eduGAIN Governance Changes

The eduGAIN Futures Working Group has recommended a series of changes to the current eduGAIN Service Model. One of those is to address and change the governance model for eduGAIN and it would make sense to address this recommendation before the beginning of GN5 and before other changes are put in place to ensure the new governance structure is supportive of the proposed changes. This paper discusses a proposed new governance process.

Current Governance Model

eduGAIN currently has two oversight committees (https://edugain.org/governance/):

- eduGAIN Executive Committee to represent the funders of eduGAIN. This is currently the GÉANT Board. There are no planned changes to the eduGAIN funding for GN5 so it is proposed that this model remains in place.
- eduGAIN Steering Group. This is currently made up of 2 representatives from each eduGAIN member federation. As a body, the group is currently overly large due to the success of eduGAIN (162 members) and cannot function effectively as a steering body.

Proposed Change

In order to allow eduGAIN governance to make more rapid and effective decisions to allow the eduGAIN service to grow, we propose the following changes.

- Maintain eduGAIN Executive Committee to represent the GN5 funding stream
- Convert the current eduGAIN Steering Group to an (bi)annual eduGAIN Assembly. The eduGAIN Assembly would still vote on membership acceptance via email.
- Introduce an eduGAIN Steering Committee.

Policy Changes

In order to put these changes into effect, eduGAIN would need to change the eduGAIN Constitution and update supporting web pages (https://edugain.org/governance/).   This requires a quorum vote of the current eduGAIN Steering Group but the concept has been socialised and has not met resistance.   We do not believe the eduGAIN Declaration needs changing.

eduGAIN Executive Committee

The role of the eduGAIN Executive Committee should be described in the new ToR and updated in the constitution.

New Steering Committee

The proposed new Steering Committee will have more direct responsibility for steering the eduGAIN service, vetting new members prior to voting and supporting decisions proposed by eduGAIN Working Groups.

We would propose the following seats:

- A permanent role for the eduGAIN Service Owner who will act as vice-chair.
- eduGAIN service teams can attend in observer / reporting status (OT, security, support, business development).
- The current secretariat function would be maintained.
- 6 elected members would be appointed.

New terms of reference for the Steering Committee and mandate for the SC members should be written including decision making processes.

The Chair of the SC would be decided by the group itself once elected from its membership.

Other observers / external parties may be invited to meetings as appropriate.

SC meetings / votes should have an appropriate quorum.

SC Member Eligibility

At least 4 members can be elected from the eduGAIN Assembly. Up to 2 roles can be elected from the community-at-large, but may also be drawn from the eduGAIN Assembly if there are no external candidates. Example external parties may be FIM4R / FIM4L participants, Service or Identity Provider representatives, research collaborations etc.

Election Process

SC members can typically sit for 2 consecutive terms maximum, but can return to the committee after a year's absence. Seats should be staggered in term and elections will be managed as required for the open seats.

Requests for nominations will be initiated by the Secretariat. Candidates can be self nominated, nominated by their organisation or by another organisation including current

eduGAIN service team members. Candidates will be vetted and then a list of proposed nominees will be circulated to the General Assembly.

Voting will be via simple majority, with a quorum of at least 30% of the membership. If external representatives have been nominated, these 2 roles will be voted on by separate ballot.

If a Steering Committee member resigns, an interim ballot will be held for the seat to cover the remaining time of the member on the Committee.

The process should have a process for replacing members.

Ensuring Representation

It is important that the eduGAIN Steering Committee is representative in the broadest sense. We want to ensure good regional representation, and to make sure specific organisations do not dominate the Steering Committee. However, ensuring good representation without reserving seats in an elected process is challenging.

We would suggest that the Secretariat be given a role to review proposed candidates for the SC and take action to ensure there is representation. This could involve encouraging regional candidates to step forward, reviewing diversity in the committee and ensuring specific organisations do not dominate the committee as appropriate. There should be a clear mandate / set of criteria for proposing additional names for the slate as part of the process. No more than one nomination per federation or organisation should be allowed.

New eduGAIN Assembly

The new eduGAIN Assembly will meet at least once a year. Additional meetings can be held as required. All member federations will continue to nominate one delegate and one deputy to the eduGAIN Assembly.

The eduGAIN Assembly will still be responsible for voting in member federations and voting for membership of the Steering Committee. There will be one vote per federation, as per the current model.

The eduGAIN Assembly will be chaired by the Steering Committee Chair. Responsibility for calling meetings will lie with the Secretariat and agenda items will be discussed with both the Steering Committee and the eduGAIN Assembly.

The Assembly should be able to raise issues / complaints with decisions made by Steering Committee and request an election.

Roles and responsibilities

Steering Committee Chair - elected from SC Members. Responsible for chairing Steering Committee meetings and Chairing eduGAIN Assembly. Tie-break vote in cases

Steering Committee Members - responsible for ensuring updates to the eduGAIN Strategy, workplan and policies are managed in a timely manner subject to voting where appropriate. Reviewing new membership applications. SC should approve temporary technical suspension, recommend permanent technical suspensions to the eduGAIN assembly and vote on suspensions for other external reasons. Assembly should be able to ask for a veto vote with support from XX% of members.   Approve the creation of new working groups and ensure effective reporting from the groups. Appointing the chair of the SC. Other tasks proposed to the SC as appropriate.

Service Owner - responsible for the day to day operations of eduGAIN according to the eduGAIN Strategy and workplan. Vice-chair of eduGAIN Steering Committee.

Secretariat - responsible for organising Steering Committee meetings, running votes on Steering Committee elections and eduGAIN membership and responsible for organising the eduGAIN Assembly.

eduGAIN Assembly - vote on eduGAIN membership, policy updates and on election of Steering Committee members or other matters as appropriate.