INCOMMON FEDERATION: PARTICIPANT OPERATIONAL PRACTICES

Participation in the InCommon Federation ("Federation") enables a federation participating organization ("Participant") to use Shibboleth *identity attribute* sharing technologies to manage access to on-line resources that can be made available to the InCommon community. One goal of the Federation is to develop, over time, community standards for such cooperating organizations to ensure that shared *attribute assertions* are sufficiently robust and trustworthy to manage access to important protected resources. As the community of trust evolves, the Federation expects that participants eventually should be able to trust each other's *identity management systems* and resource *access management systems* as they trust their own.

A fundamental expectation of Participants is that they provide authoritative and accurate attribute assertions to other Participants, and that Participants receiving an attribute assertion protect it and respect privacy constraints placed on it by the Federation or the source of that information. In furtherance of this goal, InCommon requires that each Participant make available to other Participants certain basic information about any identity management system, including the identity attributes that are supported, or resource access management system registered for use within the Federation.

Two criteria for trustworthy attribute assertions by *Identity Providers* are: (1) that

2.2 "Member of Community" [4] is an assertion that might be offered to enable access to resources made available to individuals who participate in the primary mission of the university or organization. For example, this assertion might apply to anyone whose affiliation is "current student, faculty, or staff."

What subset of persons registered in your identity management system would you identify as a "Member of Community" in Shibboleth identity assertions to other InCommon Participants?

Only accounts existing in our enterprise level directory would qualify as a "member of community" local college level accounts would not qualify.

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2.3 Please describe in general terms the administrative process used to establish an electronic identity that results in a record for that person being created in your *electronic identity database*? Please identify the office(s) of record for this purpose. For example, "Registrar's Office for students; HR for faculty and staff."

Once a person is entered into our ERP system an automated process creates an account. HR for faculty and staff, Registrar for students and Admissions for applicants.

2.4 What technologies are used for your electronic identity credentials (e.g., Kerberos, userID/ password, PKI, ...) that are relevant to Federation activities? If more than one type of electronic credential is issued, how is it determined who receives which type? If multiple credentials are linked, how is this managed (e.g., anyone with a Kerberos credential also can acquire a PKI credential) and recorded?

UserID/password

2.5 If your electronic identity credentials require the use of a secret password or PIN, and there are circumstances in which that secret would be transmitted across a network without being protected by encryption (i.e., "clear text passwords" are used when accessing campus services), please identify who in your organization can discuss with any other Participant concerns that this might raise for them:

Richard Blood

2.6 If you support a "single sign-on" (SSO) or similar campus-wide system to allow a single user authentication action to serve multiple applications, and you will make use of this to authenticate people for InCommon Service Providers, please describe the key security aspects of your SSO system including whether session timeouts are enforced by the system, whether user-initiated session termination is supported, and how use with "public access sites" is protected.

SSO timeouts are enforced. We offer a Public/Private SSO session timeout option

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[4] "Member" is one possible value for eduPersonAffiliation as defined in the eduPerson schema. It is intended to include faculty, staff, student, and other persons with a basic set of privileges that go with membership in the university community (e.g., library privileges). "Member of Community" could be derived from other values in eduPersonAffiliation or assigned explicitly as "Member" in the electronic identity database. See http://www.educause.edu/eduperson/

2.7 Are your primary *electronic identifiers* for people, such as "net ID," eduPersonPrincipalName, or eduPersonTargetedID considered to be unique for all time to the individual to whom they are assigned? If not, what is your policy for re-assignment and is there a hiatus between such reuse?

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2.8 How is information in your electronic identity database acquired and updated? Are specific offices designated by your administration to perform this function? Are individuals allowed to update their own information on-line?

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2.9 What information in this database is considered "public information" and would be provided to any interested party?

Any attribute value identified as "Directory" information according to SANS.

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2.10 Please identify typical classes of applications for which your electronic identity credentials are used within your own organization.

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Additional Notes and Details on the Operational Practices Questions

As a community of organizations willing to manage access to on-line resources cooperatively, and often without formal contracts in the case of non-commercial

staff, and active students" but it might also include alumni, prospective students, temporary employees, visiting scholars, etc. In addition, there may be formal or informal mechanisms for making exceptions to this definition, e.g., to accommodate a former student still finishing a thesis or an unpaid volunteer.

This question asks to whom you, as an *Identity Provider*, will provide electronic credentials. This is typically broadly defined so that the organization can accommodate a wide variety of applications locally. The reason this question is important is to distinguish between the set of people who might have a credential that you issue and the subset of those people who fall within your definition of "Member of Community" for the purpose of InCommon *attribute assertions*.

[2.2] The *assertion* of "Member of Community" is often good enough for deciding whether to grant access to basic on-line resources such as library-like materials or websites. InCommon encourages participants to use this *assertion* only for "Faculty, Staff, and active Students" but some organizations may have the need to define this differently. InCommon *Service Providers* need to know if this has been defined differently.

[2.3] For example, if there is a campus recognized office of record that issues such electronic credentials and that office makes use of strong, reliable technology and good database management practices, those factors might indicate highly reliable credentials and hence trustworthy *identity assertions*.

[2.4] Different technologies carry different inherent risks. For example, a userID and password can be shared or "stolen" rather easily. A PKI credential or SecureID card is much harder to share or steal. For practical reasons, some campuses use one technology for student credentials and another for faculty and staff. In some cases, sensitive applications will warrant stronger and/or secondary credentials.

[2.5] Sending passwords in "clear text" is a significant risk, and all InCommon Participants are strongly encouraged to eliminate any such practice. Unfortunately this may be difficult, particularly with legacy applications. For example, gaining access to a centralized calendar application via a wireless data connection while you are attending a conference might reveal your password to many others at that conference. If this is also your campus credential password, it could be used by another person to impersonate you to InCommon Participants.

[2.6] "Single sign-on" (SSO) is a method that allows a user to unlock his or her *electronic identity credential* once and then use it for access to a variety of resources and applications for some period of time. This avoids people having to remember many different identifiers and passwords or to continually log into and out of systems. However, it also may weaken the link between an *electronic identity* and the actual person to whom it refers if someone else might be able to use the same computer and assume the former user's *identity*. If there is no limit on the duration of a SSO session, a Federation *Service Provider* may be concerned about the validity of any *identity assertions* you might make. Therefore it is important to ask about your use of SSO technologies.

[2.7] In some *identity management systems*, primary identifiers for people might be reused, particularly if they contain common names, e.g. Jim Smith@MYU.edu.