Identity Ecosystem Framework (IDEF) Version 2:
Scoping Statement, including Program Listing and Certification Scheme

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Version 1 of the Identity Ecosystem Framework (IDEF) provides a functional model for describing the basic interactions involving digital identity and a set of common requirements for conducting secure, interoperable, privacy-enhancing and easy-to-use digital identity interactions in support of the NSTIC Guiding Principles.

To support IDEF version 1 in organizations, the IDESG maintains a self-assessment methodology for providers of identity-related services to measure their progress towards the IDEF Requirements and a self-assessment listing service (SALS) to permit providers to share information about their adherence to the IDEF Requirements in a structured and comparable way.[1]

IDESG will work with stakeholders in the digital identity space to evolve the IDEF Requirements, refining them into a set of formalized criteria against which third-parties can conduct assessments and certifications. From this, and with the release of IDEF version 2, the IDESG will offer (1) a program listing and certification scheme under which third-party assessors and trust framework providers (TFPs) may engage with IDESG to offer formal assessment and confirmation of compliance with the IDEF Requirements and (2) a trustmark program that defines a common model for categorizing interactions involving digital identity based on the characteristics of the interaction between the service provider and individuals.

Scope of IDEF Version 2

In version 2, sets of IDEF Requirements will be identified as applicable to individual providers of identity-related services based on the functions executed by the provider, as defined in version 2 of the Functional Model.

Each IDEF Requirement will be expressed in objective and testable statements suitable for third-party and other types of assessments, and accompanied by explanatory and illustrative supplemental guidance. Terms will be defined as necessary in a standalone IDEF Glossary.

Additionally, the model for the IDEF Requirements will be extensible, so that specific communities, such as industry verticals, TFPs, or use cases requiring specific assurances based on risk, can determine applicability of IDEF Requirements to the functions conducted by entities in those communities, and, if desired, add local requirements.

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[1] Throughout this document, providers of identity-related services include those entities consuming digital identities, commonly known as relying parties.

IDEF version 2 will consider a risk-based categorization of interactions through a formal risk assessment model that maps controls, standards, and requirements to the mitigation of specific risks.

General Scope of IDESG Program Listing and Certification Scheme

The program listing and certification scheme will offer providers of digital identity-related services the opportunity for comparable, formal, and structured evaluation and certification of their conformance with IDEF Requirements. In order to make conformance results more trustworthy, it will consider the needs of third-party assessors and other assessment approaches; provide better information to users of digital identity services about provider compliance; and promote broader awareness and alignment with the NSTIC Guiding Principles.

The program listing and certification scheme will provide options for compliance and certification to a sector, type, or risk of interactions involving digital identity, conforming to the risk model of IDEF version 2. To meet these more granular levels of certification, the program listing and certification service will consider extensible methods for expressing subsets and specializations and will offer mechanisms for TFPs to map their community requirements to the IDEF Requirements.

While the program listing and certification scheme program should be capable of evaluating and certifying the compliance of any provider of digital identity-related services, IDESG will prioritize the application and utility of the program listing and certification scheme to attribute providers, credential providers, and authentication transactions such as those provided by single-sign-on providers.

Transitioning from SALS to the Program Listing and Certification Scheme

The SALS program 1 will continue to operate throughout the development of IDEF version 2. Prior to making operational additional assessor services, IDESG will make a determination of whether to continue operating SALS concurrently with third-party assessments or other approaches.

In support of the program listing and certification scheme, IDESG will execute agreements that define the respective rights and responsibilities of assessed providers, third-party assessors, other assessment options and TFPs mapped for certification. These arrangements will include, but are not limited to: terms for the use of appropriate IDESG names or marks as public trustmarks or insignia indicating conformance or alignment and the commitments of IDESG to maintain publicly-available information regarding the program and any listings of certifications.

Following assessments of each opportunity, IDESG may also provide (1) a means accrediting TFPs to provide certifications on its behalf; (2) an electronic trustmarks program as an extension of the certification(s) offered under the program listing and certification scheme; and (3) publish sectoral specializations of the IDEF Requirements in collaboration with relevant industry stakeholders.