



**Australian Government**  
**Digital Transformation Agency**

## 02 - Overview

Trusted Digital Identity Framework Release 4  
February 2021, version 1.2

**PUBLISHED VERSION**

## Digital Transformation Agency (DTA)

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### Conventions

References to TDIF documents, abbreviations and key terms (including the words *MUST*, *MUST NOT*, and *MAY*) are denoted in italics are to be interpreted as described in the current published version of the *TDIF: 01 – Glossary of Abbreviations and Terms*.

*TDIF* requirements and references to *Applicants* are to be read as also meaning *Accredited Participants*, and vice versa. The scope of *TDIF* requirements are to be read as applying to the identity system under *Accreditation* and not to the organisation's broader operating environment.

### Contact us

The *DTA* is committed to providing web accessible content wherever possible. This document has undergone an accessibility check however, if you are having difficulties with accessing the document, or have questions or comments regarding the document please email the Director, Digital Identity Policy at [identity@dta.gov.au](mailto:identity@dta.gov.au).

## Document management

The *DTA* has endorsed this document for release.

### Change log

Version	Date	Author	Description of the changes
0.1	July 2019	SJP	Initial version
0.2	Oct 2019	SJP	Updated to incorporate feedback provided by stakeholders during the first round of collaboration on TDIF Release 4
0.3	Dec 2019	SJP	Updated to incorporate feedback provided by stakeholders during the second round of collaboration on TDIF Release 4
0.4	Mar 2020	SJP	Updated to incorporate feedback provided during the public consultation round on TDIF Release 4
1.0	May 2020		Published version
1.1	Jul 2020	SJP	Updated references
1.2	Feb 2021	JK	CRID0001 – Updated references, added requirements subject area description table. CRID0003 – minor grammar and style update.

### Document review

The next scheduled review of this document will occur by July 2022. Any changes made to the document prior to this date will be recorded in a *TDIF* change management document and published to the *DTA* website.

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## Introduction

The *DTA* has been developing the *TDIF* since 2015. The *TDIF* is an *Accreditation* regime which specifies the minimum requirements that *Attribute Service Providers*, *Credential Service Providers*, *Identity Exchanges* and *Identity Service Providers* are required to meet in order to achieve and maintain *TDIF* accreditation. This document provides an overview of the *TDIF* including its scope and objectives.

The intended audience for this document includes:

- *Accredited Participants.*
- *Applicants.*
- *Assessors.*
- *Relying Parties.*

# Trusted Digital Identity Framework

## 2.1 Early history

The Australian Government has been exploring the concept of online trust for several years.

In 2010 the Australian Government Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (*PMC*) identified a need to strengthen identity management in the digital economy and a voluntary trusted identity model was seen as a possible way to achieve this. The possible model involved the development of a market in identity authentication products which led to the development of the National Trusted Identities Framework (*NTIF*) in 2011. The aim of the framework was to make it simpler for government and business to confirm the identity of individuals they do business with and allow individuals to verify the credentials of the businesses they transact with online using the same system. *PMC* conducted two consultation sessions during 2011 and 2012 on the *NTIF*. Although the sessions identified several issues and questions related to online trust and what might be needed to address it, there was no clear consensus on what next steps should be taken to progress the *NTIF*.

In 2011 the then Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy published the National Digital Economy Strategy (*NDES*), which outlined the government's vision for Australia's digital economy. The *NDES* aimed to improve online government service delivery and engagement and built on the concepts established in the *NTIF* around online trust.

In 2013 these concepts were explored further, when the Australian Government Information Management Office (*AGIMO*) published the Third Party Identity Services Assurance Framework (*TPISAF*). This framework set out the compliance criteria and accreditation requirements for third party providers of identity services. The underlying premise of the framework is that, based on an understanding of an agency requirements, individuals will be able to choose to use the services of an accredited service provider in order to access online government services.

## 2.2 Recent history

The Australian Government established the *Financial System Inquiry*<sup>1</sup> (*FSI*) in December 2013 to examine the positioning of the financial system to meet evolving needs and support economic growth for Australia. In December 2014, the *FSI* concluded that:

“The innovative potential of Australia’s financial system and broader economy can be supported by taking action to ensure policy settings facilitate future innovation that benefits consumers, business and government”.

To facilitate innovation, the *FSI*’s recommendations include the aim to:

“Strengthen Australia’s digital identity framework through the development of a national strategy for a federated-style model of trusted digital identities”.

