23rd January, 2014

European universities and research institutions
ATTN: Chief Information Officer (CIO)

Data protection Code of Conduct: User Identities and Attributes to Support Collaborative Research

Modern research is highly international and collaborative in nature and relies increasingly on the use of IT. Researchers need to share research resources, such as datasets and instruments, and access collaboration platforms managed by other universities or research institutions.
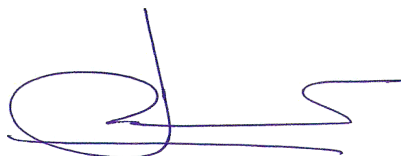
Federated identity management technology helps researchers to access resources outside their campuses, also known as home organisations, while these retain control of authentication of the users. This requires home organisations to release some of their researchers' personal data to the service (attributes, such as the researcher's name, identifier, e-mail address and role as a researcher). In Europe, data protection laws regulate the release of personal data and therefore influence what attributes may be released and under which conditions. Determining the risks involved in the release of personal data attributes to research services across Europe is a significant challenge.

To address this challenge on behalf of home organisations and service providers, GÉANT has developed a *Data Protection Code of Conduct* as part of the eduGAIN interfederation service. This service is supported by most federations across Europe and, increasingly, worldwide. The Code of Conduct introduces a scalable approach for the release of user attributes to services in the European Union, in the European Economic Area and in other countries recognized as having adequate data protection standards. The Code of Conduct weighs in the balance the risk of data protection problems incurring for home organisations when releasing researchers' personal data with the benefits of facilitating collaborative research efforts.

As the leaders of major European ESFRI research infrastructures, we encourage universities and research institutions to consider adopting the Data protection Code of Conduct in the management of their Identity Provider server. Adopting the Code of Conduct makes the work of researchers easier, reduces uncertainty and overheads for Identity Provider administrators, and could potentially increase your organisation's scientific output.

For information and help in implementing the Code of Conduct and more please contact your local Federation Operator at: http://www.edugain.org/technical/status.php

On behalf of the CLARIN research infrastructure for humanities and social sciences

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On behalf of the DARIAH ESFRI for arts and humanities research

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