

ANNUAL REPORT 2018

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



The Australian Access Federation (AAF) continued to be recognised as the premier provider of access and authentication for Australia's Higher Education and Research sector throughout 2018.

The success of the Murchison Widefield Array's eduGAIN connection, international connectivity in Australia expanded rapidly, with 13 organisations connected to eduGAIN. AAF also launched the capability to connect services to the Federation using the OpenID Connect protocol. This reduced complexity and time for subscribers to connect applications to the Federation and continues to place the Australian Federation as a leader internationally.

Evolving from the Early Adopter Program that was conducted in the previous year, AAF's cloud based Rapid Identity Provider service was officially launched in 2018. The AAF was also successful in obtaining federal funding through the Australian Research Data Commons (ARDC) to further advance the service (2019-20).

As part of the 2018 communication and engagement strategy, the AAF conducted a number of roadshows, visiting university IT departments from around Australia to communicate and educate the value of their federation subscription.

2018 was another successful year for the AAF as the ORCID Consortium Lead. With over 90 000 Australian researchers with an ORCID record and over 32 member integrations. The AAF was officially recognised in 2018 by ORCID.org as an international leader in both communications and engagement.

Inclusion in the Federal Government's eResearch Investment Plan, as National Research Infrastructure, confirmed the strength of AAF's position in the Australian eResearch landscape and demonstrates the value of the federation nationally.

As approved by the Members at the 2018 General Meeting, the AAF prepared a transfer of company structure from an Incorporated Association to a company Limited by Guarantee to take effect January 2019.

The summary of achievements for 2018 are reflected in the following Annual Report.

Bruce Callow
President, Australian Access Federation

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL



ENGAGEMENT

AAF was represented at a wide variety of key international and national engagements in 2018. The AAF was also recognised by the Federal Government as National Research Infrastructure, and in international communities as a global leader in federated access and authentication.

The AAF engaged nationally through:

- AeRO (Australian eResearch Organisations) (annual member)
- Queensland University Directors of Information Technology (QUDIT) Identity Management Community of Practice
- National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS) projects
- National eResearch Infrastructure Investment Plan process
- Digital Data and eResearch Platforms group
- Council of Australasian University Directors of Information Technology (CAUDIT)
- Providing professional services activities for subscribers
- Australian ORCID Governance Committee and Advisory Group.

The AAF engaged internationally through:

- Federations in the Asia Pacific Region with APAN (Asia Pacific Advanced Networking) through the European Union funded BACKFIRE (Broadening Asi@Connect Knowledge on Federated Identity, Roaming and E-infrastructure) project
- International REFEDS (Research Education Federation) via sponsorship
 - AAF CEO holds an open seat on the international REFEDS Steering Committee
- ORCID Consortium Lead
 - Internationally recognised for Inspired Engagement and Leadership.

AAF SUPPORTING THE NATIONAL ERESEARCH AGENDA

In response to AAF's inclusion in the 2016 NCRIS roadmap and eResearch Infrastructure Investment Plan, the Digital Data and eResearch Platforms (DDeRP) group (AAF, Australia's Academic Research Network (AARNet), Australian Data Research Commons (ARDC), National Computing Infrastructure (NCI), Pawsey Supercomputing) was formed with the aim of supporting the national eResearch agenda.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES



ANNUAL SUBSCRIBER SURVEY

In April 2018, the AAF released the seventh annual subscriber survey and the second separate technical subscriber survey. The aim was to capture subscriber needs, increase our understanding of future activities, priorities, and how subscribers perceive the AAF. The survey responses provide important input into AAF's annual planning.

From both surveys, recommendations were identified. These included:

- International connectivity
- Technology enhancements and developments
- Growing the federation
- Member outreach, engagement, promotion and training.

AAF ROADSHOWS

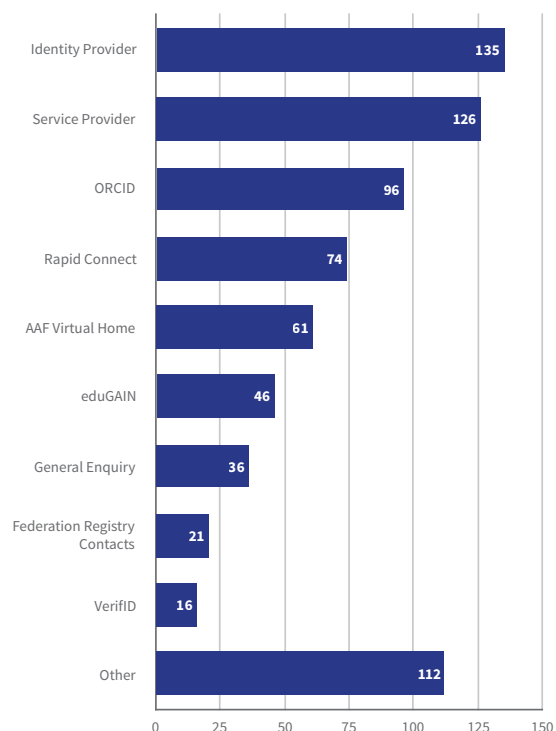
A key communication and engagement activity in 2018 was customer retention. AAF senior staff met with IT Directors and Chief Information Officers from 12 Australian universities and research organisations throughout the year. Updates were provided on new services, and subscriber use of the AAF. This engagement activity has been met with wide appreciation and the program will continue in 2019.

