



Pathfinder Project Strategic Plan

Transforming Australian research infrastructure
through trust and identity: A national strategy

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A connected research ecosystem

Background

The 2021 National Research Infrastructure Roadmap (NRI Roadmap) identified trust and identity (T&I) as fundamental research infrastructure. *Transforming Australian research infrastructure through trust and identity: A national strategy* will create a significant step change towards a more seamless, secure, efficient, and globally connected research ecosystem.

Benefits

The implementation of a national strategy will benefit researchers, industry and government.



Easier access to national research infrastructure through seamless services

Creating a more researcher centric NRI ecosystem that reduces the time and complexity for researchers to access multiple services.



Easier access to international research infrastructure

Working in step with global best practice developments in interoperability and collaboration.



A connected NRI ecosystem for better industry collaboration

Partnering with industry and global identity providers to build and implement the next generation of T&I solutions.



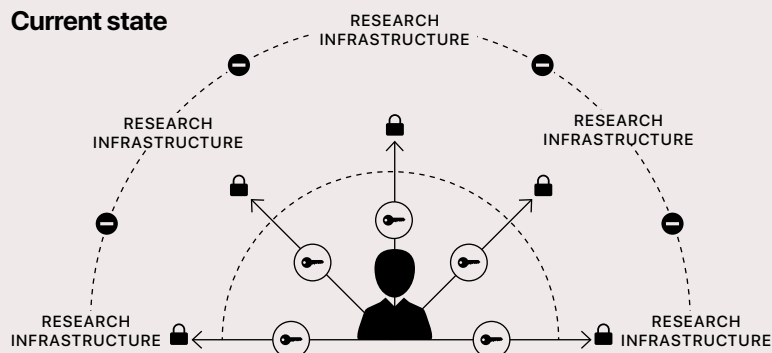
A safer and more secure NRI ecosystem

Ensuring the safety and security of our national assets by protecting them against cyber security risks.

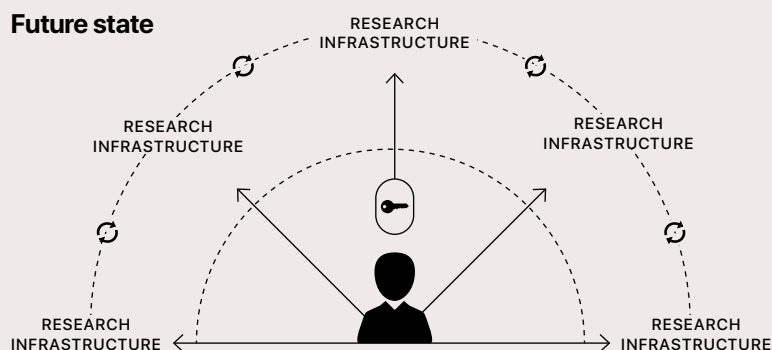
Unlocking national research infrastructure through a shared understanding of a digital identity

A system-wide approach to identity and access management will improve connectivity across the NRI ecosystem. Researchers will be able to login once, have their identity verified and seamlessly access resources across organisational boundaries to collaborate.

Current state



Future state



Australian Access Federation

Australia's trust and identity specialists

AAF is the national capability delivering trust and identity services. Established in 2009 the AAF facilitates trusted electronic communications and collaboration between education and research institutions, nationally and internationally.

We deliver quality technologies, services and expertise that include:



Federation

Australia's national authentication service for research and education. The Federation delivers world-class single sign-on that allows individuals across organisational boundaries to collaborate and access online resources within a trusted environment. It is a globally connected service consisting of a trust framework of technology and policy.



ORCID Consortium Lead

AAF operates the Australian ORCID consortium. ORCID is a persistent identifier (an ORCID ID) that researchers own and control, distinguishing them from every other researcher. In Australia the Consortium provides licencing for a sector wide ORCID licence and local support that assists with member integrations.



Consulting and Training Services

Providing bespoke support to AAF subscribers in meeting their identity and access management needs.



VerifID GLOBAL

A privacy preserving solution to verify that a person has a current student or staff relationship with an Australian university or research organisation.



Rapid IdP

Our hosted cloud solution provides a fast and easy way to connect to the AAF. Rapid IdP suits organisations of all sizes and connects your users to national and international services.

AAF is a shared service, that connects higher education and research to services with minimal effort. It removes access challenges across the sector and enables collaboration within Australia and globally.

