration for Regional Impact




### About TalentFirst

TalentFirst is a CEO alliance providing leadership on today's complex talent challenges. We rely on data and expertise to illuminate gaps, evaluate strategies, and advocate for solutions to attract, retain, and develop the talent West Michigan employers need and to ensure all individuals and the region can thrive.









### Our Goals

-  Grow the labor force
-  Improve knowledge and skills
-  Expand economic opportunity

### Our Strategies

-  P-20 Education
-  Workforce Development
-  Employer Strategies

### Our Impact

-  **31,000+** kids ages 0-8 now get books when they see their doctor
-  **1000+** business leaders & decision-makers received our insights & solutions
-  **1000+** of our Talent Solutions Playbooks distributed & downloaded
-  **250+** downloads of our reports & strategies
-  **200+** K-12 educators collaborated with us to expand career education
-  **200+** HR leaders used our employer talent strategies
-  **10** bills signed in to law — childcare (8), workforce training & education (2)
-  **1** Executive Order to make State investments in education & training

## Next Workshop

Leveraging Data to  
Identify Gaps & Evaluate  
Success

July 2, 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM  
Oakland Community College -  
Auburn Hills Campus

Register Now





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# Table of contents

- 02** Event Agenda  
Design Lab Workshop 2
- 03** Section 107a  
Adult Education Innovation Program
- 05** Design Lab  
Adult Education Innovation
- 07** Meet Your Coaches  
Public Policy Associates
- 08** Service Deserts in Michigan
- 10** Building & Maintaining Effective Partnerships
- 12** High-Quality MOUs
- 13** Asset Mapping







# Section 107a

## Adult Education Innovation Program

**Applications are due by 11:59 p.m. on August 6, 2024, in NexSys (Next Generation Grant, Application and Cash Management).**

The Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity, Workforce Development (LEO-WD) is pleased to announce the release of this Request for Proposals (RFP) to support innovative approaches that lead to **increased participant enrollment, retention, and completion of adult education programming**. This funding opportunity was made possible by a \$15 million investment in Section 107a of the State School Aid Act (Public Act 320 of 2023). The purpose of the funding is to **pilot evidence-based and scalable innovations** to equitably and effectively serve adult learners, **including adults without a high school diploma or equivalency and English language learners**. The innovation funding is intended to complement the additional \$10 million allocated to increase capacity and strengthen the adult education system under Section 107 of the State School Aid Act.

The innovations may include, but are not limited to, synchronous and asynchronous program delivery, wraparound supports for participants, alignment between adult education services and postsecondary education, colocation with Michigan Works! or community colleges, and high-quality professional development for adult education staff. **The applicant must demonstrate how the proposed innovation builds off existing research and best practices to support achievement of the defined goals.**

### Must Align with LEO-WD Priorities

The innovation programs should align with the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity, Workforce Development (LEO-WD) priorities:

- ▶ Expand **access** to adult education services.
- ▶ Ensure **equity** in the delivery of services.
- ▶ Ensure services are **high-quality** and utilize **best practices** and **evidence-based** research.
- ▶ Build **equitable career pathways** to high-wage careers.
- ▶ Increase the number of adults in Michigan with a **postsecondary credential**.

### Who's Eligible?

Eligible applicants include **adult education providers and community colleges funded under Section 107** with demonstrated experience serving adult learners. **Adult education providers that are not a school district, intermediate school district, or community college must apply in partnership with an eligible fiscal agent** for their application to be considered. The fiscal agent may not use more than 5% of the total award for administration costs for serving as the fiscal agent.

If multiple eligible adult education providers choose to collaborate in the development of a program, **a single application would be submitted in NexSys**. The entity submitting the application would act as the grant contact and fiscal agent, and would be responsible for submitting all deliverables.

# Section 107a

## Adult Education Innovation Program

### Grant Purpose and Funding

The purpose of the funding is to pilot **evidence-based and scalable innovations** to equitably and effectively serve adult learners, **including adults without a high school diploma or equivalency and English language learners.**

**Applicants are encouraged to partner with other entities and organizations,** as appropriate. Recommended partners include, but are not limited to, other adult education providers in the community or region, school districts, postsecondary education institutions, workforce agencies, community organizations, and employers.