AAF SUPPORT DESK

In 2018, AAF Support used categorisation to gain further understanding of tickets and subscriber needs.

A total of 723 tickets were received in 2018.

AAF 2018 Support Tickets by Category



SUBSCRIBERS AND SERVICES

102

SUBSCRIBERS

7

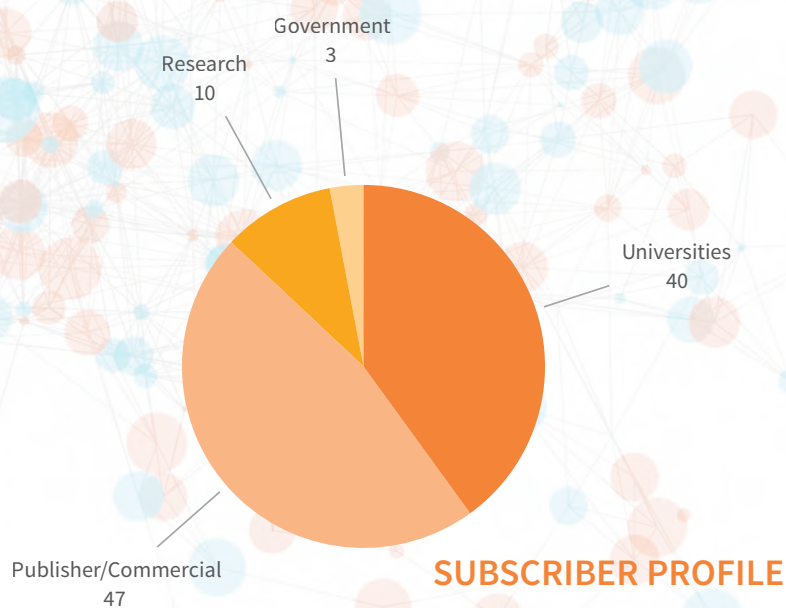
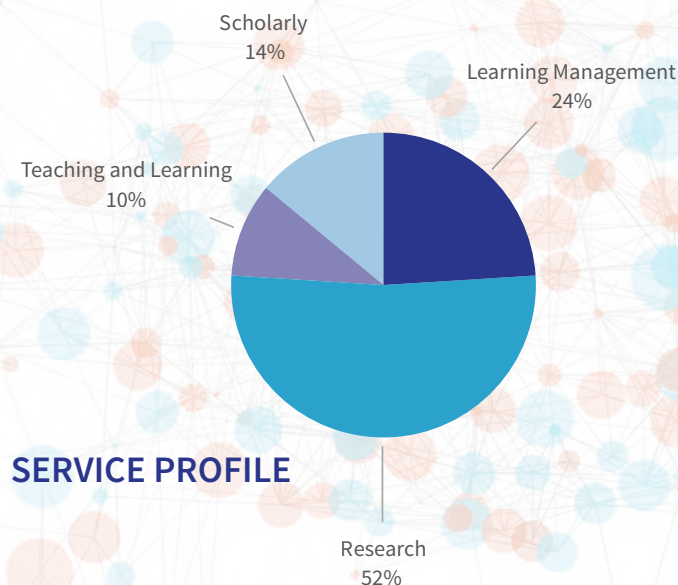
NEW SUBSCRIBERS

277

NATIONAL SERVICES

213

INTERNATIONAL SERVICES



INNOVATION

Rapid Identity Provider: Simplifying connections to the AAF



Following the success of the Early Adopter Program in 2017, the Rapid Identity Provider (Rapid IdP) service was launched into full production in February 2018. Rapid IdP assists AAF Subscribers, through the management of their connection to the federation, allowing them to focus on higher priority activities.

AAF worked closely with the teams at Swinburne University and Macquarie University to successfully migrate their Identity Providers to the Rapid IdP platform — delivering 100% availability in 2018.

In late 2018, ARDC announced further funding to extend Rapid IdP and support efforts to make the product fully sustainable.

Key benefits include:

- reduced infrastructure requirements
- fast access to new features
- high availability
- set up, maintenance and support done for you
- connect to international services
- fast deployment.

