

OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK
NATIONAL E-RESEARCH ARCHITECTURE TASKFORCE
(NeAT)

ROLE

NeAT will:

- provide a mechanism to undertake a technical examination of future generations of tools and services¹ needed by the (1) Interoperation and Collaboration Infrastructure and (2) Australian National Data Service communities;
- make recommendations on priority projects to be funded;
- oversee the development and implementation of e-Research tools to embed them in research communities; and
- provide advice to AeRIC on issues associated with the development and use of e-Research tools in Australia.

Activities

In order to effectively fulfil its role, NeAT will:

- engage with the broader e-Research community;
- work closely with the governing bodies of the Interoperation and Collaboration Infrastructure and of the Australian National Data Service;
- take note of developments in the Computational Tools and Techniques component of the National Computational Infrastructure;
- develop a thorough understanding of the e-Research landscape, including;
 - the current generation of e-Research tools,
 - research being undertaken to develop e-Research tools,
 - trends in e-Research,
 - researchers' priority for the development of particular tools, particularly researchers in each of the funded NCRIS capabilities,
- using its understanding of the e-Research landscape, identify and prioritise activities that will provide the next generation of e-Research tools, and make funding recommendations to AeRIC;
- work collaboratively with the relevant research community to successfully conduct projects to bring e-Research tools into 'production' through the governing bodies of the Interoperation and Collaboration Infrastructure and of the Australian National Data Service;
- in all of its activities, seek to broaden and strengthen expertise and skills relevant to e-Research; and
- through its Chair, maintain a strong relationship with AeRIC.

Two key factors that NeAT will need to take into account are:

1. the change in emphasis and skills necessary to take the outcomes of research into e-Research tools and turn those tools into 'production' level tools which are embedded in research communities; and
2. the development of global standards and other international developments and their importance to Australian researchers in the relevant discipline, including how to 'adopt, adapt and influence' global standards, components and middleware to create tools and services that meet identified discipline needs.

¹ 'Tool' includes...

It is expected that projects approved for funding on the basis of NeAT recommendations will have the following characteristics:

1. a focus on embedding a tool or service within a research community;
2. timeframes for projects should be short (1-2 years), reflecting NeAT's focus on getting tools into 'production';
3. coinvestment would be expected which potentially, but not necessarily, would rise with the breadth of the expected audience; and
4. projects would include activities to encourage uptake by researchers, including awareness raising and skills development.

MODE OF OPERATION

Membership of NeAT

Membership of NeAT will be determined by DEST and AeRIC.

Chair

NeAT will be chaired by the Executive Director of AeRIC, or another person chosen by DEST and AeRIC.

Other Members

The membership of NeAT will be decided on the basis of the skills and knowledge of the members, as well as their ability to take the whole-of-sector view necessary for NeAT to successfully undertake its activities.

Remuneration

NeAT positions are honorary positions and no remuneration or sitting fees will be paid.

Travel Expenses

Reasonable travel expenses for NeAT members to attend NeAT meetings will be reimbursed by the AeRIC Secretariat.

Conflicts of Interest

As its decisions and recommendations will affect funding decisions, NeAT will adopt a Conflict of Interest policy consistent with that of the NCRIS Committee and AeRIC.

Conduct of Meetings

Regularity of Meetings

It is expected that NeAT will meet on an 'as-needs' basis. It is likely that meetings would be infrequent but intensive.

Quorum

No quorum will be set for NeAT meetings.

Manner of decisions

NeAT shall seek to reach decisions on a consensus basis.

Records of Meetings

The NeAT secretariat will keep appropriate records of decisions and resolutions made by NeAT.