InCommon TAC 2020 Work Plan

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This is final version of the InCommon Technical Advisory Committee's 2020 work plan. The TAC provides recommendations related to the technical operation and management of InCommon. The work plan outlines the proposed technical priorities, particularly for the InCommon Federation.

If you have a new work item to propose, please copy the Template below and paste at the bottom of the work items, filling in a title and brief high-level description.

Alternatively, if you would like to comment on any of the existing items, please add a comment to the wiki page. *Note that you need to sign into Confluence in order to edit or leave a comment.*

Lastly, if you have a work item you'd like to propose but aren't comfortable using the wiki editor, enter it in the comments at the bottom of the page.

The areas under consideration (and detailed below) are:

- Working Groups
- Other Work Items
- (Template for New Proposed Work Item)

The TAC's 2020 work plan is a synergistic portfolio of items with two overarching themes:

1. **Making federation easier:** Lowering the barriers to getting on the federation highway for institutions that are unable or unwilling to run their own IdPs and for SPs wanting to join InCommon
2. **Increasing the value of participating in InCommon:** Increasing value proposition by thinking which wants and needs are valuable to the most people. This means solving the business case to maximize investments.

There is much overlap among the items, such that working on one item will result in momentum and progress on several other items.

Working Groups

IdP as a Service

Chartered in March of 2019 and chaired by TAC member Mary McKee (Duke) and E.J. Monti (Duquesne), the IdPaaS Working Group worked on gathering information on existing solutions and defining technical and operational requirements that an InCommon-run IdP must meet. Besides service requirements, other recommendations included criteria for feature levels, models for the responsibility for meeting the requirements of running a service among involved parties.

Status: draft of final report in progress

Other Work Items

Test federation

A sandbox for the community in the form of a test federation is needed to provide speed and agility in trying out solutions. It could also serve as a demonstration tool, perhaps incorporating different uses cases for different segments that might help increase people's interest in federation. Features of a test federation would likely include a number of the recommendations from the TAC-sponsored Deployment Profile and Streamlining SP Onboarding Working Group

Status: drafting of charter in progress. Launching of working group currently on hold due to shifting priorities caused by COVID-19.

Cloud Services Cookbook update

The Committee on Institutional Collaboration, now the BTAA, worked on the Cloud Services Cookbook about six years ago to figure out the standard things that we can ask cloud providers to do to integrate properly with InCommon. The landscape has changed and an update is needed. Updating the cookbook is on both the TAC's and the REFEDS 2020 work plan.

Deployment Profile work recommendations

The Deployment Profile Working Group created a major revision to SAML2int, the SAML 2.0 deployment profile, which addressed the issue of unique user identifiers by creating two new pairwise user identifiers to supersede existing attributes. The TAC accepted the group's final report and recommendations in March of 2019 and Kantara reviewed and ratified the revised profile. The recommendations included changing encryption algorithms, adoption of the new identifiers, SAML 2.1. The TAC will be evaluating the priority and meaning of the recommendations to InCommon. Some of the recommendations will likely be included in a test federation and subsequent iterations of Baseline Expectations.

Status: strategizing in progress

Seamless Access evaluation

Seamless Access builds on the guidelines from RA21. It is a collaborative initiative working to improve how library subscription content from publishers is accessed by promoting federated identity and accompanying technologies to move away from IP-based access. The TAC will be evaluating SA to make a clear decision about what it is InCommon needs to do. This could be a testbed and the work would include a community review. See the May 2020 IAM Online on Simplifying Federated Access to Scholarly Content and Services and The Scholarly Kitchen post, 'Guest Post – Seamless Remote Access During a Global Pandemic: An Indispensable Necessity' for background.

Status: monitoring

(Template for New Proposed Work Item)

High-level description of new work item.

Suggestion/Action Item	Comments or Elaboration	Name, Organization