Futures2 Planning Initiative Process

This document outlines the process to be used by the Futures2 Planning Working Group of the InCommon Trust and Identity Division and InCommon Steering committee to develop a shared statement of direction and strategic areas of activity that will drive where the Research and Higher Education IAM capabilities collectively need to be in 2028.

Overview

This planning process includes three phases:

Define & Scope– This phase of the initiative is to define the challenge to be addressed, determine the audiences engaged and major questions to be answered during the planning process as well as the decision principles and communication approach the drafting committee will use to guide and communication our final recommendations.

Explore & Analyze – This phase of the initiative is to discover and assimilate business, target audience, and landscape context to shape InCommon objectives, strategies, and innovation investments. Through a set of facilitated focus groups, community surveys, and research, the following can be conducted.

Strategies and Recommendations– This phase synthesizes learnings from the previous phases and culminates in a document that guides the necessary tactics/workstreams to operationalize the vision.

Define & Scope

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Why Engage the Community in Planning Now?

Today, an organization must have digital identity at its core for all users. The pandemic is demonstrating how broken business practices are not just an inconvenience but a critical barrier to work and collaboration in any meaningful way. Our current strategy of "fix-one-and-extend" has not bridged the gap between non-technical stakeholders and technology enablement. How are we keeping our online environment aligned with the evolving business?

The pandemic has also acutely demonstrated our nation's reliance on global science communities. But we must be able to move faster and include a wider diversity of researchers to have a faster and greater impact. How do we open more doors to the minds we need in the future?

Internet options for social engagement, productivity, and entertainment are creating a stakeholder expectation of seamless integration and ease of use across all devices. At our organizations however, they are confronted with a confusing, complex, jargon-rich and disjointed experience. Why can't I just use my cell identity to access my work?

To support our evolving missions, enable productivity and reduce risk, we need the electronic world to more closely mirror the real world.

Over the last 20+ years, Internet2's InCommon has become a trusted partner for the strategic creation, evolution, and maintenance of IAM Infrastructure, services and software for Higher Education and Research. To build on this role, InCommon Community and Internet2's Trust and Identity Leadership are embarking on a futuring exercise to develop a shared statement of direction and strategic areas of activity that will drive where our IAM capabilities collectively need to be in 2028.

What market pressures, players, trends, environmental challenges are driving change that the community needs to solve for in the next 5 years? Where does this leave higher education and research and our partners? What role should Internet2 play? These are the questions we hope to answer through this process.

Questions to be Answered

These questions map out the big picture of what we're trying to achieve with the planning process. What value will it bring if our planning and execution are successful?

- What are the major trends in Higher Education and Research that the community will need to respond to in the next 5 years?
- What are the corresponding trends in industry and other external forces that institutions will have to consider?
- How will these two questions affect what higher education and research IT will need to support or protect against?
- What capabilities need to be developed and what is no longer needed?
- What will Internet2's InCommon do to provide strategic value to the communities we serve and what should it not do?
- Whom do we serve and what audiences will be strategically important as we move forward?

Target Organizations and Roles to Engage in Phase 2

The organizations that we're seeking to get feedback from during Phase 2 have been prioritized based on our projection of the complex use cases that they may have based on historical experience.

Audience Organization	*Priority for Feedback based on complexity of future use cases*
Large Research Universities	High
Medium-Sized Univ/Colleges	High
Small Colleges	Medium
MS-CC	High
K-12	Low
Community Colleges	Medium
Industry/Service Providers	High
Catalyst Industry Partners	High
R&E Regional Network Providers	Medium
International Partners	Medium
Research	High
Federal Agencies	High
Standards Bodies	Low

Audience Role	*Priority for Feedback based on complexity of future use cases*
CIO/CTO	High
IAM Practitioner	High
IAM Architect	High
CISO	High
LIbrary	Medium
Research	Medium
Developers	Medium
Business Analyst	Medium
Operations	Medium
End User	Low

Target Existing Community Groups to Engage in Phase 2

The following are existing groups that serve as sources of the organizations/roles cited above. These groups would be engaged in the focus groups and survey.

HIgh

- InCommon Steering Committee
- InCommon Technical Advisory Committee
- Community Trust and Assurance Board
- Community Architecture Committee for Trust and Identity
- eduroam Advisory Committee
- InCommon Catalysts (Corporate Support Partners)
- Component Architects (Trusted Access Platform Developers)
- Internet2 Staff, including Trust and Identity Division-
- InCommon Corporate Customers (Federated Service Providers)
- REN-ISAC (Security)
- Federal Agencies (NIST, NIH, NSF, DoE, NASA)

- EDUCAUSE CIO Community (Small College/Diversity of Schools)

Medium

- Quilt (Research and Education Networks)
- Federated Identity Management 4 Research (Research/International)
- Federated Identity Management 4 Libraries (Library/International)
- Minority Serving Cyberinfrastructure Consortium (MS-CC)
- International Federation Operators (REFEDS, eduGAIN)
- Academic Research (CASC, Globus)

Low

- Standards Bodies (Kantara)

Guiding Principles for the Overall Futures2 Planning Working Group

The guiding principles below will provide a basis for decisions we make during the process.

