

AUSTRALIAN ACCESS FEDERATION

STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2025



AUSTRALIAN
ACCESS FEDERATION
AAF.EDU.AU

■ STRATEGIC PLAN

BUILDING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

National eResearch Infrastructure Programs
Health & Government
Technology Sector
Persistent Identifier Community (PIDS)
Global
Key Digital Identity Providers
Research & Education CIOs

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DEVELOPING SKILLS & CAPABILITIES

Overcoming skills and capability gaps across the sector
Developing the skills and capabilities of our own staff

2

STRENGTHENING FOUNDATIONAL SERVICES

Security Posture
International Connectivity
Customer Intimacy

3

LEADING TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION

Innovating the AAF and exploring new opportunities to deliver the next generation of technologies
Shaping reference architectures

4

DEVELOPING VALUE ADDED SERVICES

Identification and exploration of potential market opportunities
Expanding existing capabilities and actively seek new business models

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STRATEGIC PLAN 2023

Established in 2009, the Australian Access Federation (AAF) is Australia's leading provider of identity and access management services to the education and research sector. The AAF facilitates trusted electronic communications and collaboration between education and research institutions, both nationally and internationally. The AAF is a vital part of the Australian eResearch infrastructure landscape and is identified as National Research Infrastructure in the Australian Government's 2016 eResearch Infrastructure Roadmap.

The AAF delivers 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. By logging in via the Federation, end users need only their institutional credentials to access a variety of services in other organisations including file transfer, data storage, compute, collaboration tools and portals, instruments, administrative systems, scholarly, teaching, learning and research resources.

Underpinning the technology is Rapid Identity Provider, a cloud-based technology to rapidly connect an organisation to the Federation and eduGAIN which enables international connectivity.

ORCID CONSORTIUM

The Consortium provides a national coordinated approach to Open Researcher Contributor ID (ORCID) implementation.

The ORCID Consortium delivers significant cost saving to the sector, through reduced licence fees and localised support. The Consortium enables the uptake of a globally unique persistent identifier for every researcher in Australia.

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. VerifID, the national verification service enables universities, public agencies, and commercial providers to accurately deliver services to students and other roles in the research and university sector. It also provides a privacy preserving interface to the Federation.

Operating as a shared service, the AAF acts as an enabler, connecting higher education and research to a rich set of services with reduced effort. It lowers the challenges of providing access within the higher education and research sector and removes inter-organisational barriers to collaboration within Australia and globally.

■ VISION

OUR VISION IS TO LEAD ACCESS MANAGEMENT FOR AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION, RESEARCH, GOVERNMENT, AND INDUSTRY.

■ MISSION

OUR MISSION IS TO DELIVER SECURE ACCESS AND IDENTITY SERVICES THAT CONNECT AUSTRALIAN TEACHERS, STUDENTS AND RESEARCHERS WITH GLOBAL ONLINE RESOURCES.

THE NEED FOR A NATIONAL CAPABILITY

Before the AAF was established the authentication, identity and access ecosystem within Australia's education and research industry was highly disconnected, incoherent, unsustainable, inefficient, and costly.

Establishing and operating the AAF to date has been achieved through a sustainable model of subscription fees. Supplementary income from the National Collaboration Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS) has assisted the AAF with advancing its platforms.

After 10 years of operation, the AAF delivers a national approach to authentication, access, verification and persistent identifiers for Australia's education and research sector. In recent years, the AAF has innovated to take this one step further by connecting its services globally (Table 1).

The AAF is a cross-cutting capability that is fundamental to Australia's digital and data eResearch infrastructure (as outlined in the Australian Government's eResearch Infrastructure Roadmap 2016).

AAF services have enabled:

- new teaching and learning, and research methods
- new fields of teaching, learning and research to connect to communities
- globally recognised research
- the connection of researchers to scholarly outputs
- new and emerging technologies to scale
- access to national and international research instruments
- interoperable cross-cutting data intensive research infrastructures





Before the AAF (prior to 2009)	AAF in 2019	2020 and beyond
Bilateral agreements between education and research institutions to connect teaching, learning and research services to its user base	AAF supporting national and international policy for cross organisational access	Extending capabilities to fully realise international cross-organisational access
No sustainable approach to the delivery of identity and access management services for the Australian sector	10 years of delivery of a sustainable national approach to identity and access management services for Australia	AAF delivering a broader range of sustainable services to the sector, which will include integration with emerging technologies and a wider range of stakeholders
Highly fragmented identity ecosystem across Australia	AAF recognised as National Research Infrastructure (NRI) and a national asset	AAF funded as a landmark and NCRIS capability
Inconsistent access methods across jurisdictions and institutions	Internationally coordinated, standards-based approach for access to national and international teaching, learning and research infrastructure	Interconnectedness of infrastructures that cement Australia's position as a world leading provider of higher education and research globally
Cost inefficiencies	Significant savings for the Australian education and research sectors	Integrated research infrastructures leveraging the AAF, enabling researchers to lead and participate in world class research
Ambiguity in researcher attribution to scholarly outputs	ORCID Consortium with over 120,000 researchers with an ORCID record	Institutions and government funding agencies able to better track outputs and measure impact in the research system