Program activities/services must be provided within the geographic boundaries of the prosperity regions identified in the grant application.

**Programs cannot replicate services/activities/costs already being provided for under Section 107 of the State School Aid Act nor under the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act.**

**Funding Period: September 1, 2024 – June 30, 2026**

**August 06, 2024**

**Application Submission Deadline**

(by 11:59 PM on August 6, 2024)

**August 29, 2024**

**Applicants Notified**

Applicants notified of approval/denial determinations

**October 20, 2024 -  
August 20, 2026**

**State Aid Payments**

Fiscal Agent - LEA or ISD: 1/11th on the 20th of each month

Fiscal Agent - Community College: Payment method to be determined

**August 29, 2025**

**Interim Reporting**

Interim financial and program reporting in NexSys

**November 01, 2025**

**Financial Reporting**

Fiscal agents and regional providers are required to enter all Section 107a revenue and final expenditure information into the Financial Information Database

**August 29, 2026**

**Final Reporting**

Final Report due in NexSys (Participant/Performance, Final Expenditures, and Narrative Report)

**November 1, 2026**

**Financial Reporting**

Fiscal agents and regional providers are required to enter all Section 107a revenue and final expenditure information into the Financial Information Database



**Scan to learn more  
about the grant  
opportunity.**



# ADULT EDUCATION INNOVATION DESIGN LAB

## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE?

The Adult Education Innovation Design Lab will assist interested applicants in developing high-quality, competitive proposals for the Section 107a RFP that will result in sustainable and scalable innovations that improve enrollment in, and completion of, adult education programs.

The Design Lab will provide the capacity and technical expertise necessary to help interested applicants design innovative programs and develop competitive proposals for the RFP.

## WHAT IS IT?

The 2-month design sprint includes:



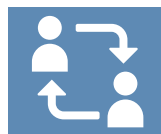
### 4 Workshops

Address each element of your application with technical support and resources from our workshops.



### 4 Coaching Sessions

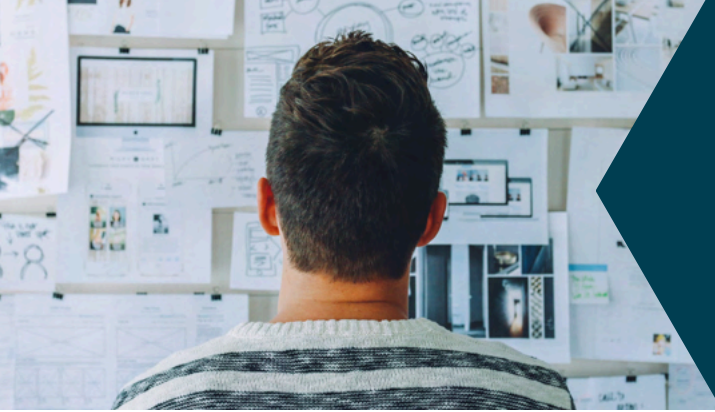
Develop and refine your proposal with individualized coaching from Public Policy Associates.



### Peer-to-Peer Learning

Collaborate, partner, and learn from other practitioners across the nation.





# ADULT EDUCATION INNOVATION DESIGN LAB

## WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

- 6/11** **Workshop 1**  
Addressing the Whole Learner  
Lansing, MI
- 6/18** **Workshop 2**  
Ensuring Equitable Access &  
Maximizing Partnership  
Potential  
Grand Rapids, MI
- 7/02** **Workshop 3**  
Leveraging Data to Identify  
Gaps & Evaluate Success  
Detroit, MI
- 7/17** **Workshop 4**  
Mitigating Risk & Sustaining  
Change  
Mount Pleasant, MI

Individualized coaching will be available to applicants between each workshop.

