



AUSTRALIAN
ACCESS FEDERATION



Trust &
Identity

NCRIS
National Research
Infrastructure for Australia
An Australian Government Initiative



Trust & Identity Policy Working Group Workshops 19 and 20 July

A step change in trust and identity for Australian research

Executive Summary

AAF's Trust and Identity Pathfinder Project seeks to bring together a T&I Policy Working Group (T&I PWG) to co-design a Trust and Identity Framework that includes common policies and standards, for a seamless, secure and globally connected research ecosystem.

Members of the T&I PWG will play a pivotal role in shaping an effective and enduring national policy framework for national research infrastructure.

The Australian Government's 2021 National Research Infrastructure Roadmap identified trust and identity as fundamental research infrastructure. Through this NCRIS-enabled pathfinder project, the AAF is partnering with national research capabilities to create a Policy Development Kit for collaborative research infrastructure environments, paving the way for a significant step change in access to digital research infrastructure.

The Policy Development Kit (PDK) aims to guide the operational measures undertaken to securely and effectively provide research infrastructure and services, and includes policies which:

- define the roles and the responsibilities of all participants
- define expected behaviour of all the participants
- define the security response procedure and responsibilities of individuals during a cyber incident
- manage the risk of capturing, storing and using personal information about users and their data.

In the two initial workshops held 19 and 20 July 2023 we sought to understand the current privacy and identity policy landscape. The workshops outlined that the PDK will consider:

- the different types of research collaborations in Australia (i.e., NCRIS facilities, health and medical research institutes, Centres of Excellence)
- a shared understanding of identity and access requirements for users of the research collaboration
- development of standard terminology for research collaborations
- consistency in how policies are managed within research collaborations.

The discussion focussed on how a strong policy environment will benefit research collaborations, by enabling a shared understanding of good practice and incident management, protecting the safety of the services delivered within a collaboration and by extension their facilities and institutions, and creating a framework for a collaborative approach to trust that can be reproducible and scalable.

Establishing a T&I Policy Working Group

AAF seeks to form a T&I PWG commencing in September 2023 that will establish a baseline set of policies for the Australian NCRIS ecosystem to achieve policy alignment and avoid friction.

Through sharing policies, analysing existing collaborations and considering the questions posed in the Authentication and Authorisation for Research and Collaboration (AARC) PDK template policies, the T&I PWG will:

- share and benefit from collective experiences
- create building blocks that can be reused
- identify related institutions and replicate applicable approaches
- agree on a set of terminology to assist discussions
- advise the AAF on creating useful resources such as decision trees to assist the development of policies
- identify individuals responsible for policy development within Facilities and Services, and the process required to have policies adopted or amended.

The responsibilities of the members will likely involve:

- occasional online meetings of the whole group
- individual discussions with the AAF T&I Team
- discussions using email.

Objectives

Based on the discussion points raised in the two workshops, some of the key areas the T&I PWG will address in a system-wide approach to trust and identity include:

- **Multiple identities and multiple affiliations** - the issue of individuals having many different affiliations, and different identities having different policies associated with them.
 - What happens when an institution restricts your access to data?
 - While a university affiliation usually reflects a level of background checking, how can those from industry or government be managed?
- The **complexity** of identifying multiple legal entities and their requirements.
- **Data access levels** - How to manage different data access levels; some organisations operate with a policy of making data open and accessible to all, while others are managing sensitive data which cannot be shared.
- **Collaboration access** - issues around:
 - a shared responsibility for identity and access management across Service boundaries
 - a differing approach to identity and access management
 - a differing risk profile and risk management approach.

About the T&I Policy Development Kit

The Trust and Identity Policy Development Kit (PDK) is a key component of the Trust and Identity Pathfinder Project for NCRIS and aims to establish a baseline set of policies for the national digital research ecosystem.

The workshops provided an opportunity to identify a community of practice in Australia that can work together to develop a baseline PDK that is fit for purpose for research infrastructure collaborations in Australia.

The PDK aims to outline the operational measures undertaken by a Facility to provide services. The policies principally cover security measures, user management and identity data protection.

These policies are a part of a wider policy environment and will not cover all the requirements, such as additional policies around data sharing and sensitive data. The terms of a Facility's existing policies and agreements will likely inform the policies for its collaborations.

Next steps

Expression of Interest - register

- [Please indicate your continued interest](#) to be an ongoing member (or nominate a colleague) for the PWG.

Online course

- A [Moodle course](#) is available to learn more about the AARC Policy Development Kit. This course is provided by GÉANT, a collaboration of National Research and Education Networks (NREN). **You will need to login to GÉANT to complete the course.** You can login through your AAF enabled credentials or use your social networks logins (Google, Twitter etc).