

Newsletter No 4 -- April 2006

The e-Framework for Education and Research is a joint initiative of JISC (UK) and DEST (Australia)

For any questions or proposed input into future newsletters please email [The Editor](#)

UK and New Zealand sign ICT agreement

JISC and the New Zealand Ministry of Education (on behalf of New Zealand's Education Sector ICT Standing Committee and Ministry of Research, Science and Technology) signed a formal partnership agreement in early April which will see close cooperation between the two organisations in the [e-Framework initiative](#) and the exploration of other potential areas for collaboration which include e-learning, repositories, network, e-Science, e-administration and middleware development [Read More](#)

New Zealand's Education Sector Agencies, under the auspices of the New Zealand Education Sector ICT Standing Committee have worked together to develop the New Zealand ICT Strategic Framework for Education to provide the mechanism to guide and co-ordinate the sector's ICT investment towards the government's vision of improved education outcomes. With a vision to "improve learner achievement in an innovative education sector, fully connected and supported by the smart use of ICT", the Framework is aligned with and supports, the New Zealand Government's e-Government and National Digital Strategies, and provides the foundation for effective e-learning practices to be integrated into New Zealand educational practices.

Australian Research Infrastructure Investment Strategy

On 13 April 2006, the Minister for Education, Science and Training, The Hon Julie Bishop approved the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy ([NCRIS Investment Framework](#)). The Investment Framework describes:

- how NCRIS will use facilitators to develop investment plans in consultation with the research community;
- how interested parties can participate in the development of investment plans;
- the role of the NCRIS Committee in ensuring the quality of investment plans;
- the role of the Minister in providing final approval of funding for Investment Plans; and
- administrative arrangements for implementing investment plans.

The strategy follows publication of the Roadmap last month, which identifies 'platforms for collaboration' as one of 16 priority areas in which Australia should aim to develop, or further develop research capability. Infrastructure that supports collaboration has been identified as including the following interrelated components:

- Data storage management, access, discovery and curation to improve interaction and collaboration;
- Grid enabled technologies and infrastructure to enable seamless access to facilities and services required in various research fields;
- High performance computing to allow analysis, modelling and simulation; and
- High quality network access through high capacity bandwidth to permit interaction with diverse data and computing resources.

RUBRIC and MAMS Federation

Recently the RUBRIC Project joined level 1 of the [MAMS Testbed Federation](#). This consisted of installing the [Shibboleth](#) Identity Provider software and using an in-house LDAP server for authentication.

The use of federated authentication technologies, such as Shibboleth, is a growing area and one that the RUBRIC Central technical team is keeping watch on. Federated authentication is seen as one of the issues that is becoming more important as the use of Institutional Repositories for the storage of more than just open access materials increases

JISC Conference & Capital Spending Programme

[Presentation materials](#) from this year's JISC Conference in Birmingham are now available. Sir Ron Cooke, Chairman of JISC, opened the event by announcing detailed plans of the £80 million Capital Spending Programme which will be spent on six key areas: the network, repositories, digitisation, e-infrastructure, user environments, and e-learning. There were many highlights at the event, not least of which was the closing keynote by Clifford Lynch, Executive Director of the Coalition for Networked Information. Clifford's talk spanned a broad range of issues emerging from the impact of ubiquitous computing. For a report by Christina Smart of the e-learning programme at the event see the [JISC e-Learning Focus](#) website.

For further information about the JISC Capital Spending Programme (April 2006 - March 2009) together with a roadmap of expected calls see http://www.jisc.ac.uk/capital_roadmap.html

Use and Users of Digital Resources: Report

A recently published research [report](#) from the Center for Studies of Higher Education at the University of California, Berkeley is focused on the use and users of digital resources in undergraduate education in the social sciences. The purpose of the research was to

1. map the universe of digital resources available to a subset of undergraduate educators in the humanities and social sciences; and
2. to investigate how and if available digital resources are actually being used in undergraduate teaching environments.

Multiple methods, including surveys and focus groups were used to conduct the research.

Upcoming Events:

Alt-i-lab -- Indianapolis, June 19-22

This year's [alt-i-lab](#) is the fourth in a series that brings together key organizations, companies and individuals who are advancing learning technology interoperability. The "i" this year is extended to have a double meaning to include innovation. The event will be held in conjunction with the Summit on Global Learning Industry Challenges in Indianapolis, Indiana between the 19-22nd of June 2006. It will bring together creators, vendors, users, and buyers of learning technology to evaluate demonstrations, exchange technology, and participate in working sessions focused on real-world interoperability, strategies maximizing the impact of learning technology, and critical examination of state of the art technology.

The Successful Repository -- Brisbane, June 29

The Australian Partnership for Sustainable Repositories (APSR), in collaboration with the Queensland University Libraries Office of Cooperation (QULOC) and the RUBRIC Project, is pleased to announce "The Successful Repository", a forum on issues of repository management to be held in Brisbane on 29 June.

Many Australian universities have now recognised the need for a repository and have taken steps to put one into place. "The Successful Repository" is designed for repository managers, administrators and funders who are seeking to ensure that they get the best value from their repository. The topics to be covered will include costing the repository, measuring repository value and adapting the repository to serve the institutional mission.

Speakers will include Susan Gibbons, Assistant Dean, Public Services & Collection Development, University of Rochester, and John Houghton, Professorial Fellow in Strategic Economic Studies at Victoria University of Technology.

Further details can be found at
<http://www.apsr.edu.au/successful/successful.htm>

e-Social Science -- Manchester, June 28-30

The 2nd International Conference on e-Social Science will be held in Manchester, UK, and hosted by the National Centre for e-Social Science. Among the themes explored this year will be: Collaboration and Engagement: the use of new technologies across the Teaching and Learning Research Programme and the Applied Education Research Scheme. [Read More](#)

QUESTnet -- Coolom, July 11-14

Queensland Education, Science and Technology Network (QUESTnet) is the Queensland regional component of the Australian Academic and Research Network ([AARNet](#)).

The [QUESTnet](#) conference is an annual event aimed at network technologists and those IT&T professionals who work closely with network technology. A key focus of the event is to provide an opportunity for delegates to develop their professional and technical knowledge and gain an appreciation of the key strategic issues for network development.

Topics at this year's event include:

- Enabling e-Research through next generation networks
- Federated middleware architectures (Grid computing, Identity and Access Management, repositories, etc)
- Disruptive technologies (podcasting, peer-to-peer, etc)
- Collaboration tools (wikis, blog, vlogs, IM, etc)
- Emerging technologies (RFID, 4G, quantum computing)
- Networking in general (broadband wireless, video/voice/data convergence, network management, network security)

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