AAF Central (OpenID Connect): The genesis of a multi-protocol federation

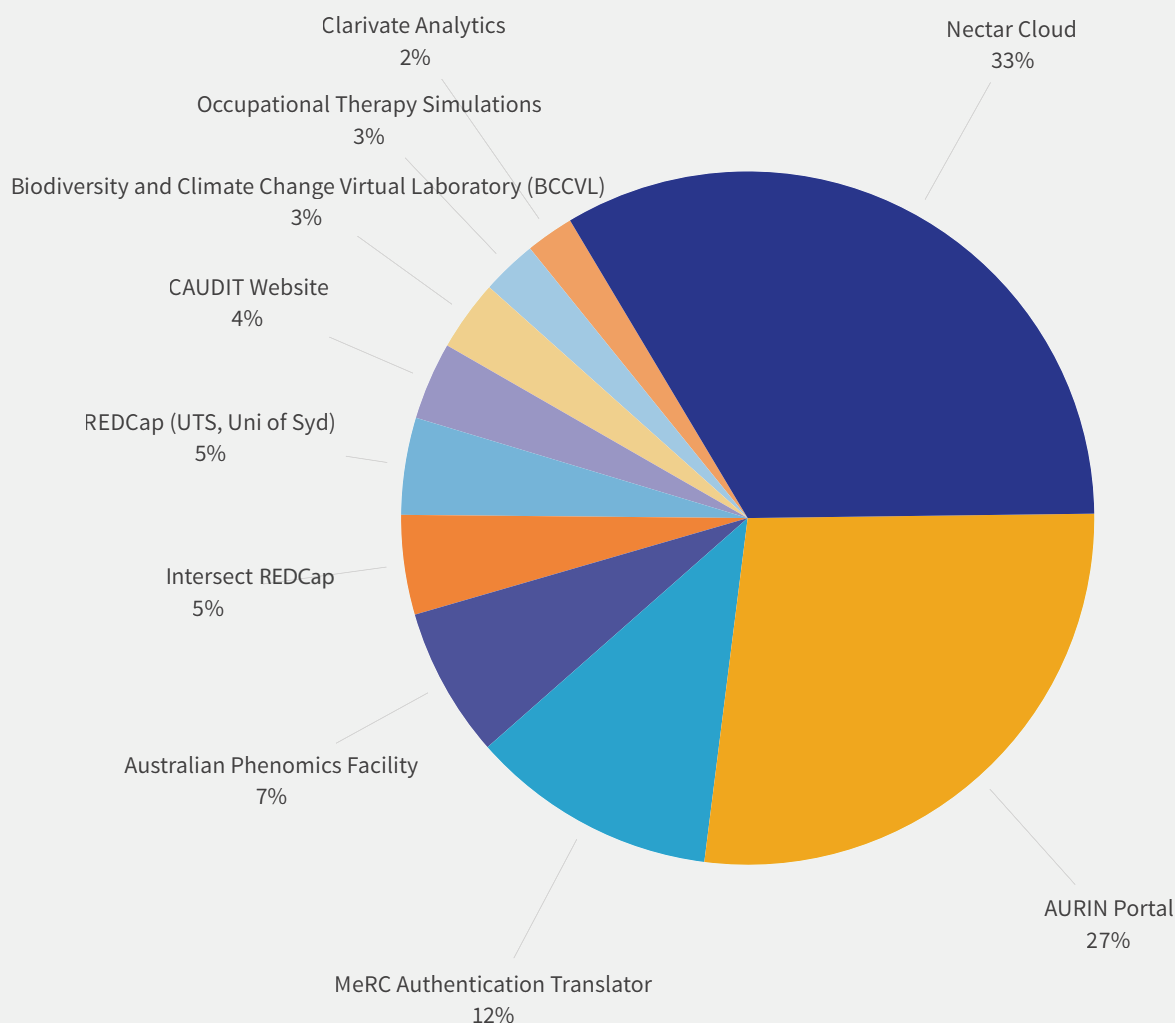


In 2018 AAF became the first research and education federation to enable services to connect using the OpenID Connect (OIDC) protocol. This work is the culmination of a multi-year program of work funded by the then NeCTAR Project. This new world leading service promises many benefits for AAF subscribers. These features include:

- leading standards-based approach
- reduced federation connection complexity
- faster and more economical integration of new services
- a solid foundation to support native mobile applications and API-based authentication.

AAF Central was soft-launched at the beginning of 2018. Following this a number of eResearch services connected to the federation through AAF Central. AAF will continue to seek investment in 2019 to continue to advance the platform.

AAF TOP 10 SERVICES



eduGAIN: Enabling international connectivity

International research collaboration through eduGAIN continued to gather momentum in 2018. This multi-year program of work provides a borderless authentication framework (federation) that connects Australian research to the rest of the world. Following an ARDC-funded project to develop policy and support materials in 2017, interest in eduGAIN from AAF subscribers grew significantly throughout 2018. In all, 13 Australian identity providers and three services connected via eduGAIN by year end. eduGAIN streamlined authentication to the Murchison Widefield Array telescope — an international collaboration involving researchers from Australia, Canada, China, India, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, South Africa, Sweden, UK and USA. AAF will continue to seek investment in 2019 to streamline processes and support a national rollout.



