# Market Research Resource Guide for Academic Planning Proposals
## Updated 1/14/2025

We are pleased to share that the Office of the Provost, the University Library Systems, and PittEDGE can provide several market research services to inform your unit/school enrollment strategy and academic program development. These services focus on graduate and professional programs, both online and residential, but can also include undergraduate programs.

As part of the academic planning process, units are required to include market research data in any proposal for a new or modified academic program. Units should complete market research before designing a new or modified academic program and submitting a proposal through the academic planning process.

Several market research services are available to units:
1. Hanover Digital
    a. This resource is accessible to individual users through licenses. The data produced through self-service searches can be used to explore where opportunities for new residential and hybrid/online programs, jobs, enrollments, and regional competition exist. It is a great place to start your market research data collection.
2. LightCast
    a. This resource is accessed through the University Library System (ULS) and is a deep dive into market data about similar programs. To access this resource, units will first complete a form requesting support (linked below), and then will be asked to compile a list of peer programs in an Excel spreadsheet. That information will be fed into the Lightcast system and detailed information will generate a matrix that units can use as a reference for how they develop and design their new or modified program. This process takes about 3 weeks to complete, and both OTP and ULS staff will be more engaged with units in discussion about data interpretation and subsequent proposal viability.
3. Eduventures
    a. This resource is also accessed through the ULS and can provide both high-level Program Feasibility Studies as well as smaller scale 'Data Cuts' to answer specific market questions that a unit may have, like regional job postings or survey results to gauge student interest. This process also takes about 3 weeks to complete, though Data Cuts often arrive more quickly.

When we talk about market research data, we frequently reference three key pieces:

- **Trend Report**
    - **What is it?** Data-based report and insights that outline trends in the graduate, undergraduate and online prospective student and job markets and within specific disciplines.
    - **What can it help with?** Understanding big-picture trends that can influence your program development and strategy.

- **Program Feasibility Study (PFS)**

- o **What is it?** The PFS is a quantitative and qualitative deep dive into a specific degree program market that can be leveraged to explore new program viability and provides considerations for program launch or strategies for differentiation.
  - o **What can it help with?** The PFS will support market analysis for new degree considerations. This can be an online version of an existing on-campus degree or an entirely new degree.
- **Answers to specific market questions**
  - o **What is it?** Data that can help to answer specific questions like: *What is the job market demand for roles my program prepares students for? What do existing competitor programs look like?*
  - o **What can it help with?** Answering specific questions to support your program development and strategy.

**Getting started**

If you are interested in exploring new or modified program options and these market research offerings, please first talk to the Dean or Director of your school or unit to confirm their support. Then, reach out to Courtney Syskowski at OTP to discuss your ideas. Together, we can decide which market research option is best for what you are looking to find: starting with a Hanover search on your own, asking for help from ULS, or working directly with PittEDGE.  If we go the ULS route, you will submit your request to ULS by filling out this form. The data team will contact you to discuss the next steps and provide you with the Excel sheet to complete.