



## Tech Executive Leadership Initiative

Anjali Joshi  
Phil Marshall  
Ratna Saripalli  
Jeremy Toeman  
Nevin Zimmermann

# Whether and How to Develop a COVID-19 Vaccine Credential

Helping Outdoorsville increase confidence as citizens get back to events, work, and school

## BACKGROUND

*As part of their 10-week technology policy training program, the leaders of the Tech Executive Leadership Initiative spent 6 weeks working on real-world government challenges. Three teams tackled whether states should develop digital COVID-19 vaccine credentials, tailoring their recommendations to a fictional “State of Outdoorsville.” Each team narrowed its focus to a specific part of the problem, conducted research, and developed solutions. Below is an overview of one team’s solution: a decisionmaking framework to help Outdoorsville determine whether and how to develop a COVID-19 vaccine credential.*

## FOCUS

A COVID-19 vaccine credential is compelling and could possibly minimize virus incidence; keep Outdoorsville communities safe; and increase confidence amongst residents to get back to work, school, and public gatherings. But before Outdoorsville begins developing a credential, it should test these assumptions and determine whether a credential will actually achieve the state’s goals. Moreover, before proceeding, the state should scope how a vaccine credential could feasibly be implemented and what alternative options are available. Outdoorsville should only begin investing considerable state resources in a credential after carefully considering all of these factors.

To learn more about this project, please visit [aspentechpolicyhub.com/teli](https://aspentechpolicyhub.com/teli).



## Tech Executive Leadership Initiative

### ABOUT TELI

This project was completed as part of the Tech Executive Leadership Initiative (TELI), a 10-week skills-building initiative that prepares experienced technology leaders to engage effectively with public sector challenges. Learn more at [aspentechpolicyhub.com/teli](https://aspentechpolicyhub.com/teli).

The Aspen Institute  
2300 N St. NW, Suite 700  
Washington, DC 20037  
202 736 5800

## RECOMMENDATIONS

This project proposes a [clear framework](#) to facilitate the State of Outdoorsville's decisionmaking about a state COVID-19 vaccine credential. The state should progress through the following steps:

### **Step 1: Determine if a verifiable vaccine credential is necessary.**

*The state should only advance to Step 2 if it can answer 'Yes' to all of the following questions:*

- *Has Outdoorsville enabled ubiquitous access to the vaccine?*
- *Does Outdoorsville have sufficient demand from event organizers, businesses, and/or school systems for a verifiable vaccine credential?*
- *Does Outdoorsville have sufficient public support to enable the use and cost of a vaccine credential?*

### **Step 2: Determine if a verifiable vaccine credential is technically feasible.**

*If the state can demonstrate it has the technical capability to execute an equitable, accessible, and secure credential, it should advance to Step 3.*

### **Step 3: Build a vaccine credential.**

*If the state reaches this step, it should prepare to develop and deploy a COVID-19 vaccine credential.*

At this time, based on the above criteria and the authors' knowledge of the State of Outdoorsville's circumstances, this project [does not believe there is sufficient support from event organizers, businesses and/or school systems to require a vaccine credential at this time](#).

However, and recognizing that circumstances are quickly changing, if Outdoorsville officials go through the decisionmaking steps and determine they can answer 'Yes' to all of the questions, the state does have the technical ability to develop a vaccine credential to clear Step 2, based on its existing digital service delivery offerings. If the state thus decides to create a vaccine credential, this project also provides [high-level recommendations](#) for how to develop a secure and ethical system.