

Updating the Internet2 Membership and Network Participation Model

What?

The Network Planning and Policy Advisory Council (NPPAC) is conducting a review of Internet2's membership and network participation structures, in its capacity as the Membership Committee of the Internet2 Board of Trustees. This work is supported by Internet2 staff and informed by input from the broader community. The goal of this review is to ensure that Internet2 continues to be inclusive of and provide constructive engagement opportunities for organizations and individuals interested in working together to develop, deploy and use advanced networking technologies and capabilities. This work incorporates recommendations from the Campus Expectations Task Force (CETF), as well as guidance from the Internet2 Board of Trustees and input from individual members and other groups such as the Quilt and StateNets.

Why?

The current structure was developed incrementally over the past 10 years, so this review provides an opportunity to simplify as well as to ensure that Internet2 continues to be supportive of and responsive to communities it serves as it maintains a solid long-term financial outlook. The review process should result in a final membership model that:

- Engages as members all organizations interested in contributing to the advanced networking community
- Provides members with collaboration opportunities
- Supports members' efforts in the adoption of advanced networking and technologies in their own environments
- Fosters the broader use and adoption of advanced networking
- Provides flexible mechanisms for members to initiate new efforts within the Internet2 membership, ensuring community cohesiveness

How?

The examination of Internet2's membership structure review is being guided by:

- Feedback from existing members about the current membership structure
- Developments in areas such as middleware, security, and collaboration support.
- Opportunities and capabilities provided by the new Internet2 Network
- Increasing interest from diverse communities in advanced networking, and
- Experience gained during the first 10 years of Internet2

Highlights

The work so far has produced a number of ideas and potential recommendations. While these are subject to change, highlights of the current discussions include:

- State/regional network organization membership
- Graded membership fees based on institution or organization expenditures, across three levels
- Mechanisms for ensuring that all entities using network services pay an equitable share

- Membership for organizations that are part of network groups, such as a SEGP, if they so choose

The model being presented for input includes three levels within the current categories of membership, in most cases based on financial criteria. For example, within higher education, institutions fall into one of three levels based on a combination of their annual expenditures and Carnegie class. Corporate members fall into one of three levels based on their annual revenues. The new category of state/regional network members is differentiated between those serving as connectors to the Internet2 backbone and those that are “downstream” in the network path to campuses, research labs, and other end-user serving entities on the network.

How Does The Member Model Relate to Network Participation?

Membership status has traditionally been linked to how institutions and organizations attach to the network. What follows is the current thinking about how network participation will change in the new model.

All institutions and organizations that connect to the Internet2 Network behind a connector (directly or indirectly) are proposed to be one of two kinds:

1. Individual network participants. These are:
 - a. Members of Internet2 at Level 1 or Level 2 (members at Level 3 can connect as part of a Group Network Participant)
 - b. Served by an Internet2 Network connector
 - c. Billed directly by Internet2 for the participation fee
2. Group network participants. These are:
 - a. Optionally Internet2 members at level 3 (no membership requirement; Internet2 Members at Levels 1 and 2 cannot be a group network participant)
 - b. Served by an Internet2 Network connector
 - c. Part of one of the following broad groups:
 - o Educational (K20, museums, libraries, and most other traditional SEGP participants in current model)
 - o Health (small health-related organizations and institutions)
 - o Others as natural groupings emerge, e.g., economic development, local government, other R&E
 - d. Billed by the connector for share of the group participation fee

A guiding principle for network connectivity is that all members will connect to the Internet2 network through an Internet2 connector, and that it is up to the connector and the member to determine how the member’s traffic gets to the connector.

When?

July, August and September 2006	Preliminary discussions undertaken based on discussions by the Network Policy and Planning Advisory Council and the Campus Expectations Task Force
October, November 2006	Preliminary model refined based on further discussion with NPPAC, the Quilt, StateNets, SURA, and other key stakeholders

November 2006	Membership review summary document posted on Internet2 website for input from member organization executive liaisons and other key stakeholders
11/20/2006	Membership model recommendations discussed and finalized by NPPAC
Week before Member Meeting	Membership Model recommendations available on Internet2 web site for member review and comment.
12/4-12/7 2006	Fall 2006 Internet2 Member Meeting: Opportunities for community input at NPPAC Open Meeting on Wednesday, 12/6 and throughout meeting.
Mid-December	Membership Model proposal adjusted based on input and presented to Internet2 Board of Trustees.
January 2007	Internet2 Board of Trustees action

Where Can I Get More Details?

If you are a member, you are encouraged to participate in the open NPPAC meeting at the Fall 2006 Member meeting, or to contact members of the NPPAC directly. You may also contact Laurie Burns, Executive Director for Member and Partner Relations (lburns@internet2.edu), +1-734-913-4251) or Jill Arnold, Director for Member and Partner Relations (jillar@internet2.edu), +1-734-913-4294), or send email to membership@internet2.edu.