In accepting the recommendations of the *FSI* in October 2015, the Australian Government agreed that a national digital identity strategy would streamline people’s interactions with government and provide efficiency improvements. As per Inquiry Recommendation 15 (digital identity), the Government also agreed to:

“Work across government and with the private sector to develop a Trusted Digital Identity Framework to support the Government’s Digital Transformation Agenda”.

The *TDIF* builds on previous trust framework development efforts and responds directly to the *FSI* and government commitment. The *TDIF* requires providers of identity-related services to be accredited and establishes the rules for the *Australian Government’s identity federation*.

## 2.3 Guiding principles

The *TDIF* supports the following guiding principles:

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<sup>1</sup> See *References* for further information on the *FSI*

**User centric:**

- Accessing digital services must be easy, convenient, simple, secure and trusted.
- *Individuals* can choose to create a *Digital Identity* from a range of accredited government and private sector providers.
- *Individuals* can use one or more *Identity Service Providers* to maintain separate or merged personal and business *Digital Identities*.

**Voluntary and transparent:**

- *Individuals* choose to participate or not (i.e. opt-in).
- *Individuals* can control their *Digital Identity* in an easy and straightforward manner.
- Records of *Credential* use are maintained securely by *Accredited Participants* and easily accessible by those authorised to do so under the *TDIF*.

**Service delivery focused:**

- *Accredited Participants* offer choice and convenience for *Users*.
- Participation is cost neutral for *Users*.
- The supporting business model encourages private sector participation.

**Privacy enhancing:**

- *Personal Information* is only collected and disclosed by *Accredited Participants* with the *Consent* of *Users* and in accordance with privacy laws and good privacy practices.
- Privacy enhancing technology, policy and processes are applied by *Accredited Participants* to all *Personal Information*.
- *Users* have an informed understanding of how their *Personal Information* will be used and protected.
- *Users* can view and manage their *Personal information*, correct errors and revoke their *Consent*.



**Collaborative:**

- Active collaboration between the public and private sectors and the broader community will draw on the respective strengths and expertise of government and business.

**Interoperable:**

- Facilitate interconnectedness with other *Trust Frameworks* and identity services nationally and internationally.
- Scalable to grow and accommodate the needs of *Accredited Participants* and *Relying Parties*.

**Adaptable:**

- Promote flexibility and innovation in technology and business models.
- The *TDIF* is flexible to evolve to meet community expectations and changing business, technology, legal and social needs.
- The *TDIF* supports secure information exchanges ranging from low to high value and from pseudonymous to fully verified identity proofing.

**Secure and resilient:**

- *Accredited Participants* meet stringent government security standards.
- The same *Accreditation* requirements apply to government agencies and organisations.
- Cyber security threats and risks are identified and actively managed by *Accredited Participants* and *Relying Parties*.
- Effective *Fraud* management controls are implemented and maintained.

## 2.4 Objectives

Based on the above principles, the *TDIF* will facilitate the following outcomes:

**Simple, easy to use and trusted:** A *Digital Identity* that *Individuals* want to use.

**Accessible:** *Digital Identity* that is accessible to all *Individuals* regardless of their location, circumstances, abilities or the computing devices they use.

**Secure and privacy-preserving:** *Digital Identity* is secure and privacy preserving. No single identifier is issued by the *Identity Exchange* to *Identity Service Providers*, *Attribute Service Providers* or *Relying Parties*. There is no single *Credential* or centralised database of *Personal Information*. *Individuals* are given greater control over their *Personal Information* and who their *Personal Information* is shared with. Safeguards and recovery mechanisms are implemented in the event an *Individual's Digital Identity* is compromised.

**Standards based:** *Digital Identity* services support open standards to facilitate interoperability including with other jurisdictions and *Trust Frameworks*.

## 2.5 Accredited roles

The *TDIF* supports the *Accreditation* of *Attribute Service Providers*, *Credential Service Providers*, *Identity Exchanges* and *Identity Service Providers*.

### 2.5.1 Attribute Service Providers

*Attribute Service Providers* generate and manage *Attributes* and claims that are provided to *Relying Parties* to support their decision-making processes.

### 2.5.2 Credential Service Providers

*Credential Service Providers* generate, bind and distribute *Credentials* to *Individuals* or can include the binding and management of *Credentials* generated by *Individuals*. This function may also be undertaken by an IdP.

## 2.5.3 Identity Exchanges

*Identity Exchanges* conveys, manages and coordinates the flow of identity *Attributes* and assertions between members of an *Identity Federation*.

