



ARC Newsletter

February 2026

LMI Technology & Operations Survey Findings

In October of 2025, Wisconsin's LMI tech team, in collaboration with the ARC, received feedback and comments via a 15-question survey sent to LMI Directors and/or IT professionals in all states and territories. The survey asked questions regarding LMI operations, technology, and tools/resources such as AI. The results helped inform the ARC's strategic planning sessions to identify priorities for the coming year.

The survey yielded a robust 70% response rate. While a few states remain unrepresented, the data provides a snapshot of current resource utilization and needs. Highlights identify that 57% of respondents are aware of and utilize ETA and LMI community resources.

Among these, WIDCenter.org stands out as the most vital tool with an 83% usage rate, followed closely by C2ER (74%) and NASWA (69%). These figures underscore the importance of these platforms as the backbone of current state operations.

Looking ahead, the results reveal a strong desire for technical advancement and collaboration among states. More than half of all respondents expressed a direct interest in receiving assistance with AI resources (53%) and advanced analysis (53%), while half requested help with WID implementation and dashboard development. Qualitative feedback highlighted several recurring themes, most notably the need for an improved user experience on WIDCenter.org and a desire for more structured training and shared resources. As a result of the survey and subsequent strategic planning sessions, the ARC identified three committees to move forward in the coming year: communication, training, and technology/resources. Stay tuned for more information and resources from each of these groups in the coming months!

Heather Duerst, Wisconsin

January Meeting Highlights

The ARC Committee's January 2026 meeting was hosted by the North Carolina LMI Office in Raleigh. Our goal was to develop an ARC strategic plan for 2026 and beyond. We also took the opportunity to learn from each other and hear about related research and data projects. Minutes from the meeting are available at [Newsletters/Reports – ARC](#).

Guest presentations included:

- **[Jobs and Employment Data Exchange \(JEDx\)](#)** by Robert Sheets & Jason Tyszko from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation — standardizing U.I. administrative data, modernizing reporting systems, and aligning with federal Pell grant program efforts
- **[Job Ad Analysis Toolkit \(JAAT\)](#)** by Peter Norlander, Loyola University — presented an



Bharman Gulati, NV; Joe Skeen, UT; Joe Jaehnke, WI; Matt Steadman, UT; Sarah McGraw, WA; Gary Sincick, OR; Erica Lashley, VA; Steven Pennington, NC; Heather Duerst, WI; Salah Ahmed, MN; Jeff DeBellis, NC; Dr. Yifan Wang, NJ; Oriane Casale, MN; Elizabeth Jerkins, CO. Not pictured: Kyle Davis, VA; Bill McMahon, COS; Steve Duthie, MT; Mike Curtis, WI; Wayne Rourke, MI; Maali Wilson, SC; Noah Violette, SC; Bryan Cook, FL

open-source [Python repository](#) extracting O*NET skills and SOC/NAICS data from NLx job postings; supports skills-based hiring initiatives that align with current administration's goals. All slide decks are available in the ULMITA [Forum](#) in the ARC/Presentations folder.

After reviewing survey results (see above article) and discussing context and customers, brainstorming uncovered several ideas, not all of which are new. We decided on the following focus areas for 2026:

- **Training:** revising and developing training and providing relevant training in 2026.
- **Repository for LMI:** maintain and expand [WIDCenter.org](#) as a repository for LMI research, publications, and dashboards.
- **Nationwide WID database:** This would provide states easy access to updated core tables for their own, custom WID and provide a platform to build shared data tools and visualizations.

Oriane Casale, Minnesota

WID 3.0 Transition Update

The WID 3.0 structure document is available on the WIDCenter.org website. The structure was reviewed and currently there are no changes in review for the WID 3.0 structure.

The structure committee received two comments for changes/additions to the document since our last meeting. Both of these are in the errata here [WID-v30-Addenda.pdf](#) for a total of three changes to date.

- Stfips file added to CESCodes table: Although stfips fields were removed from most lookup tables in WID 3.0 to prevent needless redundancy, conversation with CES staff indicates that there is genuine definitional differences between some codes at the state and national level
- Added Adjusted field as a primary key in the JOLTS table: This field is included in the CES and LAUS tables as part of the primary key. JOLTS table should follow this standard.

With missing months of data due to the federal shutdown in the fall of 2025, NULLs are recommended for the missing fields. However, this recommendation may not work for all states. Some may need to have no records for missing data instead on NULLs for graph or charting data display.