- Our work together must stand up to the lens of the broader community. We must assume that we operate in transparency by default.
- It is essential to foster confidence and inclusion in our activities and messaging.
- The process we design to engage the community and develop the additional artifacts will be as important as the final document we produce. The process of producing this document has value in and of itself. This process is a community-engagement exercise with expected goodness and "bounce."
- We want individuals to see themselves (or someone like them) as contributing to the process in some way.
- Our decisions, strategies and recommendations can be traced to community or research-driven data or citations.
- The actors guiding this process are the community and Internet2. All decisions are driven by consensus by the Steering Futures2 Working Group.
- We will respect the opinions, business needs, and time of all members. We are advocates for each other.
- We will facilitate preparation with clear communication and the timely dissemination of information to Steering Committee and the Community at-large. The likelihood of an impact will be higher if we communicate and tell the story as it unfolds.

Explore & Analyze

InCommon Business Context, Strategic Objectives & Desired Outcomes

A series of internal leadership and selected-staff discussions to map what is happening within the organization that will influence the InCommon planning efforts. Focus groups seek to gather and define:

- ***Business Context**: What is happening in the organization at large – shifts, changes, challenges. This should reflect the general "state of the business" and key priorities and initiatives related to our core lines of business. What are the drivers fueling us forward?*
- ***Strategic Objectives**: Where is InCommon hoping to achieve? Themes from the Internet2 5-Year Roadmap.*
- ***Desired Outcomes**: What is the change organization wants to see because of our work?*

Broad Community and InCommon Customer Survey

Develop a survey to send to key stakeholders about challenges they face.

Stakeholder Input Sessions

Focus-group meetings or interviews with external stakeholders (from above) to understand climate, challenges, needs and desires for future state and answer the "Questions to be Answered" identified above.

Education and Research Landscape Trends & Opportunities

Reviews trends in the marketplace and the challenges that we face in terms of economic, social, and technological influences. Important element is future-casting – what is on the horizon in this fast-changing environment across our community? Identifies gaps and opportunities in the market.

Consider:

- *Trends in R&E – where are things going? How is the higher ed landscape changing?*
- *Trends within our core competencies – T&I, Networking, Cloud, etc.*
- *Trends in learning and delivery*

How will we respond?

Industry Assessment

What capabilities will the industry sector likely support in 5 years? In what ways do we compete or collaborate? What are our unique differentiators? What gaps should/could we fill?

Product/Service Assessment

What is the array of products/services we deliver? How are they integrated? How do they stack up against competition or market needs? Where are there gaps/opportunities?

Consideration: Given our community-driven orientation, how well are we serving the community (what's working, what's not, what gaps exist) given future-casting?

Data Analysis

A review of any/all analytics (members, participants, software usage, services, marketing, web, digital marketing, etc.) What can we learn? What is the data telling us? Where do we have gaps in data? Consider:

Strategies and Recommendations

A set of community and Internet2 shared strategies and recommendations to prepare us collectively to provide what is needed for access management in 2028.

Key Finding Highlights

While most of the output of the Explore & Analyze phase shows up in the items below, this section offers a synopsis of our methodology and highlights and artifacts from our findings The result of our homework.

Vision, Mission, Objectives, and Metrics

Vision: North Star
Our sacred, persistent belief, and the 'so what' of our work that is worth championing; the change it could result in.

5-Year Mission		
Commercial Position	**Customer Purpose**	**Cultural Perception**
What is our ambitious, yet achievable market position?	*The role/function that our customers (as a whole) perceive we play in their lives?*	*How our organization is recognized as championing within the culture at-large*

Business Objectives
A set of objectives that guide our work together.

Scorecard
7-10 metrics that help us assess progress toward 3-year mission.

Strategic Themes

How our 5-year mission will be realized.

- *Strategic Themes: 3-5 strategic fields of play that enable us to achieve our shared objectives.*

Prioritized Target Audience + Product/Service Matrix

How we are prioritizing our target audience segments and mapping current/new products to address needs, landscape trends, and internal objectives.

Should include

- *Key partners and our strategies with them*
- *Cost structures and revenue streams*

Brand and Messaging Strategy

Sets forth the strategy for the way in which our brand and message will be conveyed to target audiences. This informs everything from website, digital marketing, and printed collateral to outreach & CRM tools.

Considerations:

- *What is the essence of our story?*
- *What is different about what we do together?*
- *Who do we want to become, and what role will we play?*
- *What do we want our work to be defined by?*
- *What guides our actions and drives our culture?*
- *How do we sound, look, and make people feel?*