

Making the Invisible Visible: Increasing Microcredential Awareness

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Microcredentials are gaining traction as a way to recognize skills and competencies, yet many learners remain unaware of their existence or how to leverage them effectively. Low awareness results in reduced claim rates, missed opportunities for learners, and diminished impact for institutions and employers. Even well-designed credentialing initiatives can struggle when recognition is not embedded clearly within the learner experience.

This interactive workshop addressed a critical but often overlooked challenge: how to effectively communicate the value of microcredentials to learners and other stakeholders. Rather than focusing on issuance alone, the session explored how awareness can be intentionally designed across the learner journey.

In this workshop, participants engaged in a structured, hands-on process to identify awareness gaps within their own contexts, whether in higher education, workplace training, or informal learning environments. Through guided mapping activities, small groups analyzed where learners currently encounter credentials, where communication breaks down, and where opportunities for visibility are missed.

The workshop then moved into practical message design. Participants prototyped concise and compelling communications tailored to different stakeholders, including learners, educators, and employers. Using simple tools and templates, groups tested language that makes credentials relevant, valuable, and actionable. Rapid feedback cycles allowed participants to refine their messaging in real time.

In the final phase, groups developed a quick communication prototype, such as a learner-facing notification, a staff awareness guide, a social media message, or a learning management system announcement. Peer review and reflection helped participants translate ideas into strategies that can be implemented immediately.

By the end of the session, participants left with a clear action plan to improve microcredential visibility within their institutions, workplaces, or communities. The workshop emphasized that awareness is foundational to accessibility. If learners do not know they are earning a credential, they cannot claim or use it. Embedding awareness into existing credentialing ecosystems strengthens engagement, improves sustainability, and supports recognition across formal, non-formal, and informal learning contexts. This session positioned awareness not as marketing, but as infrastructure for equitable and scalable recognition.

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