[AAF Strategic Plan 2023-2025 >> find out more](#)

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ORGANISATIONS CONNECTED TO THE AAF

300+

AUSTRALIAN SERVICE CONNECTIONS

370+

INTERNATIONAL SERVICE CONNECTIONS



Trust and Identity Pathfinder Project

AAF's Trust & Identity Pathfinder Project will inform a future capability to address the step change in the NRI Roadmap.



PATHFINDER



TRUST & IDENTITY

Capability + Futures + Cyber security



STEP-CHANGE



HEAR FROM ONE OF OUR PROJECT PARTNERS

"Trust and identity is integral for ensuring researchers from academia, the public sector, and industry have seamless and secure access to digital research infrastructure. This project will be a crucial component of the ARDC's new Thematic Research Data Commons, which will scale up digital research infrastructure to meet Australia's future research needs."

Australian Research Data Commons (ARDC) CEO Rosie Hicks



Enabled by NCRIS

In partnership with the Australian Data Commons, the Trust and Identity Pathfinder Project received funding from the Australian Government through the National Collaborative Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS).

Vision

Our vision is the system-wide adoption of Trust & Identity enabling a more researcher-centric national research infrastructure.

Mission

Our mission is to deliver a seamless, privacy enhancing and cyber secure experience for end users of Australia's national research infrastructure through a system-wide framework for Trust and Identity.

The combination of policies and technology will build a connected research, innovation and translation network, and provide enhanced collaboration opportunities with support from a skilled workforce.



Our strategic drivers



Enhanced collaboration

Goal

Design infrastructure and resources for a connected research ecosystem, that enables easy access for collaboration by researchers, industry, and government.

Key Activities

- Implement a national T&I Framework for interoperability and cyber security.
- Design a Policy Toolkit to facilitate a shared understanding for accessing, operating, and using NRI.
- Work to enable integrations, extensions, and proxies for better connectivity across NRI service providers.
- Deliver trusted access to industry, to enhance research translation.
- Enable collaboration by allowing better access to research data and infrastructure.



Amplified capability for efficiency

Goal

Deliver faster access to data and tools that researchers need, through a world leading suite of T&I tools, services, and skills.

Key Activities

- Build a library of tools that follow best practice, are cyber secure and underpinned by world-class T&I infrastructure.
- Coordinate, develop and nurture a skilled workforce ready to support and implement solutions.
- Deliver training and support to enable implementation of solutions.
- Explore and pilot new technologies, frameworks, and standards to address the emerging needs of our research communities and infrastructure providers.



Connectivity for global collaboration

Goal

Connect Australian researchers to increase their ability to lead and participate in international research programs.

Key Activities

- Ensure interoperability and reduce the risk of a fragmented T&I approach within the NRI ecosystem through international alignment.
- Work with leading global T&I groups to influence the development of technology standards and practices to benefit Australia.
- Leverage world class expertise and investment through partnerships with global T&I research infrastructure operators (CILogon, eduTEAMS, AEGIS).
- Enhance Australia's reputation as a hub for world class research and innovation through international engagement.



Thematic deployment for impact

Goal

Harness the full potential of research infrastructure by deploying T&I solutions to national challenges, creating impactful collaborative partnerships across the NRI ecosystem.

Key Activities

- Build thematic deployments of T&I solutions to support sector wide transformations in research and translation.
- Develop long term partnerships within NCRIS to support user driven and sustainable T&I solutions.
- Understand and maintain alignment with national scientific priorities to ensure T&I solutions deliver impact to the research ecosystem.



Cyber security for trusted environments

Goal

Goal: Build a trusted and secure NRI ecosystem for improved national security, economic competitiveness, and scientific advancement.

Key Activities

- Protect our national assets from the threats of cyber security risks and foreign interference through safe and secure infrastructure.
- Leverage and deploy leading cyber security expertise across the NRI ecosystem.
- Provide essential cyber secure underpinning infrastructure to all NRI, enabling identity and access management activities.



Trust & Identity for the future

Goal

Goal: Enable enduring and system-wide T&I improvements for NCRIS.

Key Activities

- Realise the value of T&I for AAF's funders and partners through the implementation of standardised infrastructure.
- Balance the provision of long-term reliable infrastructure against the need to innovate and support cutting edge NRI.
- Foster long term relationships with national and international research, industry, and government partners.
- Alignment with the AAF 2020-25 Strategic Plan, national and international research agendas and NRI specific requirements.



Funders and partners

Our funders



National Research Infrastructures



International providers





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