SCAN TO SIGN UP  
FOR COACHING



## YOUR GOALS

To complete the 107a Design Lab process, and subsequently develop a proposal to be considered by LEO-WD for a Section 107a grant, each applicant will work with TalentFirst and Public Policy Associates to complete the following elements during the 2-month planning process:

- 1 Needs Assessment**  
Quantify the size of your adult learner population, evaluate your program data to identify gaps and barriers experienced by your learners.
- 2 Asset Map**  
Detail local resources and potential partners in your community that you could leverage to enhance your proposed innovation.
- 3 Work Plan**  
Review your plan to evaluate and improve your current delivery mechanism to achieve higher enrollment and completion rates, including plans to mitigate risk and scale your innovation.
- 4 Success Measures**  
Articulate a clear vision of success with metrics to capture how your innovation will improve employment, education, and/or quality of life for participants.
- 5 Sustainability Plan**  
Develop a clear and realistic plan to sustain your innovation after grant funds exhaust in 2026.





# Meet Your Coaches



All Design Lab teams will have access to (4) 1-hour virtual coaching session with Public Policy Associates following each of our 4 workshops. Coaches will provide technical assistance and advice to help you design your innovation and develop a competitive proposal.



**Suniya Farooqui**  
Senior Research Associate

Ms. Farooqui is an experienced researcher and program evaluator specializing in mixed-methods research, quantitative analysis, survey design, and community-based participatory research.



**MaryBeth Talbot**  
Project Manager

Dr. Talbot excels in experimental and survey designs, quantitative analysis, and mixed-methods approaches. She is skilled in identifying implicit and explicit bias and dedicated to promoting equity.



**Colleen Graber**  
Chief Operating Officer

Ms. Graber is a skilled facilitator, researcher, and manager specializing in education, workforce development, and equity. She excels in qualitative research, evaluation, and strategic planning.



**Dirk Zuschlag**  
Senior Research Associate

Dr. Zuschlag contributes extensive expertise in law, teaching, and research to education and workforce development projects. He excels in qualitative research.



**Rob Linden**  
Affiliated Consultant

Dr. Linden brings extensive experience in higher education research and analysis, as well as a strong background in data and grant management.



**Meg Chamberlain**  
Affiliated Consultant

Dr. Chamberlain brings a wealth of experience in research and analysis and is especially adept at transforming complex data into actionable frameworks.

## Reserve Time During Each Coaching Cycle

Design Lab participants, or teams, will be asked to reserve a 1-hour slot during each of the 4 coaching cycles outlined below. Participants will have one week after each workshop to complete their coaching. It is recommended, but not required, for all partners to attend coaching if submitting a joint proposal.

