

InCommon Update, Spring 2010

A report about operational and community supporting federated access.

The InCommon Federation, in conjunction with Internet2, supports a number of outreach and collaboration activities aimed at increasing the use of federated access to protected resources.

Certificate Service to Ramp Up

The new InCommon Certificate Service will be announced at the 2010 Spring Member Meeting. With the support of Internet2, this service will provide the higher education community with unlimited SSL and personal certificates at one price, allowing significant cost savings for campuses. The service is expected to be fully operational by the summer.

InCommon Affiliate Program Begins

InCommon has launched a new Affiliate Program, providing InCommon participants with a way to connect with partners able to help build the necessary underlying infrastructure that supports federated access. As of the 2010 Spring Member Meeting, Unicon and AegisUSA have joined the program. More information is at www.incommon.org/affiliate.

IAM Online Continues Monthly Offerings

In February 2010, InCommon unveiled IAM Online, a monthly service delivering interactive education on Identity and Access Management (IAM). Topics fall in one of three categories: federated identity management essentials, advanced issues in IAM, and hot topics from the EDUCAUSE Identity and Access Management Working Group. IAM Online is sponsored, in part, by InCommon Affiliates AegisUSA and Unicon. A complete schedule is available at www.incommon.org/iamonline.

CAMP and Advance CAMP in June

InCommon CAMP (June 21-23) and Advance CAMP (June 23-25) are sponsored in cooperation with Internet2 and several partners. CAMP: Exploring and Supporting Federated Access is open to higher ed and corporate partners and will feature tracks for prospective, new and current InCommon participants. Advance CAMP: The Second Identity Services Summit focuses on aligning identity approaches across open source projects. Both will take place in Raleigh, North Carolina. The early bird registration

deadline for both is May 10. More information is at www.incommon.org/camp.

Library Services Collaboration Group

The InCommon Library Services collaboration was assembled to investigate problems related to federated access for library services and resources. Over the last several months, the collaboration has worked to encourage additional library resource providers to join InCommon.

The group has also developed best practices relating to the use of certain attributes, created a registry of federated resources, worked on a comprehensive list of use cases related to accessing library resources. More information is available at spaces.internet2.edu/display/inclibrary/.

Student Services Collaboration Group

The InCommon Student Service collaboration group has been working on a student lifecycle concept, mapping the different types of identity proofing and levels of assurance needed at various stages of an institution's interaction with students – from inquiries through graduation. The group is also looking at the relationship of the life cycle with the InCommon Bronze and Silver attribute profiles. More information is available on the wiki: spaces.internet2.edu/display/InCCollaborate/InC-Student.

Research Agencies Collaboration Group

This new collaboration group includes universities and federal research agencies working to federate various research-oriented applications. Specific recent areas of concern include attributes – how they are handled, which are needed and any new attributes that may need to be created. Federal participants include the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health and the Department of Energy.

US Federations Collaboration Group

This collaboration group is exploring the building of federations within and across state boundaries. Invited participants include StateNets and higher-education systems staff. This effort is supported by Internet2, EDUCAUSE, and the InCommon Federation.

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US Federations Collaboration Group (continued)

The group's monthly calls have focused on hearing presentations about federations and related technology. Presentations have focused on working with K12 and state government as federation partners in the state of North Carolina and creating a new federation in Wisconsin.

The collaboration group will hold a meeting in Raleigh on June 23 after the CAMP: Exploring and Supporting Federated Access. Several stakeholders will be there to discuss the North Carolina case study in more detail. For more information, see the wiki: spaces.internet2.edu/display/USFederations.

Apple iTunesU – Phase II Coming

In late 2008, InCommon and Apple successfully completed a pilot for federated access to iTunesU. There is, however, additional work to be done to explore some additional attributes and discovery. As a result, InCommon anticipates a phase II of this project to commence in mid-2010. If you are interested in participating in phase II, please send an email to incommon-info@incommonfederation.org. Background on the original work is here: spaces.internet2.edu/display/InCCollaborate/InC-Apple.

InCommon Operations Update

InCommon operations has made a number of changes over the last few months to improve service and provide additional benefits to participants (see the left-hand column below). There are several changes to come (see the right-hand column) in the next few months. You can track our operational priorities at: <https://spaces.internet2.edu/display/InCCollaborate/Priorities>

Deployed Since Fall 2009

- Multiple IdPs per organization enabled
- SP number increased from a cap of 20 to a cap of 50 for the initial system package
- Self-signed certs in the Federation metadata
- Metadata Change Management Policy
- DIFF for testing: production to test diff and archive
- One-way notifications: inc-ops-notifications@incommonfederation.org
- Phase I: platform and DB upgrade for Silver and direct XML submissions

In the Works

- DIFF: daily production-production diff email and archive (May)
- Metadata signing key update (May)
- WAYF/Discovery Service upgrade (May) and community discussion group (Summer)
- Alerting InCommon of urgent matters
- Direct XML submissions (Summer)

About the InCommon Federation

Benefits

- InCommon supports web-based distributed authentication and authorization services, such as controlled access to protected content resources.
- Participants exchange information in a standardized format, reducing or removing the need to repeat integration work for each new resource.
- Access decisions and user privacy controls are decided on a case by case basis for each resource, providing higher security and more granular control.
- Reduced account management overhead by eliminating the need for separate accounts

- Campus and company IT professionals provide protected content to multiple organizations using a single authentication framework.
- The home institution controls when an identity is disclosed, and how much information is revealed.

Who can join InCommon?

Any accredited two- or four-year higher education institution can join InCommon. Higher education participants can sponsor their online service providers.