20 February 2013

Building Identity Trust Federations Conference Call

February 20, 2013

1) In Attendance

- Suresh Balakrishnan (University of Maryland System)
- Brian Burkhart (OneNet)
- George Laskaris (NJEDge.Net)
- Greg Monaco (Kansas State University/GPN)
- Steve Olshansky (Internet2)
- Mark Scheible (MCNC)
- Valerie Vogel (EDUCAUSE)
- Ann West (Internet2)

2) Quilt Winter Member Meeting and InCommon Federation Workshop Reports

- The Quilt Winter Member Meeting (February 5-7, 2013) and InCommon Federation Workshop (February 7-8, 2013) were both quite successful, with 60+ attendees.
- There was a lot of interest in and acknowledgement about the importance of IdM. If you want to take advantage of NET+ services, you really need to have IdM as a critical infrastructure to support it.
- There has been some confusion about what regionals need to do. InCommon chartered a working group that started last summer; George and MCNC actively participate. The group is looking at models that might allow InCommon to extend beyond current constituents (beyond R1 institutions) and reach out to community anchors such as regionals. They have drafted a blueprint for things that InCommon should continue doing, as well as tasks that could be distributed to regionals on a state-by-state basis (depending on whether a state might be centralized or distributed).
- The basic model that they're working toward is creating an InCommon membership category for a regional network. They would take on tasks to extend down to other community anchor institutions so we're all agreeing on metadata management. InCommon would also create tools for regional networks.
- Mark's report on the technical breakout: They discussed what type of model would work given the variety and differences among the regionals. Some may be better situated to do federation, have in-house skill sets, are already working with K-12, etc. Some are focused mostly on higher ed and their charter is to support colleges and universities, so they don't have the ability to work with K-12. The goal is identifying how to provide options for regionals such as: guidance and consulting, training, running an IdP, supporting the infrastructure (hosting IdPs), etc. Scaling of the large metadata files used for federation may be an obstacle to overcome. There is current testing between InCommon and some of the European federations to determine how to keep metadata manageable. Technical analysis and preparation still needs to be done before the pilots to determine what makes the most sense. Ideally solutions can be provided that will work for a variety of situations.
- Ann: It was clear throughout the track (and later) that there's a lot of variety in terms of what the regionals are ready to support. Now they are discussing what the key pieces are that need to be standard across all regionals and are non-negotiable.
- Regionals understand that they may need this infrastructure in order to offer more cloud services in the future.
- The workshop illustrated the responsiveness of the regionals, especially the acknowledgement that they have a key role to play. It's also encouraging that InCommon wants to leverage tools, policies, and other resources to help with these regional efforts.
- There will be opportunities working through the Quilt to have one regional helping another.
- There will also be a need to develop use cases for the regional perspective.
- These efforts should be further along by the next Internet2 Member Meeting in April.

Resources
Note that two pre-workshop webinars were held in January and resources are available.

- January 18 webinar, Introduction to Federations and InCommon: Archived recording and slides
- January 25 webinar, Getting Ready for La Jolla: Archived recording and slides