**Cycle 1**

June 12 - June 17

**Cycle 2**

June 19 - July 1

**Cycle 3**

July 3 - July 16

**Cycle 3**

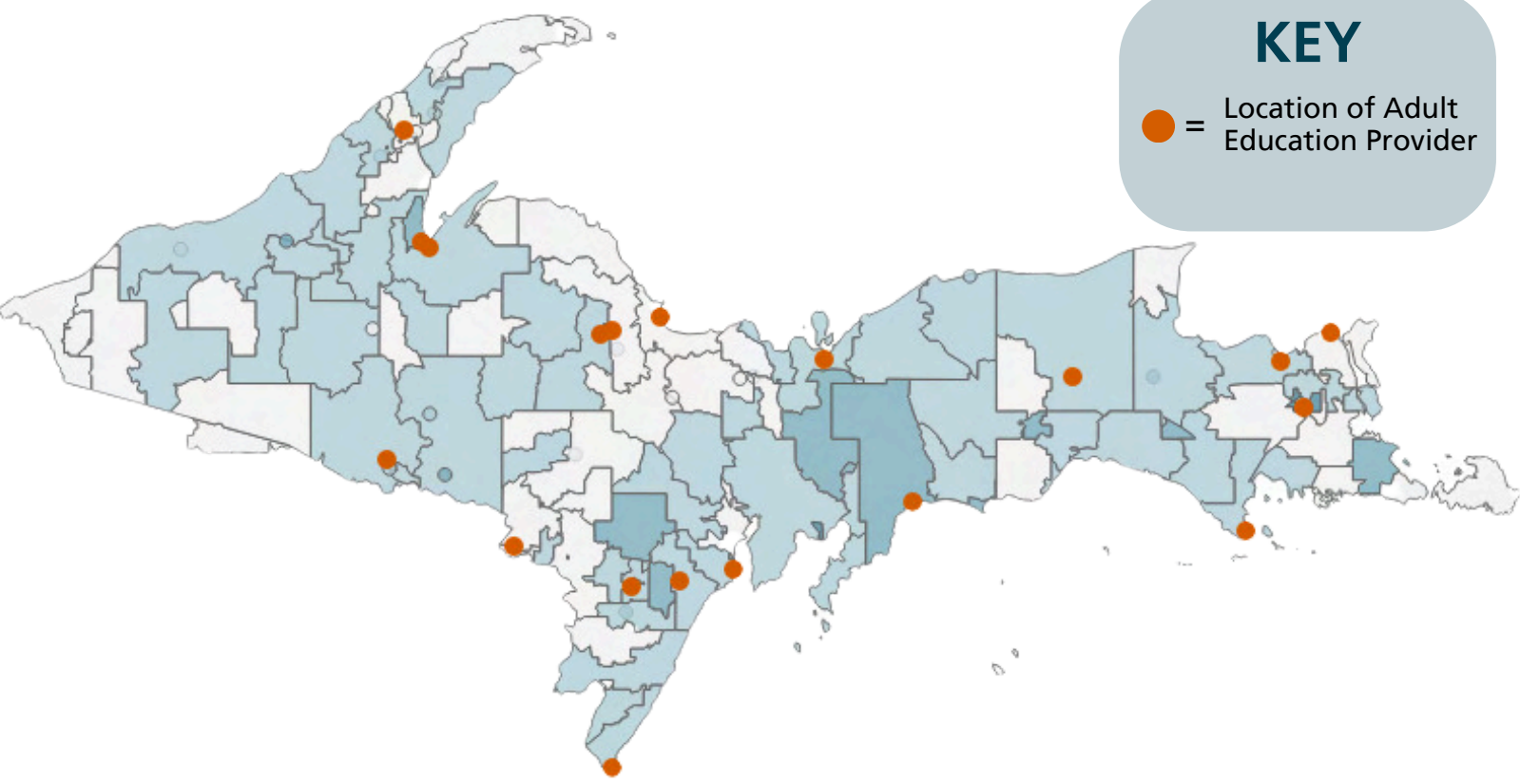
July 18 - July 26


# Service Deserts in the Upper Peninsula



## KEY

● = Location of Adult Education Provider



Percentage of the Population (18+) with No High School Diploma (or equivalent)  
0.0%  43.0%

