

# Federation Operators

A federation operator is an organisation that operates an [identity federation](#). Operation typically includes at minimum:

- Collecting, processing and republishing federation metadata
- Common policies and legal frameworks that all federation participants adhere to
- Guidelines and deployment instructions to operate services in the federation
- Helpdesk to assist with deploying services and debugging issues



Many federations also offer:

- A central Discovery Service/WAYF service
- A guest Identity Provider for users that don't have accounts at participating organisations
- A test infrastructure and test service
- Hosted Identity Providers
- Workshops and Trainings



Most academic federations are operated by the national research and education network (NREN). These organisations typically also operate the network connecting the universities and research organisations within a country. A few examples of NRENs that are also the operator of the national federation are shown in the image above.

A [list of known federation operators](#) in the academic sector can be found on the [REFEDS web page](#).