Introduction

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The Internet2 community has released the first version of software and practices under the TIER (Trust and Identity in Education and Research) program.

This baseline release represents a crucial first step in providing structural frameworks upon which the community can build. We are grateful to the many community members who have worked extremely hard in numerous capacities to enable this first release of TIER. Our appreciation also goes to the institutions that have loaned subject matter experts to the TIER Program.

This report provides all of the necessary information to understand the background, current state and future of the TIER Program as it is currently understood today.

Background

What is TIER?

TIER is both an open-source toolset and a campus practice set. The toolset includes open-source software components and APIs packaged in a container, with a regular release schedule. The campus practice set includes creation and adoption of a community-defined set of requirements to ensure a common approach to identity and access management.

TIER History

TIER is a response to the need for a comprehensive suite for identity and access management, and consistent campus identity practices. Starting in 1999, the Internet2 community collaborated to develop a number of open-source software packages including the three that have been subsequently chosen as core components of the TIER Program (Shibboleth, Grouper and COmanage). These are now widely-deployed throughout the InCommon Federation. The TIER Program grew out of campus discussions and the desire to align efforts to form an open-source, community-developed identity and access management suite, with coordinated campus practices to ensure interoperability. More than 100 community members participate in TIER working groups. The effort is initially funded by 49 investor campuses and guided by the 9 person TIER Community Investor Council. More information on the process and history of TIER is on the About TIER web page.

Formative Work

In order to package and deliver the software in TIER Release One, considerable work had to be coordinated across myriad constituencies and disciplines. To meet the primary objective of *Durable Standards and Practices* identified by the community, campus practitioners and Internet2 staff produced the comprehensive set of work packages and convened the necessary conversations to ensure that needs of the primary recipients (campus adopters) would be met.

To properly align the efforts, resources such as assigned university staff, contractors and consultants had to be properly engaged. Levels of engagement range from one-third time to full-time equivalents. Additional partner relationships and resources will be retained as funding and a persistent scope of work evolves throughout the course of the program.

TIER relies heavily on several working groups to get the specification work done, involving more than 100 active, contributing participants from the community. These teams work to ensure complete and comprehensive software development, documentation, partner engagement, and campus engagement. Internet2 has also hired software developers, a project manager, and a vice president for trust and identity thanks to the funds provided by the 49 TIER investor institutions.

Related pages

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