**The darker the ZIP code,  
the greater the need.**

*Note: Only providers who received WIOA Title II or Section 107 are shown.*

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, 2022*

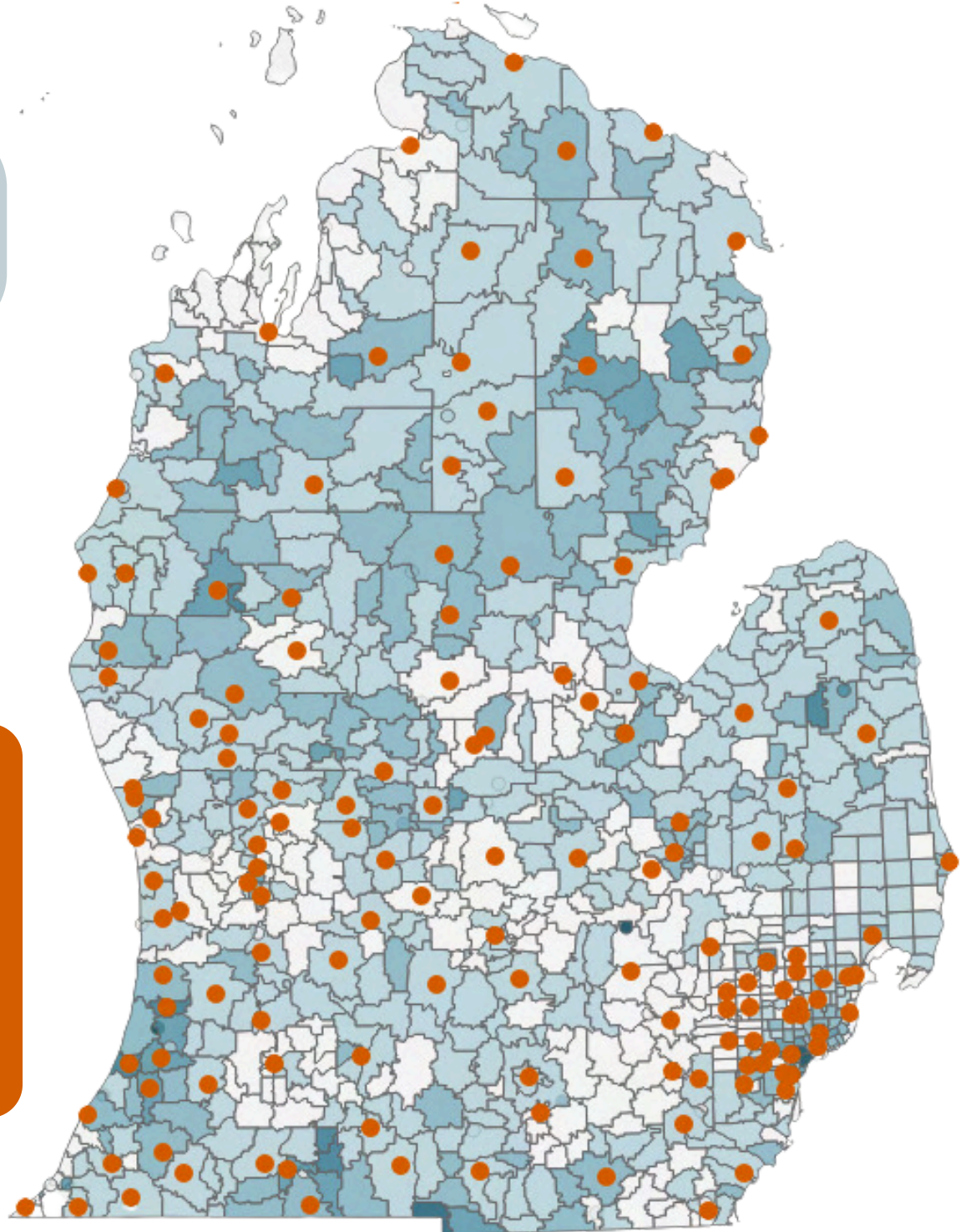


# Service Deserts in the Lower Peninsula

## KEY

● = Location of Adult Education Provider

SCAN TO ACCESS THE INTERACTIVE MAP



Percentage of the Population (18+) with No High School Diploma (or equivalent)

0.0%  43.0%



# Keys to Building and Maintaining Effective Partnerships

## POTENTIAL PARTNERS TO CONSIDER



Local Employers



School Districts



Workforce Agencies



Other Providers



Supportive Service Agencies



Postsecondary Institutions



Libraries



Community Organizations

## CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS



### Shared Vision and Goals



Partners are aligned on a shared vision with clear goals, and understand each other's missions, values, and objectives.

### Clear Communication



The partnership prioritizes open communication and has regular meetings to share progress updates, feedback, and address concerns.

### Defined Roles & Responsibilities



The partnership has formal agreements or MOUs in place that clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each partner.

### Collaboration & Co-Creation



All partners actively contribute ideas, resources, knowledge, and expertise to assist in the planning and execution of the innovation.

### Flexibility & Adaptability



All partners share a willingness to adapt strategies and approaches based on feedback and changing circumstances.

### Sustained Commitments



Partners prioritize sustained impact over short-term gains, offering ongoing support and investment to achieve the shared goals.

# Keys to Building and Maintaining Effective Partnerships

## ACTION STEPS



1

### IDENTIFY AND ENGAGE POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Conduct a thorough analysis of local businesses, community organizations, educational institutions, and other potential partners with a common interest in adult education. Host introductory meetings to explore mutual goals, interests and potential areas for collaboration.

2

### DEFINE SHARED GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Find areas where each organization's mission, values, and goals overlap. Once you've established shared goals, define clear and mutually beneficial objectives for the partnership. Align on the set of outcomes you're striving to achieve for learners, partners, and the community.

