

DEST Funded Standards Capability – NCRIS ANDS Statement

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DEST has developed a standards capability with a proven track record helping communities to solve real interoperability problems. The core of the standards capability is a team known as **Link Affiliates** that works with Australian communities, infrastructure projects, and with national and international standards organisations. Link Affiliates has been focused on education and repositories infrastructure, but in the past year has expanded to include e-research expertise. The team is distributed and portable. Organisationally, it is currently based at the University of Southern Queensland and has a close relationship with e-Research activities at the University of Melbourne.

As a result of this capability, Australia has an international reputation for influencing, adapting and adopting standards to build interoperable systems. The team participate in both formal ISO style standards organizations and more agile standards development consortia. The team take a broad view of the term “standard”, using a definition of “authoritative advice created through a consensus building and endorsement process”.

Link Affiliates capabilities relevant to ANDS

Federated services

Link Affiliates can assist in the development of federated services. The team has experience working with existing SII projects including ARROW, APSR, DART, ARCHER, RUBRIC, MAMs, RAMP, AAF, and in piloting standards in demonstration projects including COLIS, PILIN, and FRED to establish best practice, policy, and governance for using the standards in ongoing service provision.

Link Affiliates activities of particular relevance to ANDS:

- PILIN - management and technical leadership to the PILIN persistent identifiers project.
- FRED project – development of metadata registry and discovery tools (including OAI harvesting tools).
- Standards activities relevant to the access federation (e.g. XACML, eduPerson).
- Standards development activities in metadata, ontologies, registries, discovery, repositories, content formats etc.

Outreach services

Link Affiliates can provide outreach services to the planning and early development phases of projects to:

- Identify, adopt and adapt (profile) standards to meet interoperability requirements.
- Engage with bodies developing e-Research standards.
- Provide advice on short-term and long-term planning for standards based interoperability.
- Use the e-Framework for Research & Education and other processes and tools for engaging communities with standards and strategic planning, create networks of expertise and document recommendations against data management issues.
- Producing best practice documents relating to interoperability issues and persistent identifiers

Stewardship services

Link Affiliates manages Australia's contribution to the international e-Framework for Research & Education. The e-Framework provides a methodology for creating, publishing and disseminating information about interoperability solutions, standards, their adoption and adaptation by local communities, and provides a knowledge base to record decisions, outcomes and best practice. The interoperability outcomes of many DEST funded infrastructure projects, including PILIN, FRED and APSR are being contributed to the e-Framework.

Link Affiliates manages and supports DEST's international partnerships targeted at the standards-based interoperability agenda. Partners include the JISC in the UK and the US Department of Defence. NCRIS capabilities could use these partnerships to access international experience and advice on building e-Research systems.