State Data Sharing Initiative Launches Technical Assistance Efforts in Five States

The Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness’s (CREC’s) State Data Sharing Initiative (SDS) seeks to improve workforce and economic development program outcomes by encouraging data sharing to enable more rigorous policy analysis and program evaluation. This two-year project aims to raise awareness of the value of administrative data, deepen understanding of laws that protect and govern access to administrative data, and encourage data sharing to improve states’ analysis and evaluation capabilities. As part of this initiative, CREC is providing technical assistance to five competitively selected states, including Iowa, Minnesota, South Carolina, Utah, and Wisconsin, whose teams are committed to advancing data sharing in their state.

From September 20\textsuperscript{th}-21\textsuperscript{st}, 2016, CREC hosted 18 representatives from participating states for the first SDS All States Meeting. Four guest facilitators and speakers as well as nine CREC staff members were also in attendance. The meeting gave attendees an opportunity to share experiences and work with subject matter experts to deconstruct key data sharing challenges related to data governance policy, data sharing processes, information technology requirements, and user understanding and access. CREC also shared preliminary findings of its research on these and other related issues with the group. Finally, CREC staff and partners worked with each state team to evaluate their data sharing assets and challenges, draft an action plan, and determine immediate next steps towards action plan implementation.

Over the next 12 months, CREC staff will conduct multiple site visits to participating states to ensure that action plans are finalized, implemented, and revised as needed. In between, CREC will provide remote technical assistance to ensure that state teams have the support they need to achieve their project visions and goals towards better data sharing environments. Further, CREC is developing additional data sharing resources that will be publicly available on a new project website, launching soon.