The WID database structure is fluid and allows for updates or changes made to the tables to reflect data availability and requirements along with updated software standards. The ARC WID Structure Committee receives requests from states, committee members, and federal government agencies for WID database changes, which, after review and approval, are made to the structure.

Request for changes, additions, or support can be directed to the ARC Consortium arc.deed@state.mn.us, the ULMITA/ARC forums <https://ulmita.org/home>, or directly to Steve Duthie sduthie@mt.gov, ARC consortium member.

Steve Duthie, Montana

New ARC Resources and Research

Accessibility: Do you need help updating your website with the latest accessibility [requirements](#)? Resources on website and data visualization accessibility are now available at [What's New – ARC](#)

New, Emerging and Obsolete (NEO) Occupations Research: Conducted by Jered Piepenbrink of Illinois LMI and Donna Burkett of Iowa LMI, this is the second set of research

conducted with support from the ARC to identify obsolete and emerging occupations for potential reclassification in SOC. This research uses job titles reported by employers in 2010 to 2018 [OEWS](#) panels to identify emerging and obsolete occupations and [NLx](#) job postings to determine if these candidates are currently in demand by employers.

The analysis identifies 11 SOC candidates for consideration as obsolete and 11 for consideration as emerging. The report proposes SOC codes and definitions for emerging candidates and suggestions for coding obsolete occupations. The lists of obsolete and emerging candidates are included in the [report](#).

Metabase queries are available if other states would like to replicate this analysis. Be in touch through ARC.DEED@state.mn.us

LMI Research Repository: WIG annual performance reports and annual economic [reports](#) are available at WIDCenter.org. More to come.

If you missed it, the Data Axle **ARC Employer Database 2026 1st Edition** is available. Check [here](#) for instructions on how to access the update.

In the Spotlight: Jeff DeBellis, North Carolina



How long have you been involved in the world of LMI? I've been using LMI for decades, but have been actively involved in creating products, conducting research, and promoting its use since 2012.

Are you originally from NC? No. Originally from the Hudson Valley in NY but have been a resident of Raleigh NC for 30 years.

What is your role in the ARC? Active member, supporter, instigator since 2023.

What is your current job title? I'm the Director of Economic & Policy Analysis in the NC Department of Commerce's Labor & Economic Analysis Division.

What is the most rewarding aspect of your job? Developing tools, analysis, and insights that help people make more informed economic decisions – whether that's our policy leaders, educators, program administrators, jobseekers, or students.

What is the most frustrating or challenging aspect of your job? Navigating the complex bureaucracies and rules that come with working in government, but I can be stubborn and persistent, so things still end up getting done (eventually).

What is the strangest or most interesting job you have ever had? I traveled the country surveying methadone clinics in the late 90's, interviewing patients and staff for an accreditation pilot project funded by the federal government. I was often onsite before 6:00 am, heard a lot of interesting and tragic stories, visited corners of major cities most people never visit (for a reason), and learned a lot. Pro tip: make sure to request a neutral-colored rental car when visiting gang neighborhoods.

Family and/or hobbies outside work? Married my long-time best friend 23 years ago and have a son and daughter in college. I enjoy running, hiking, exploring new music, and watching my favorite NY sports teams perpetually disappoint.

LEWIS Project Update

Performance Monitoring and System Optimization Over the past year, the ULMITA development team has been working hard behind the scenes to optimize the LEWIS application. We have observed that certain performance enhancements effective in our development and testing environments do not always translate to the production environment as expected. To address this, we implemented targeted performance monitoring metrics within the live production system. This data helps us understand how LEWIS responds under varying loads and real-world usage, ensuring that future optimizations deliver genuine speed and stability improvements for all users.

Team Updates and Cross-Training There are significant changes within the ULMITA team structure. Matt Steadman, the lead developer for LEWIS since 2018, is now the ULMITA Team Manager. Matt is using this transition to focus on cross-training the entire development staff, reducing single points of failure and increasing the redundancy of LEWIS expertise across the board, as well as our other projects. While the team is still on the path to becoming fully cross-functional, this shift is already strengthening our long-term support capabilities. Additionally, we are excited to welcome developer Joe Skeen who has already proven to be a valuable addition to the team during his short tenure.

Looking Ahead: 2025 Roadmap While we have navigated some delays in 2025, we remain committed to several major enhancements in 2026. These upcoming updates include a centralized OEWS microdata repository, which will significantly simplify the data import process for states. We are also prioritizing the restoration of township-level geographic estimates, which were impacted by changes in the MB3 modeling system outputs in 2024Q2. These features are currently in development and will be merged into the codebase as soon as they are complete.

Matt Steadman, Utah