

**BotsREN**

Botswana Research and Education Network

**Botswana Identity Federation Policy**



## Document Control

Role	Name	Title	Date	Signature
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*This work is based on the African Catch-All Federation Metadata Registration Practice Statement written by Alex Mwotil, Omo Oaiya, Mario Reale, and Eriko Porto, available at [www.eduid.africa/policies](http://www.eduid.africa/policies), used under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike license: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>. This document is licensed under Creative Commons CC BY 3.0 and acknowledges contributions from the UK Access Management Federation and the ACOnet Identity Federation*

## Revision Control

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Description of Changes</b>
1.0	18 March 2025	Bofelo McFadden	Initial draft
2.0			

## Definitions and Terminology

<b>Attribute:</b>	User information defining roles or characteristics.
<b>Attribute Authority:</b>	Manages additional user attributes for a home organization.
<b>Authentication:</b>	Verifying a user's identity.
<b>Authorization:</b>	Determining access permissions for an authenticated user.
<b>Digital Identity:</b>	A unique set of user attributes managed by a home organization.
<b>End User:</b>	An individual (e.g., employee, researcher, or student) using a service.
<b>Federation:</b>	A network of organizations sharing identity data for secure access.
<b>Federation Operator:</b>	Manages authentication and authorization for federation members.
<b>Federation Member:</b>	An organization that adheres to federation policies.
<b>Home Organization:</b>	Manages digital identities for its members.
<b>Identity Management:</b>	Issuing and maintaining digital identities.
<b>Identity Provider (IdP):</b>	Authenticates users and shares credentials with service providers.
<b>Interfederation:</b>	Collaboration between federations for cross-access to services.
<b>Service Provider:</b>	Offers services and grants access based on authentication data

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## **1. Introduction**

An identity federation is a collective framework enabling organizations to securely share user identity information for collaboration and streamlined access to digital services. The Botswana Identity Federation is established to facilitate seamless identity verification among participating institutions, leveraging identity federation technologies to extend the usability of credentials issued by individual members. The federation policy outlines the obligations and rights of members and the federation operator, defining the operational framework for secure identity and access management.

## 2. Governance

### a. Governance and Roles

Botswana Research and Education Network (BotsREN), serving as the governing body, is responsible for:

- Establishing and enforcing membership criteria.
- Reviewing and approving membership applications.
- Revoking membership if policy violations occur.
- Maintaining relationships with national and international organizations.
- Managing financial and policy matters relevant to the federation.

### b. Rights of Governing body

The Governing Body has the authority to:

- Approve changes to the Federation Policy proposed by the Federation Operator.
- Define strategic direction and future development of the Federation.
- Approve participation in interfederation agreements.
- Approve operational frameworks and technical profiles used within the Federation.
- Resolve disputes related to federation governance.

### c. Obligations and Rights of the Federation Operator

The federation operator ensures:

- The Federation Operator prepares and presents operational, technical, and policy issues to the Governing Body and acts as the secretariat for Governing Body meetings.
- Secure and efficient federation management.
- Technical and operational support for members.
- Testing and recommending identity management solutions.
- Engaging in international collaboration efforts.
- Ensuring compliance with relevant data protection laws.

Additionally, the federation operator has the right to:

- Temporarily suspend a member's technical operations if security is compromised.
- Publicly list federation members and their compliance status.
- Share necessary information about federation members where applicable.

### c. Obligations and Rights of Federation Members

Members must:

- Appoint an administrative contact for federation communications.

- Cooperate in resolving operational issues.
- Maintain secure IT systems and comply with technology requirements.
- Adhere to applicable data protection regulations.

If a member acts as a Home Organization, it must:

- Operate an Identity Provider that authenticates its users securely.
- Manage authentication credentials and digital identities according to institutional policies.
- Ensure that identity information associated with users is accurate and maintained.
- Protect authentication credentials from misuse or unauthorized access.
- Provide support to end users experiencing authentication issues.

If a member functions as an attribute authority, it must:

- Assign and maintain accurate attribute values for federation users and ensure that these attributes are released to authorized Service Providers in accordance with federation policies.
- Release attributes to service providers securely.

If a member operates as a Service Provider, it must:

- Clearly define the access requirements for federation users.
- Determine and enforce authorization rules based on attributes received from Identity Providers.
- Protect personal data received through the federation.
- Provide accurate service metadata to the Federation Operator.

### **3. Eligibility**

Membership in the Botswana Identity Federation is open to:

- BotsREN member institutions acting as Identity Providers.
- Organizations operating services intended for the research and education community
- Other organizations approved by the Governing Body whose services benefit the federation community

Service Providers that are not BotsREN members may participate subject to approval by the Federation Operator and Governing Body.

## 4. Procedures

### a. How to Join

- Organizations apply for membership by agreeing to the federation policy.
- The federation operator reviews applications and presents recommendations to the governing body.
- Approval or rejection is communicated to applicants.
- All members must comply with the federation policy.

### b. How to Withdraw

- Members can terminate their participation by submitting a written request.
- Termination results in the immediate deactivation of federation services.
- The federation operator may also terminate participation, ensuring an orderly transition before the official termination date.

## 5. Legal Conditions of Use

### a. Termination

- Members failing to comply with the policy may have their membership revoked.
- Policy violations trigger formal notices, followed by membership revocation if not addressed.
- Revocation immediately disables access to federation services.

### b. Liability and Indemnification

- The Federation Operator provides federation services on a best-effort basis.
- While reasonable efforts are made to maintain service availability and accuracy of federation metadata, the Federation Operator does not guarantee uninterrupted service.
- Liability exclusions do not apply in cases of gross negligence or fraud.
- Each federation member is responsible for verifying and appropriately using information obtained through the federation.
- Members remain responsible for compliance with applicable laws and regulations within their jurisdiction.

## **6. Additional Legal Provisions**

### **a. Jurisdiction and Dispute Resolution**

Disputes concerning this Federation Policy shall be settled primarily through negotiation between the affected parties. If the issue cannot be resolved through negotiation within four (4) weeks from the date a written claim for negotiation was submitted by one party to the other, either party may escalate the matter.

Should negotiations fail, any unresolved disputes shall be submitted to the competent courts of the Republic of Botswana, specifically the High Court of Botswana, which shall have exclusive jurisdiction.

If any provision of this Federation Policy is deemed unenforceable or invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remaining provisions shall continue in full force and effect.

### **b. Interfederation**

To promote and facilitate collaboration across national and organizational boundaries, the Federation may engage in interfederation agreements with other federations. The administrative and technical aspects of such interfederation participation for specific technologies shall be described in the relevant Technology Profiles.

By participating in interfederation arrangements, Members acknowledge and accept that they may interact with entities governed by foreign laws and federation policies, which may differ significantly from those of this Federation. It is the responsibility of each Member to consult the policies of the foreign federations involved in such interactions, particularly in the event of disputes or concerns regarding behaviour of external entities.

### **c. Amendment**

The Federation Operator reserves the right to amend this Federation Policy as necessary. All amendments must be reviewed and approved by the Federation's Governing Body prior to implementation.

Federation Members will be notified of any changes in writing at least ninety (90) days prior to the effective date of such amendments. This notification period allows for feedback and resolution of any concerns from the Federation Members before the changes are enforced.