The InCommon Certificate Service provides unlimited digital certificates for one fixed fee, covering all domains owned by a college, university, or not-for-profit regional research and education network. The program includes all certificates—server, extended validation, client (personal), and code signing (which meet the technical guidelines of the Interoperable Global Trust Federation - IGTF).

Certificates of various types are a key security component of web browsers, and can also be used for individual email security and for wireless network security. In addition, organizations’ certificate administrators have the option to use multi-factor authentication, making their access to the certificate management portal even more secure.

Prior to the creation of this service in 2010, certificates were mainly individually priced and were relatively expensive. Driven by the subscribing community, this service introduced the concept of unlimited certificates for one annual fee, while driving down the overall costs for individual institutions.

Benefits include:

• Takes the guesswork out of budgeting and provides flexibility by offering unlimited certificates for one single fee for all domains.

• Solves complex administrative problems with centralized monitoring, reporting, tracking and insight for all certificates deployed across the enterprise—along with the ability to delegate requests and deployments to departments or groups.

• Provides security with trust anchors in virtually all major browsers, email clients, mobile devices, application suites, and other applications.

• Enjoys an engaged and helpful peer support community of more than 300 users who collaborate on new ideas, problems, and solutions.

The University of Minnesota now invests only $15,000 annually with InCommon for an unlimited number of certificates compared to $53,000 on 679 certificates previously. Cost alone was sufficient reason to subscribe, but speed, the delegable workflow, and community support were also compelling features.

-Chris Bongaarts,
Office of Information Technology,
University of Minnesota

Any higher education institution with its primary location in the United States (and qualifying for a primary domain name in .edu) may subscribe. Not-for-profit regional Research and Education Networks in the United States may also subscribe.