

Call for input

Investment strategy for eResearch tools and services

Overview

Ideas are sought from interested research communities on the ongoing investment strategy for next generation eResearch tools and services.

This is not a call for formal proposals for funding. Rather, it is an invitation to research communities to come forward with ideas about the development of new tools and services that seek to transform researcher practice. Following an iterative process to prioritise and refine these ideas, there is scope to develop a detailed proposal to be submitted to the National eResearch Architecture Taskforce (NeAT) for consideration and funding.

Background

The National eResearch Architecture Taskforce (NeAT) is a committee of experts established to develop and assist the adoption of new eResearch methods and tools. NeAT is tasked with overseeing the development and implementation of e-Research tools and embedding these into research communities.

NeAT is developing projects that require the support of the Australian National Data Service (ANDS) and/or the Australian Research Collaboration Service (ARCS), as the available funding resides within these activities.

An initial set of projects was developed earlier this year in alignment with NCRIS investments. This is a second and deliberately broader call for input and ideas that will assist a range of research communities and contribute to the ongoing development of the investment strategy.

NeAT is seeking to develop a suite of eResearch tools and services projects that can be pursued through to June 2011. Ultimate approval of projects will come from the Australian eResearch Infrastructure Council (AeRIC).

Objectives of NeAT investments

It is expected that projects approved by AeRIC for investment on the basis of NeAT recommendations will:

- Focus on providing an eResearch tool or service to a research community;
- Encourage eResearch uptake, awareness raising and skills development;
- Be short (2 years), reflecting NeAT's focus on getting tools into 'production';
- Identify participants willing to work with ANDS and ARCS;
- Include a ready, willing and engaged long term provider for the eResearch tools and services; and
- A ready, willing and engaged user community with identified co-investment.

Scale of investment

It is anticipated that a number of projects will be supported in the investment strategy that would be either large projects (\$400k per annum) or small (\$200k per annum), commencing in 2009 and concluding in June 2011. A total of \$5 million is available for this second round of funding. Previous examples of successful NeAT projects are available at www.pfc.org.au/bin/view/Main/NeAT.

Initial scoping input

The deadline for input is 7 November 2008 and is limited to 2 pages describing:

- Overview: Summarise the context that leads to this idea.
- Needs: Describe the needs that this idea seeks to address and outline a project that would address the idea.
- Users : Identify the research communities and resource providers that this project serves; and any specific data federating or collaborating research groups, and any institutions that will participate by setting requirements or steering this project.

Development process

Following the prioritisation of ideas, NeAT members will work with those proposals most likely to lead to acceptable NeAT projects to define the result of the project in terms of the tool(s) or service(s) that will be implemented and demonstrated. Work will also be undertaken to clarify how the service could be operated in an ongoing fashion and identify the proposed operators who would be willing to participate in and support the project.

At the end of that development process, the following criteria will be used by NeAT to assess the resulting project proposals:

- 1) The project has a clear service objective and outcome
- 2) The services to be implemented address identified researcher needs
- 3) The project has a realistic scope and the proposed outcomes are achievable
- 4) The project has the potential to lead to services that may benefit a broader set of research communities; and
- 5) The project will deliver services or a product that enables new research processes.

Further information

Please contact one of the following NeAT members to discuss your ideas in the first instance and the process for generating the necessary scoping input.

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