



# OARnet Pilot

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**OARnet**

An **OH·TECH** Consortium Member

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# OARnet - Pilot Overview

OARnet is working with InCommon Affiliate *Fischer International Identity* to develop and pilot a cloud-based federated identity solution for Ohio's K-12 to Community College community. The concept is using cloud-based software-as-a-service in a shared hosted environment in order to bring federated identity to those members who are least able to federate on their own.

Most of K-12/CC have limited resources and we are investigating whether delivering federated identity in a subscription-based, low-footprint model will increase adoption and decrease cost of federation technology.

A FIDM that is widely adopted would make it easier to deliver federated services to members. We are looking at Library Services, State of Ohio Board of Regents services, and shared roaming wireless as the first set of services.

# OARnet - Pilot Description

## 1. Target constituents and scope

- 23 Public community colleges in the state of Ohio
- Initial scope will be 3-5 community colleges and 3 applications.

## 2. Federation model selected

- Hybrid. Some IdP's will be individually operated in a distributed mesh as part of the federation and will also be members of InCommon; there will also a central "IdP of last resort" for institutions not operating their own or institutions that are not members of InCommon.

## 3. Targeted applications or services

1. Library Access: Federated web-based access to the OhioLINK library network via SAML
2. State Board of Regents applications: Federated authentication incorporating the Ohio Statewide Student Identifier (SSID)
3. Shared roaming wireless: Federated, authenticated access to wireless networks across all participating Ohio institutions using the Eduroam model

## 4. InCommon Affiliate assistance/role in pilot

1. Fischer International Identity will be providing IdP services to constituents who need assistance with IdP setup/operations

# OARnet - Pilot Goals

- High-Level Goals:
  - Enhance the classroom and online teaching in Ohio Community Colleges by increasing adoption of federated access to three key services:
    - Library Access (OhioLINK using SAML)
    - State Board of Regents Student Services (Web)
    - Wireless Network Access (Eduroam model)
  - Long-term goal of the pilot is to extend the benefits of federation down to K12 in order to provide a seamless transition process to higher education.
- Detailed goals:
  - Understand/drive demand for cloud-based identity
  - Develop the value proposition for cloud-based identity

# OARnet – Pilot Value Proposition

- Value proposition will depend on three factors:
  1. Cloud-based delivery of IDM software-as-a-service
    - Easier initial setup and ongoing change management
    - Lower impact on local servers/hardware/DC space/staff
    - Faster availability of patches/new features in IDM software
  2. Shared hosting operations of the software by OARnet
    - Smaller institutions have greatest need for help w/hosting
    - Allows us to keep data in State of Ohio where required
    - Support/operations by OARnet, already trusted by members
  3. Tiered/aggregated purchasing by OARnet members
    - The more schools/users buy in, the greater the savings.
    - Discount from IDM vendor for OARnet doing the hosting

# OARnet – Pilot Challenges

## 1. Slow (but steady) adoption

There has not been a “surge” of institutions looking to adopt, but rather a “trickle”. This might be due to a combination of factors:

- Low demand for IDM/Federation in general?
- Lack of awareness of solution?
- Price or function requirements not being met?

## 2. Hosting value proposition

- It's taken more time/complexity to develop hosting operations suitable for the IDM software than we initially expected
- Low adoption means it will take longer to recover the initial and ongoing costs of hosting operations:
  - Hosting cost (e.g. staff/server/network/disk) is sunk whether 1 or 100 institutions use the system
  - [Vendor discount for hosting it ourselves] has to exceed [hosting cost we incur] for this to make economic sense.

# OARnet – Pilot Successes/Lessons Learned

## Successes

1. Institutions that use the solution are pleased with it
2. Led to increased InCommon participation
3. We have developed a much more detailed understanding of the cost/value of hosting operations

## Unanticipated Benefits

1. Solution is being adopted more quickly by the private higher ed community
2. Developing this pilot has opened doors to discussions about federated services in general

# OARnet – Pilot Status and Path Forward

- Where things are now
  - 3-5 institutions in various stages of deployment of Fischer
  - Solution is not being currently hosted by OARnet, but by Fischer in their Rackspace environment
    - We are developing the capability to do the hosting ourselves
  - Institutions have been adopting SAML for Library Services access
  - Eduroam is being developed for introduction to the system
- Plans for scaling beyond current scope (Post-Pilot Goals/Next Steps)
  - Introduce solution to additional community colleges and K-12 schools
  - Increase the adoption of SAML for Library services so we can retire legacy protocols
  - Prove the value proposition for OARnet hosting, and operationalize it.



**Questions?**