

# THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

## Administration

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### Digital Platform Seeks to Match Employers, Job Seekers, and Courses

*By Meg Bernhard*

For Americans who don't graduate from college with a four-year degree, finding employment can be difficult. But a new partnership between a foundation, big-name companies, and colleges hopes to make the job search easier.

The collaborators — which include LinkedIn, Arizona State University, edX, the Markle Foundation, the State of Colorado, and a number of employers in Phoenix and Colorado — hope to better prepare workers for jobs in today's rapidly evolving labor market. Their initiative, [Rework America Connected](#), focuses primarily on "middle skill" workers, including people who have two-year degrees or did not attend college.

Zoë Baird, Markle's president and chief executive, said the project was still in its early planning phases and did not yet have a set design or appearance. But the main idea is that collaborators will pool their resources to connect job seekers with employers and to offer job seekers the chance to enroll in college programs or classes if their credentials don't yet meet employers' needs.

[Michael M. Crow](#), president of Arizona State, said in an interview on Tuesday that job seekers and employers alike would be able to use the platform as a sort of search engine; they could search for potential employers, and employers could find prospective employees with specific skills their companies needed. If someone seeking a job did not have the skills an employer was looking for, the Rework America Connected platform might connect them to community colleges or universities that could offer them the verifiable credentials or degrees they needed.

In short, Ms. Baird said, the platform would "enable people to find

the information they need when they need it."

LinkedIn, she said, would "provide people with information about what employers are looking for" in terms of skills or experiences. Arizona State would provide pathways for enrollment in its courses, and Estrella Mountain Community College — part of the Maricopa Community College system, another partner — would offer cybersecurity courses to anyone interested in that field. The leaders of the collaborative hope to expand it to a number of other colleges and regions, leaders say, but for now, they're testing the platform in just two places, Phoenix and the State of Colorado.

Both Ms. Baird and Mr. Crow said that Rework America Connected would allow employees to gain knowledge and develop skills that they could use in the future, not only for one job.


"This is intended to work with people to navigate their careers throughout their lives," Ms. Baird said.


For Mark S. Schneider, a vice president at the American Institutes for Research who studies the earnings of college graduates, the motivation behind the project is familiar. But what's promising about this particular platform is its potential to connect people to jobs more efficiently than before, he added. "It's a combination of smart people and good names," he said of the program.

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Always wondered why the job sites didn't automatically assess a person's CV and recommend skill-sets, courses or degrees based on the gaps in the CV or the needs of the employers or the goals of the person looking for employment.


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LinkedIn is a for-profit enterprise. Profiteers do not generally provide free services. Can anyone identify where and how LinkedIn gets the money they want out of this deal. In other words, "show me the money".

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A "profiteer" is someone who makes an unfair or illegal profit on business activity. Since we don't know what LinkedIn is going to get out of this, it's