3

### CLARIFY ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Clearly define each partner's roles and responsibilities in achieving the desired outcomes of your partnership. Develop a detailed timeline so each partner understands when and how they will engage. Create a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to formalize these commitments and deadlines.

4

### ESTABLISH COMMUNICATION & COLLABORATION CHANNELS

Establish protocols to ensure partners are aligned on which channels you will use for information sharing, and set expectations regarding the cadence of communications. Use a variety of channels to enhance collaboration by enabling task tracking, daily communications, or formal updates.

5

### SUSTAIN AND EVOLVE THE PARTNERSHIP

Develop a feedback mechanism to continually gather feedback from all stakeholders, including participants, that you can use to identify areas for improvement and success. Recognize and celebrate the achievements and contributions of partners often, while working to address identified gaps.

# Developing a High-Quality Memorandum of Understanding

## WHAT

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is a formal agreement between two or more parties that outlines the terms and details of a mutual understanding or partnership. Unlike a legally binding contract, an MOU is typically not enforceable in a court of law, but it serves as a **written record of the intentions, expectations, and responsibilities of the parties involved**. MOUs are commonly used in various sectors, including business, government, education, and nonprofit organizations, to establish collaborative efforts.

## COMPONENTS OF A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

### 1 Introduction & Purpose

Describe the context and purpose of the MOU by outlining why the parties are coming together and what they aim to achieve.

### 2 Parties Involved

Identify all parties entering into the agreement, including their names, titles, and organizations.

### 3 Scope of Work

Detail the specific activities, projects, or initiatives the parties will collaborate on.

### 4 Roles & Responsibilities

Clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each party, including who's responsible for which tasks.

### 5 Duration & Timeline

Specify the duration of the MOU and include any important timelines or key project milestones.

### 6 Funding & Resources

Outline any financial contributions, resources, or support each party will provide.

### 7 Confidentiality

Address any confidentiality requirements related to the information shared during the partnership.

### 8 Communication & Coordination

Establish how the parties will communicate and coordinate their efforts, including regular meetings.

### 9 Dispute Resolution

Provide a mechanism to resolve any disputes that may arise during the collaboration.

### 10 Signatures

Include the signatures of all parties to indicate their agreement to the terms outlined in the MOU.



# Asset Mapping

## WHAT

**Asset mapping** is a systematic process used to identify and catalog the physical, economic, social, and cultural resources in a community. This exercise helps you understand available resources and how they can be leveraged to support the proposed goals of your initiative.

## BENEFITS



### Comprehensive Resource Identification

Provides a detailed inventory of resources available in your community that can be used to ensure you effectively leverage existing assets.



### Strategic Partnerships and Collaboration

Identifies potential partners in your community that can provide additional resources, expertise, and support to strengthen your innovation.



### Identify Gaps and Opportunities

Allows you to identify specific areas where resources are lacking, which can be addressed through targeted interventions or additional funding.



### Identify Regional Strengths

Uncover specific areas where your region excels or existing initiatives in your community that could be leveraged to enhance your innovation.

## ASSET CATEGORIES



### Individual

Skills, talents, and experiences of adult learners and educators.



### Institutional

Educational institutions, training centers, libraries, and organizations offering educational opportunities.



### Physical

Classrooms, computer labs, community centers, and other educational facilities.



### Economic

Scholarships, funding opportunities, philanthropic organizations, and local businesses who invest in adult education.



### Cultural

Heritage, traditions, arts, and cultural institutions that can enrich the educational experience.



### Social

Networks, associations, and community groups that can support adult learners.

## HOW

1

### Define Scope

Define the geographical or organizational boundaries of the mapping process.

2

### Engage Stakeholders

Recruit community members, organizations, and relevant stakeholders to participate.

3

### Collect Data

Use surveys, interviews, focus groups, and observations to gather information.

4

### Catalogue Assets

Compile a comprehensive list of assets and organize based on relevant categories.

5

### Analyze and Interpret

Identify patterns, strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities within the inventory. Assess current utilization and potential of each.

6

### Create Asset Map

Develop visual representations of the asset inventory, ensure they're clear and accessible.



Vision. Insights. Solutions.



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