Lightning round: Innovative federation uses: Telescopes, labs, and clouds

If you think identity federations are mainly for wikis and access to scholarly databases, you should come and listen to some of the ways the Australian Access Federation is being used. From engineering lab equipment to telescopes to the synchrotron to data clouds, these innovators are federating their services to add value and expand access to a growing user base.

The Australian Access Federation (AAF) provides a framework and support infrastructure to facilitate trusted electronic communications and cross-institutional collaboration within the Australian Research and Higher Education sector. AAF Member organisations benefit by enabling their research and academic users to use their institution's Login to access a growing number of participating services and resources across Australia.

The AAF has been working with its participants to connect services which add value to the AAF and all its users. Benefits for the service provider include:

- Greater usability - users don't have to remember another username and password. They use the same username and password as they normally use every day within their organisation.
- Increased efficency - because you don't have to issue and manage credentials for all of your users. You can take advantage of the credential issuing and user registration processes that are already happening at the AAF member organisations.
- Scalability - you can offer your service to thousands of users within the federation without having any extra credential management burden.
- Trust - as a service provider you can determine the level of trust you require for accessing your service. The AAF provides a framework that allows identity providers to describe both the level of assurance in the processes used to identify the user, and the strength of the method used to authenticate the user.

The way to get the most out of the AAF is to connect services, the more useful the services that are connected, the greater value for all of its participants. This strategy has led to an increase in the number of services which specifically target the advancement of research and higher education. This lightning round will expel old notions of what federations can be used for.

The following speakers have been invited to give a 5 minute presentation each to provide some innovative examples of services that have been AAF-enabled and are available to AAF Participants. This will be followed by a period of questions and discussion.

SPEAKERS

Mr Michel de la Villefromoy
University of Technology Sydney

The Labshare project is a national initiative that uses remote labs to support the sharing of engineering teaching laboratories between institutions. Labshare will use the AAF to assist in the identification and authorisation of users from different organisations who will interact with the system in different ways and with different levels of access.

Dr Roy Duncan
Automated Patrol Telescopes Australia

telescope-net provides access to online telescopes and observing hardware, astronomical imaging services and other astronomy-related services. Connecting the service to the AAF will improve the user experience and streamline the account setup process for accessing telescope-net.

Mr Chris Myers
VeRSI

Synchrotron remote instrumentation allows remote access to instrumentation and datasets for research, experimentation and teaching. Researchers can collaborate, acquire data from the experiments and manipulate samples via motor controls through a secure, remote desktop and an interface to the controls.

Dr Nick Tate
ARCS

The ARCS Data Fabric is the country's national data storage system. It enables groups and communities to easily store, maintain and share their data and is available to all Australian researchers and free within stated limits.

CONVENER

Mr Heath Marks, Australian Access Federation (AAF)

REFERENCES

Australian Access Federation (AAF) homepage - http://www.aaf.edu.au/

Labshare homepage - http://www.labshare.edu.au/

telescope-net homepage - http://www.telescope-net.com/apta

Australian Synchrotron homepage - http://www.synchrotron.org.au/

ARCS Data Fabric homepage - http://www.arcs.org.au/index.php/arcs-data-fabric