

Identifying and Scaling Higher Education in Prison Programmatic Resources: Grantee Profile



Unlocked Labs



Location | St. Louis, Missouri

Facilities served:

- Algoa Correctional Center
- Bolduc Correctional Facility
- Cayuga Correctional Facility
- Farmington Correctional Center
- Green Haven Correctional Facility
- Jefferson City Correctional Center
- Maine State Prison
- Missouri Eastern Correctional Center
- Mountain View Correctional Facility
- Palmer Correctional Center
- Potosi Correctional Center
- Sing Sing Correctional Facility
- Southern Maine Women's Reentry Center
- Vandalia Correctional Center

[Additional Program Information](#)



Resource Overview: Breaking Down Barriers: A Toolkit for Implementing Educational Technology in Correctional Settings

To implement technology in prison education programs, higher education in prison (HEP) providers, along with corrections partners, must navigate security concerns, infrastructure limitations, and regulatory constraints, while also making decisions that will best support their learners. The Breaking Down Barriers toolkit provides a strategic roadmap that includes policy considerations, pathways for implementing technology in carceral settings, components of a functional technology system, and stakeholder engagement and roles.

Created by Unlocked Labs as a one-stop resource, the toolkit guides HEP leaders throughout the process, from identifying the technology needs of their educational programs to collaborating with departments of corrections (DOCs) and IT staff to implement solutions. By improving access to digital resources, it helps HEP programs prepare students for success during their educational program and beyond.



What the Resource Includes

Piloted in multiple states, the toolkit provides a practical framework for designing and implementing technology strategies in correctional education. The resource includes a variety of assets:

- Guiding questions for HEP providers considering technology implementation in correctional facilities
- Step-by-step guidance on assessing technology needs, navigating DOC technology approval processes, and building a technology strategy
- Strategies for collaboration with DOCs, IT departments, and educators to ensure alignment and compliance
- Case studies and examples offering real-world lessons on overcoming technology access and implementation barriers
- A digital library of open-source tools



Resource Refinement and Scaling Journey

Through this grant, Unlocked Labs will engage in an evidence-informed cycle of continuous improvement to refine and share a user-friendly web-based toolkit of resources to support the HEP field.

The Unlocked Labs team will improve and finalize the toolkit through a series of hands-on refinement activities. This work will include reviewing existing research to inform content development, and gathering feedback from DOCs, HEP staff and alumni, and IT departments to ensure the tools are adaptable to diverse programs and settings. These steps will help ensure the materials are useful, practical, and based on solid evidence. The team will explore these key areas during the refinement and scaling process:

- State policies on internet and technology access for students who are incarcerated
- Benefits, challenges, and strategies for integrating technology into correctional education settings
- Organizations promoting and advancing technology access in prison education in the United States

Learn More About the Grantee

Unlocked Labs, founded by formerly incarcerated technologists, has developed a comprehensive web-based toolkit to help higher education in prison (HEP) programs integrate technology effectively. Their work began in Missouri and now supports programs across multiple states, serving more than 750 incarcerated students. *Breaking Down Barriers: A Toolkit for Implementing Educational Technology in Correctional Settings* was designed to simplify the complex process of technology adoption in prisons—bridging gaps between HEP programs, departments of corrections (DOCs), and IT departments.

To learn more about the project's evidence-informed continuous improvement cycle, read the [Identifying and Scaling Higher Education in Prison Programmatic Resources one-pager](#). The insights and materials developed through this project will be shared with the broader HEP field to support ongoing improvement in prison education programs.



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