1. BUILDING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Key Activity	Outcome	Measure
National eResearch Infrastructure Programs	<p>AAF enables increased use of, and accessibility to, national research infrastructure by researchers.</p> <p>AAF services enable researchers to seamlessly shift between NCRIS digital infrastructures</p> <p>AAF services support research translation with industry</p>	Ongoing funding is secured to ensure the AAF can continue to support the trust and identity needs of NCRIS capabilities
Health & Government	Streamlined access between and increased usage of service by education, research, health, and government	Increasing recognition of the value of the AAF within health and government
Technology Sector	AAF services are informed through strong partnerships with the technology sector	AAF is recognised as a valued partner within the technology sector
Persistent Identifier Community (PIDS)	AAF contributes to maximisation of benefits through long term access to, and use of, research outputs and data sets	AAF seen as an important voice in the national and international debate regarding persistent identifiers
Global	AAF's proactive contribution to global federation activities helps set the direction for the development of international standards and policies	<p>AAF recognised as a leader by the global federation community</p> <p>AAF staff regularly present conference papers and participate in international governance activities.</p>
Key Digital Identity Providers	AAF digital identity services and technologies are aligned and informed through strong partnerships with technology providers and digital identity frameworks	AAF's portfolio of digital identity services grows in line with the investment roadmap

Research & Education CIOs

AAF's services are aligned with the needs of the sector

AAF seen as a valued adding, responsive and secure service provider by CAUDIT and its members



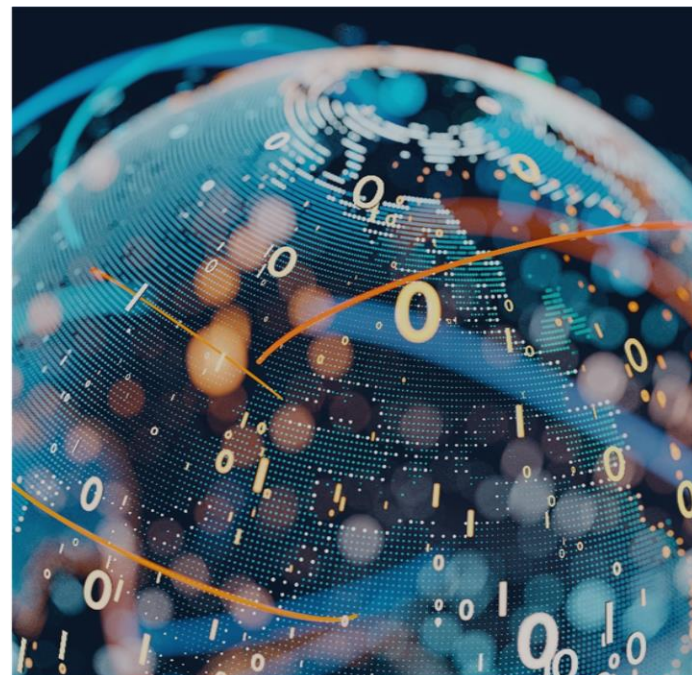
2. DEVELOPING SKILLS AND CAPABILITIES

Key Activity	Outcome	Measure
Overcoming skills and capability gaps across the sector	<p>Skills gaps in identity and access management are identified and reduced</p> <p>Increased sector knowledge and engagement with respect to identity and access management</p>	<p>AAF's technology, service roadmaps, and project activities reduce the skills needed within subscriber organisations to manage trust and identity solutions</p>
Developing the skills and capabilities of our own staff	<p>AAF staff are continually upskilled to be able to confidently lead and support the company's current and emerging activities</p>	<p>Investment in staff development is targeted and based on carefully considered individual and collective development plans.</p> <p>Individual staff are recognised within the sector and industry as subject matter experts</p>



3. STRENGTHENING FOUNDATIONAL SERVICES

Key Activity	Outcome	Measure
Security Posture	AAF's services are safe and secure	The security posture of the AAF's operations, services and technologies is consistent with its cyber security investment roadmap
International Connectivity	Australian researchers can access research infrastructures located overseas and vice versa	Year on year growth of eduGAIN services that enable internationally connected research
Customer Intimacy	Meeting the needs of the customer base Development of business intelligence capability	Annual survey confirming alignment with subscriber needs Decisions are made based on business intelligence and data analytics



4. LEADING TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION

Key Activity	Outcome	Measure
Innovating the AAF and exploring new opportunities to deliver the next generation of technologies	AAF service and technology roadmaps reflect global trust and identity trends and NCRIS needs	AAF platforms are maintainable, secure, and relevant to stakeholders
Shaping reference architectures	Standardised approaches to the authentication and authorisation needs of the sector	AAF contributes to sector wide architecture programs



5. DEVELOPING VALUE ADDED SERVICES

Key Activity	Outcome	Measure
Identification and exploration of potential market opportunities	New products introduced as opportunities are identified and analysed.	New products provide a return on investment within 18 months and fully sustainable over the life of the product
Expanding existing capabilities and actively seek new business models	AAF digital identity products are seen as market leaders	<p>AAF verification products have a large share of the market for federation deployed verification solutions</p> <p>AAF digital identity products are developed in-line with the needs of the sector</p>