## 2.5.4 Identity Service Providers

An *Identity Service Provider* creates, maintains and manages identity *Information of Individuals* and offers identity-based services.

## 2.6 Unaccredited roles

Other roles within an *Identity Federation* (which are not accredited) include *Relying Parties*, *Attribute Verification Services* and *Users*.

### 2.6.1 Relying Parties

*Relying Parties* are the organisations that rely on verified *Attributes* or *Assertions* provided by *Identity Service Providers* and *Attribute Service Providers* to enable the provision of a digital service.

### 2.6.2 Attribute Verification Services

*Attribute Verification Services* (also known as an *Identity Matching Service*) are repositories recognised by the *DTA* that confirm the veracity of *Attributes* and associated information. *Attribute Verification Services* can refer to either the repositories themselves, or the methods used to access them (e.g. *Document Verification Service* and the *Face Verification Service*).

### 2.6.3 Users

*Users* are *Individuals* who establish a *Digital Identity* to obtain digital services from *Relying Parties*. This includes *Individuals* acting in their own capacity and *Individuals* who act on behalf of others.

## 2.7 Accreditation governance

Currently a series of *Memorandums of Understanding (MOU)* are in place between the *DTA* and *Accredited Participants*. Under these *MOUs*, the *DTA*, as part of the *Oversight Authority*, is responsible for the *Accreditation of Applicants* and the ongoing accreditation of *Participants (Accredited Participants)*. In time these will be replaced with a set of *Operating Rules*.

## 2.8 Accreditation process

*TDIF Accreditation* is a formal process through which *Applicants* demonstrate their ability to meet specific requirements to the satisfaction of the *DTA*. *TDIF Accreditation* covers the initial accreditation and ongoing accreditation obligations.

**Initial Accreditation:** *Accreditation* of an *Applicant's* identity system is fundamental to its trustworthiness and its functional effectiveness. The *TDIF Accreditation Process* involves a combination of documentation, third party evaluations by *Assessors* and operational testing that *Applicants* must complete to the satisfaction of the *DTA* to achieve *TDIF Accreditation*.

**Ongoing Accreditation obligations:** *Accredited Participants* are required to continue to comply with the requirements of the *TDIF* to maintain *Accreditation*. *Accredited Participants* are required to complete *Annual Assessments* against the *TDIF* by the anniversary of their initial *Accreditation* date and remediate any adverse findings in timeframes agreed with the *DTA*. These *Annual Assessments* ensure *Accredited Participants* continue to meet the requirements of the *TDIF*.

## 2.9 TDIF Accreditation Process roles

### 2.9.1 Applicant and Accredited Participant

The *Applicant* is responsible for:

- Formally requesting *TDIF Accreditation* for its identity system from the *DTA*.
- Preparing all required documentation within timeframes agreed with the *DTA*.

- Obtaining all relevant internal system *Accreditations* or endorsements from the appropriate *Accountable Authority* throughout the *TDIF Accreditation Process*.
- Completing the required *Functional Assessments* by *Assessors*.
- The provision of all relevant *Accreditation* evidence to the *DTA*.
- Remediating all identified non-conformance and adverse findings to the satisfaction of the *DTA*.
- Accepting the residual risk relating to its identity system. (Residual risks may be accepted by appropriate *Accountable Authority*).
- Responding to all requests for information by the *DTA* in relation to *Accreditation* matters.
- As required by the *DTA*, enter into an agreement with the *DTA* following *TDIF Accreditation*.
- Maintain *Accreditation* in accordance with its agreement.
- Undergo *Annual Assessments* on its identity system by the anniversary of its initial *Accreditation* date as set out in *TDIF: 07 – Annual Assessment*.
- Formally advising the *DTA* of its intention to leave the *TDIF* in the event it:
  - No longer wants to undergo the *TDIF Accreditation Process* or maintain *Accreditation*.
  - Can no longer comply with *TDIF* requirements once accredited.
  - Chooses to no longer maintain its *Accreditation*.

## 2.9.2 Digital Transformation Agency

The *DTA* is responsible for:

- Performing the roles and functions of the *Oversight Authority* in relation to *TDIF Accreditation*.
- Ensuring that the *TDIF Accreditation Process* is conducted with due care and in accordance with the published *TDIF* documents.
- Reviewing, within agreed timeframes, all relevant *Applicant* and *Accredited Participant* evidence to ensure conformance to the published *TDIF* documents.