ORCID: Open Researcher and Contributor ID

2018 was another successful and productive year for the Australian ORCID Consortium led by the AAF. With 32 integrations completed across 29 organisations, another 10 in development and one planning, Australian members were actively engaged throughout the year in integrating ORCID with their systems.



In 2018, the Australian Consortium continued to receive positive feedback and received the Inspired Engagement and Leadership award at the international annual consortia event.

In 2018, the Australian Consortium membership consisted of 40 members from 37 higher education organisations, two funding bodies, and one research organisation.

VerifID: Student verification service

As part of AAF's business plan for 2018, a verification service was created to assist students verify their status in order to get access to services. VerifID leverages the existing framework available through the AAF while preserving user privacy. Launched in October 2018, three customers have subscribed to VerifID, with more expected to join in 2019.



KEY ACTIVITIES FOR 2019

- 1** Provide support services to ensure existing subscribers gain best value from their subscription.
- 2** Ensure the technology on which the AAF depends is appropriately maintained.
- 3** Continue partnerships, memberships and supporting international initiatives.
- 4** Provide compliance support activities associated with the Federation Rules and annual Compliance Statements.
- 5** Provide a range of professional services to support subscriber needs.
- 6** Develop and deliver bespoke Identity Management workshops on-demand.
- 7** Continuation of AAF's business development and innovation capabilities to further build upon the utility and value of the federation.
- 8** Undertake business development as part of the operating culture of the AAF.
- 9** Undertake communication and engagement activities that focus on promoting the AAF's value proposition to subscribers, ORCID members and the international community.

In 2019 the AAF will continue to be the ORCID (Open Researcher and Contributor ID) Consortium Lead for Australia. Key activities will include:

- Providing administrative support to the Consortium
- Managing the on boarding of Consortium Members
- Being the central technical support contact to all Members (Tier 1)
- International engagement with other Consortium Leads to ensure best practice and knowledge exchange
- Maintaining consortium documentation and technical documentation repositories.

OUR PLAN FOR SUCCESS

2019–2020 STRATEGIC PLAN

Be the premier solution provider for enabling access to online resources for Australia's research and education community

- Maintain growth of subscribers
- Grow new services connected to the federation
- Maintain the subscription base (AAF and ORCID)

1

Increase the value of AAF services

- Increase the value of AAF's identity and access management products and services
- Provide Professional Services to the Australian education and research community
- Deliver Managed Services to new and existing Australian subscribers

2

Lead the global access, authentication and ORCID Consortium agenda for research and education

- Continue to align with international Federation initiatives through REFEDS (Research Education Federations)
- Lead the international agenda for federated technologies and ORCID Consortium operations

3

Deliver innovation impact for the Australian eResearch agenda

- Remain aligned with the Australian eResearch Agenda as a National Research Infrastructure Facility
- Drive advances in technology to underpin leading edge research and innovation
- Leverage key strategic partnerships
- Connect research globally

4

Transfer of Company Structure

In August 2018, an Extraordinary General Meeting was held where the Members voted to change the AAF's company structure from an Incorporated Association to a Company Limited by Guarantee, as of January 2019.

The 2019 Business Plan and 2019–2020 Strategic Plan can be found at www.aaf.edu.au

AAF STAFF

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President

Bruce Callow

Vice President

Fiona Rankin

Past President

Prof Ian Gibson

Treasurer

Paul Sherlock

Public Officer AAF Inc.

Richard Northam

Member at Large

Niranjan Prabhu

AAF TEAM

Chief Executive Officer

Heath Marks

Technical Engagement and Support Manager

Terry Smith

**Technical Lead – Innovation, Software
Development and Infrastructure**

Bradley Beddoes

Service Delivery Manager

Elleina Filippi, Kathy Wheeler

Manager, Strategic Initiatives

John Scullen

Technical Lead

Shaun Mangelsdorf

Senior Developer

Russell Ianniello

Senior Developer

Ryan Caught

Technical Support Analyst

Dalia Abraham

Technical Support Analyst

Melroy Almeida

Administrative Support Services

Donna Magrath, Marita Dore

SPECIAL THANKS TO

AAF Executive Committee

AAF Team

CAUDIT

Australian Research Data Commons (ARDC)

ORCID Advisory Group

ORCID Governance Committee

The Department of Education and Training

OUR VISION

The AAF's vision is to lead access management for Australian education and research.

OUR MISSION

The AAF's mission is to deliver secure federated access that connects Australian teachers, students and researchers to global online resources.