Australian Access Federation

Strategic Plan 2014-15

About **us**

The Australian Access Federation (AAF) provides the solution for accessing online resources and services within the Australian Higher Education and Research sector. This is achieved by delivering a secure framework which exchanges information between an individual and a provider of digital data resources. The outcome of our work is to facilitate collaboration and sharing of data for the benefit of end users in Australian universities and research organisations.

The AAF was initiated by the Council of Australian University Directors of Information Technology (CAUDIT) in December 2008 to provide an Access Federation for organisations which undertake or support higher education and research in Australia. Since commencing operations, the AAF has established a functioning federation that provides a range of services to both identify providers (university and research organisations) and service providers (owners of data or information resources).

The AAF's subscriber base consists of all Australian universities, CSIRO and a number of leading research support organisations. Some initial development funding was provided through an Australian Government grant and ongoing operations are funded through subscription fees.

The AAF has established a vital role as part of the Australian eResearch infrastructure landscape through its core value proposition of a shared service for the Australian research/education sector. AAF lowers the costs and effort associated with managing federated identity in each individual subscriber organisation. AAF removes inter-organisational barriers to collaboration by enabling people to quickly and easily connect with resources. Conversely, resource providers are able to quickly and easily connect their services to people. A national Federation also provides the capability for collaboration on a global scale through the interconnection of national federations.

AAF planning is conducted on a rolling two year basis. In 2014-2015, the focus will be on meeting the needs of education and research subscribers to enhance the range of online resources that can be accessed seamlessly across organisational boundaries. A key strategy will be to enhance and extend AAF services through strategic partnerships with relevant organisations.

Our **vision** and **mission**

The AAF's **vision** is to be the authoritative provider of access management services for Australian higher education and research.

The AAF's **mission** is to support the collaboration and resource sharing objectives of its subscribers through provision of effective access management technologies and services.

Our objectives
2014-15

Objective 1: *Be the identity broker for Australia's research and education community*

Initiative	Outcome	Target
Attract new subscribers (public and commercial research organisations, medical research institutes, government agencies, broader education community, eResearch organisations)	Larger subscriber base achieves broader reach into the research/ education sector and greater economies of scale	10% subscriber growth per annum
Grow **new services** connected to the federation	Broader service catalogue grows AAF value proposition	15% growth per annum
Remain aligned with **Australian eResearch Agenda**	AAF is central to national eResearch planning and operations	Assessed value of AAF as a part of the Australian eResearch landscape
Establish **key strategic partnerships** where mutually beneficial (including NeCTAR, RDSI and AARNet)	End users benefit from AAF collaboration/ integration with related eResearch initiatives	Assessed value of collaboration/integration with relevant Australian eResearch initiatives

Objective 2: *Extend AAF services*

Initiative	Outcome	Target
Expand AAF's **identity and access management products** (fine grained access control, group management and Researcher ID toolkit)	Increased utility of the federation for eResearch services	• Group management and fine grained access control tools established Q4 2014 • Researcher ID toolkit supporting eResearch services Q4 2014
Develop **cloud-based approaches** for participation in AAF	Reduced technical barriers for participation in the AAF	Cloud based approaches evaluated by Q4 2015
Align with international Federation initiatives to enable **international access to federated services**	Significant progress in enabling international access to federated services	eduGAIN co-federation connection established by mid-2015

Objective 3: *Contribute to and be informed by international best practice*

Initiative	Outcome	Target
Continue to **align with international Federation initiatives through REFEDS (Research Education Federations)**	Contribution to and benefit from international experience to ensure compatible, connectable technologies are in place internationally	Assessed value of collaboration/ integration with relevant international initiatives

Objective 4: *Deliver high quality sustainable and innovative products and services*

Initiative	Outcome	Target
Adopt a highly **customer-centric** operating model	High level of subscriber, supplier and end user satisfaction with AAF services and operating model	• Subscriber satisfaction survey result of at least 70% of customers rating the support services provided by the AAF as either 4 or 5 • Level of supplier retention

Our Stakeholders

Stakeholders	Present/potential value from the AAF
Shareholders/Subscribers	*Sustainable operations focused on achievement of agreed AAF objectives*
Identity Providers	*Cost effective, quick and simple access to a broad range of online services*
Service Providers	*Scalable and easily accessed services with low account management overheads*
End Users	*Seamless access to services*
Government	*Support for the Australian eResearch agenda*
Other Federations	*Easy to deal with, compatible technologies that leverage international standards and trends*
Sponsors	*Potential opportunities to market to end users*

Our operating model

The AAF's ongoing operations are funded by subscribers.

Development of new functionality and services is funded through two sources:

- Incremental development funded through an increase in subscriptions; and
- Major development funded by co-investment (Government, other eResearch groups, individual subscribers, etc).

www.aaf.edu.au