- Handling and treating all *Applicant* and *Accredited Participant* evidence consistent with its classification and sensitivity. Unless otherwise agreed between the *Applicant* and the *DTA*, all evidence provided to the *DTA* will be treated as *OFFICIAL information*. All *DTA Personnel* associated with *Accreditation* activities have an appropriate security clearance level to handle sensitive or classified documents provided to the *DTA* in relation to *TDIF Accreditation*.
- Protecting all information provided to it by an *Applicant* (including their *TDIF Accreditation Letter* and supporting information), and *Accredited Participant* to ensure it is only available to staff directly involved with their *Accreditation*. Any documentation requested by other parties will only be shared with the express permission of the *Applicant* or *Accredited Participant*.
- Considering all reports and recommendations from *Assessors*.
- Interpreting conformance against *TDIF* requirements.
- All decisions in relation to the initial *Accreditation* of an *Applicant* or ongoing accreditation of an *Accredited Participant*.
- Granting accreditation to an *Applicant*.
- Maintaining the list of *Accredited Participants*<sup>2</sup>.
- Maintaining the *TDIF Accreditation Register*.
- Reviewing all documentation which supports an *Accredited Participant's Annual Assessment*.
- Directing *Accredited Participants* to undergo *TDIF Reaccreditation* (as required).
- Revoking the accreditation of an *Accredited Participant*.

### 2.9.3 Assessors

*Assessors* are independent evaluators of business processes, documentation, systems and services who have the required skills, experience and qualifications to determine whether an *Applicant* or *Accredited Participant* has met specific *TDIF* requirements.

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<sup>2</sup> Available on the TDIF website (<https://www.dta.gov.au>)

As part of the *TDIF Accreditation Process*, the *Applicant* is required to undergo a series of *Functional Assessments* by suitably skilled and experienced *Assessors*. *Assessors* are responsible for assessing the *Applicant's* compliance against specific *TDIF* requirements<sup>3</sup> and documenting their findings.

## 2.10 Documents

The *TDIF* documents are grouped into three categories – governance, requirements and guidance.

**Governance documents** – the primary purpose of these documents is to control and direct *Accreditation* effort.

- *TDIF: 01 - Glossary of Abbreviations and Terms*, which includes a list of acronyms and a definition of key terms used in the *TDIF*.
- *TDIF: 03 - Accreditation Process*, which sets out the process and requirements an *Applicant* is required to complete to achieve *TDIF* accreditation.
- *TDIF: 06D – Attribute Profile*, which describes the *Attributes* used within the *Australian Government's identity federation* and how these are mapped in the *OpenID Connect 1.0 Profile* and *SAML 2.0 Profile*.

**Requirements documents** –the purpose of these documents is to set out the *TDIF Accreditation* requirements to be met by *Applicants* and *Accredited Participants*.

- *TDIF: 04 - Functional Requirements*, which includes requirements applicable to the *Accredited Roles*, including fraud control, privacy, protective security, user experience and technical testing. This document also includes a series of *Functional Assessments* to be undertaken by the *Applicant* to achieve *TDIF* accreditation, including a *Privacy Impact Assessment*, *Privacy Assessment*, *Security assessment*, penetration test and an assessment against the *Web Content Accessibility Guidelines*.
- *TDIF: 05 - Role Requirements*, which includes user terms and lifecycle management requirements applicable to the *Accredited Roles*.

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<sup>3</sup> See *TDIF: 04 - Functional Requirements* for further information.

- *TDIF: 06: Federation Onboarding Requirements*, which includes the requirements to be met when an *Applicant's* identity system is approved to onboard to the *Australian Government's identity federation*. This document includes functional requirements, technical integration testing requirements, operating obligations and the accreditation requirements for an *Identity Exchange*<sup>4</sup>.
- *TDIF: 06B - OpenID Connect 1.0 Profile*, which describes how OpenID Connect 1.0 is used within the *Australian Government's identity federation*.
- *TDIF: 06C - SAML 2.0 Profile*, which describes how SAML 2.0 is used within the *Australian Government's identity federation*.
- *TDIF: 07 - Annual Assessment*, which sets out the process and requirements an *Accredited Participant* is required to complete by the anniversary of their initial accreditation date to remain *TDIF* accredited.

**Guidance documents** – the purpose of these documents is to set out information to help *Applicants* and *Accredited Participants* meet *TDIF* requirements.

