Research.gov and InCommon Overview

Overview of NSF and InCommon

The National Science Foundation (NSF) joined the InCommon Federation in January 2009 to provide NSF's research and education community easier access to online services using Research.gov. InCommon leverages technology developed under an NSF-funded grant that enables researchers and sponsored programs offices to securely access Research.gov using the user ID and password issued by their institution. This feature is called federated identity management.

InCommon is a non-profit organization offering services in federated identity management to its members[1] – institutions of higher education, federal agencies, research organizations, and corporations in the United States and abroad– that provide services to member institutions and reaches more than 4.5 million end users. The mission of the InCommon is to create and support a common, secure framework in which users gain access to many online resources that support education and research in the United States by using their institution user ID and password. NSF first demonstrated InCommon's federated identity management service to access NSF systems at the Internet2 Conference in December 2006. Since this initial exposure, the research community has requested the capability to use their institution user ID and password to access Research.gov.

Research Community Benefits

■ The ability to access Research.gov using institutional user IDs and passwords.

■ The ability to use the same login credentials across agencies (e.g., NIH).

■ Minimizes the number of user IDs and passwords that researchers are required to remember.

InCommon Pilot

The InCommon login feature is currently being piloted with a limited number of institutions. This approach ensures the functionality meets user needs before it is expanded to all InCommon members in the NSF community. Each active institution has developed a login page where members can access Research.gov as well as their university's services, using their institution user ID and password.

	Phase*	Institution	Timing	Pilot Status
1	Phase I	Pennsylvania State University	October 2010	Active
2		University of California - Davis		Active
3		University of Washington		Active
4	Phase II	Colorado State University	December 2010	Pending
5		Georgetown University		Pending

Plans for Expanding InCommon Login Features
NSF plans to increase access to additional Research.gov users at InCommon member institutions and to expand this feature to other NSF systems, such as FastLane.

Contact Information
For more information about InCommon and Research.gov, please contact the National Science Foundation:
(703) 292-8150 or feedback@research.gov.

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[1] An updated list of InCommon participants is available at http://www.incommonfederation.org/participants/.