- *TDIF: 02 - Overview*, (this document) which provides a high-level overview of the *TDIF*.
- *TDIF: 04A – Functional Guidance*, which provides guidance to *Applicants* on meeting the requirements set out in *TDIF: 04 Functional Requirements*.
- *TDIF: 05A – Role Guidance*, which provides guidance to *Applicants* on meeting requirements set out in *TDIF: 05 Role Requirements*.
- *TDIF: 06A – Federation Onboarding Guidance*, which provides guidance to *Applicants* on meeting requirements set out in the *TDIF: 06 Federation Onboarding Requirements*.

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<sup>4</sup> The *Identity Exchange* performs a unique role in the identity federation. Where other *Accredited Roles* are standalone systems, the *Identity Exchange* needs to demonstrate how it coordinates the flow of data to other *Participants*. For this reason, the *Identity Exchange Accreditation* requirements are listed in *TDIF: 06 - Federation-onboarding Requirements* and not the *TDIF: 05 - Role Requirements*.



## 2.11 Requirements schema

The following is an example of a *TDIF* requirement:

**TDIF Req:** ACCRED-03-01-01; **Updated:** Mar-20; **Applicability:** A, C, I, X

The *Applicant* **MUST** formally request *TDIF* accreditation and complete the *TDIF Application Letter* at Appendix A. Each *TDIF* requirement includes the following information.

- **TDIF Req:** The unique identifier for each *TDIF* requirement.
  - Each *TDIF* requirement uses the following schema  
[*Subject Area -Document Section – Requirement -Sub Requirement*].
  - *Subject Area:* A shorthand of the subject area. See Section 2.12 for a list of these.
  - *Document Section:* Denoted by the four left-hand digits in the schema. For example, the '03-04' in PRIV-03-04-01a means section 3.4 of the privacy requirements (set out in *TDIF: 04 - Functional Requirements*).
  - *Requirement:* Denoted by the two right-hand digits in the schema. For example, the '01' in PRIV-03-04-01a means requirement 01 in section 3.4 of the privacy requirements.
  - *Sub-Requirement:* Denoted by a unique letter at the right-hand side of the schema. For example, the 'a' in PRIV-03-04-01a means the first sub-requirement linked to requirement 01 in section 3.4 of the privacy requirements.
- **Updated:** The month/year the requirement was last updated.
- **Applicability:** The *Accredited Role* to whom the requirement applies. The roles include:
  - *Attribute Service Providers*, denoted by an 'A'
  - *Credential Service Providers*, denoted by a 'C'
  - *Identity Service Providers*, denoted by an 'I'
  - *Identity Exchanges* denoted by an 'X'.
- **Requirement text:** The requirement to be met.

## 2.12 Subject area description

The following table sets out the shorthand descriptions for the TDIF requirements subject areas.

TDIF Document	Section	Shorthand
03 Accreditation Process	All Sections	ACCRED
04 Functional Requirements	2 – Fraud control requirements 3 – Privacy Requirements 4 – Protective Security Requirements 5 – User Experience Requirements 6 – Technical Testing Requirements 7 – Functional Assessments	FRAUD PRIV PROT UX TEST ASSESS
05 Role Requirements	2 – Common Role Requirements 3 – Identity Service Provider Requirements 4 – Credential Service Provider Requirements 5 – Attribute Service Provider Requirements	ROLE IDP CSP ASP
06 Federation Onboarding Requirements	All Sections	FED
06B OpenID Connect 1.0 Profile	All Sections	OIDC
06C SAML 2.0 Profile	All Sections	SAML
07 Annual Assessment	All Sections	ANNUAL

## 2.13 What is not covered in the TDIF

The scope of the *TDIF* is limited to the accreditation of *Applicants* and maintenance of *Participant's* accreditations (*Accredited Participants*). There are several items not covered by the *TDIF*, including:

- Cost or fee schedules for the provision of identity services.
- Liability arrangements for *Accredited Participants*.

- Details on how to join the *Australian Government's Identity Federation*.
- Requirements to be met by *Relying Parties* to join the *Australian Government's Identity Federation*.
- A catalogue of participating services available through the *Australian Government's Identity Federation*.
- Technical details or other information related to the *Australian Government's Identity Federation* test environments.
- Operational functions of the *Australian Government's Identity Federation*.
- Service level agreements.
- Governance arrangements for the *Australian Government's Identity Federation*.

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<sup>5</sup> Some sources contain hyperlinks.

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