# Federated authentication - roleplay

What happens in the federated authentication workflow?

At the 2016 LIBER conference we held a [workshop: Federate to Win!](#) Part of this workshop was a roleplay game, which illustrates the workflow in a fun way. Dare to play it yourself?

The workflow

The workflow we played was from a schema from the SWITCH AAI demo. Study the image carefully, take your time. Do you understand what's going on?
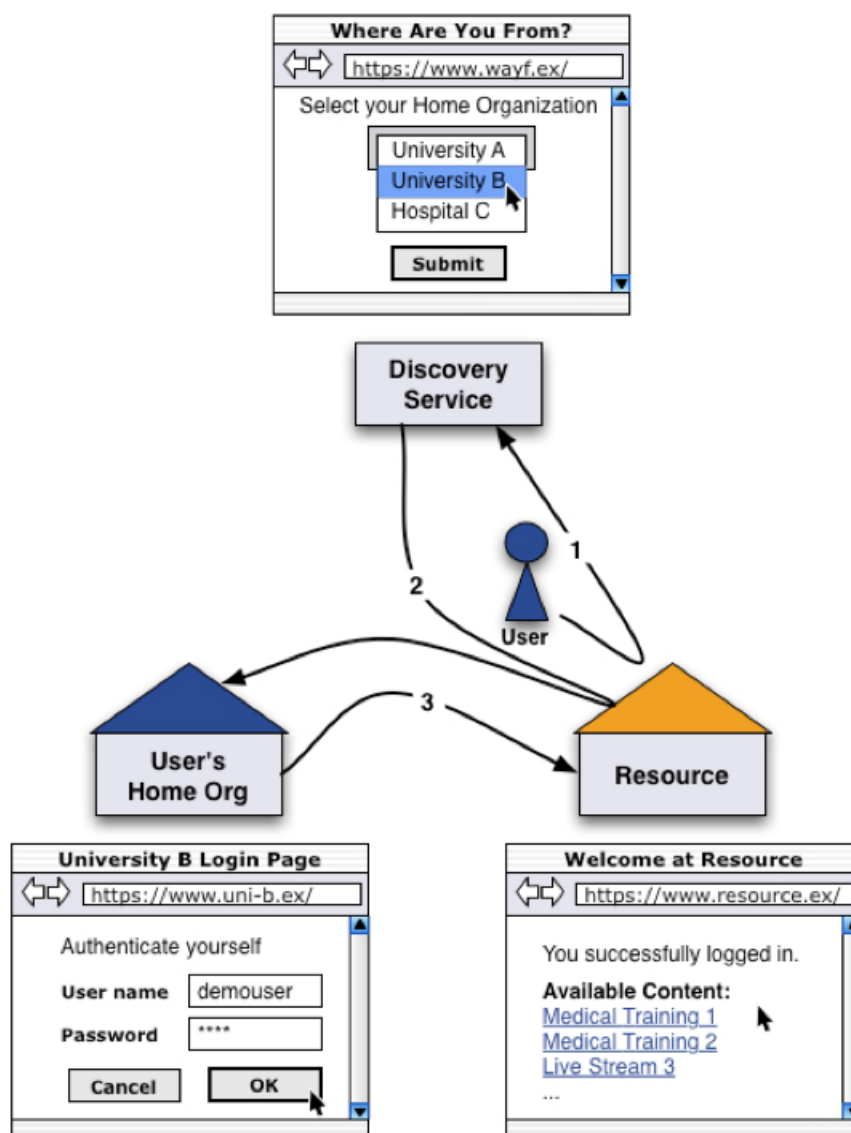
The players

In the role play there are several 'characters' to be played:

- User
- Library Portal (a service provider)
- Identity Provider (at the user's home organisation)
- Where Are You From / Discovery Service
- Guide
- SAML Protocol

Attached you can find signs for the user groups. You can print them (or make them yourself), and distribute them among the players.

Start playing!

The role play is both fun and useful, here is how you can play the federated authentication workflow:

1. The Library Portal answers: "Hallo, welcome! Where are you from?".
2. The User goes to Where Are You From/Discovery Service and chooses his/her home organisation, and comes back to the Library Portal.
3. Now the Library Portal asks the User: "Could you login at your home organisation now, please, so I know details about you so I can provide you the service you are asking for?"
4. The User goes to his/her Home Organisation/Identity Provider and the Identity Provider asks the User: "Hi there, could you enter your credentials here in my secure form, please?".
5. The User enters the credentials, the Identity Provider recognises the User and tells the User: "Thank you, I know you, I am securely passing all necessary details about you to the Library Portal".
6. The User goes back to the Library Portal. Meanwhile SAML Protocol passes his/her user attributes securely in an envelope from the Identity Provider to the Service Provider/Library Portal.
7. The Library Portal cheers the User: "Now I know all the details about you I need to provide you with the service you are asking for. Here you go!". The User is happy now with a service he needs from the Library Portal.

To illustrate Single-Sign-On, try adding another Service Provider. When the User approaches another Service Provider, the Service Provider again sends the User to the Discovery Service. The User chooses his Home Organisation again, but now the Identity Provider doesn't ask for the User credentials as he can remember the User and securely passes all necessary details about the User to the other Service Provider and the User is allowed by the Service Provider to access requested service.

Figures for posters

User

Library
Portal

IdP

SP
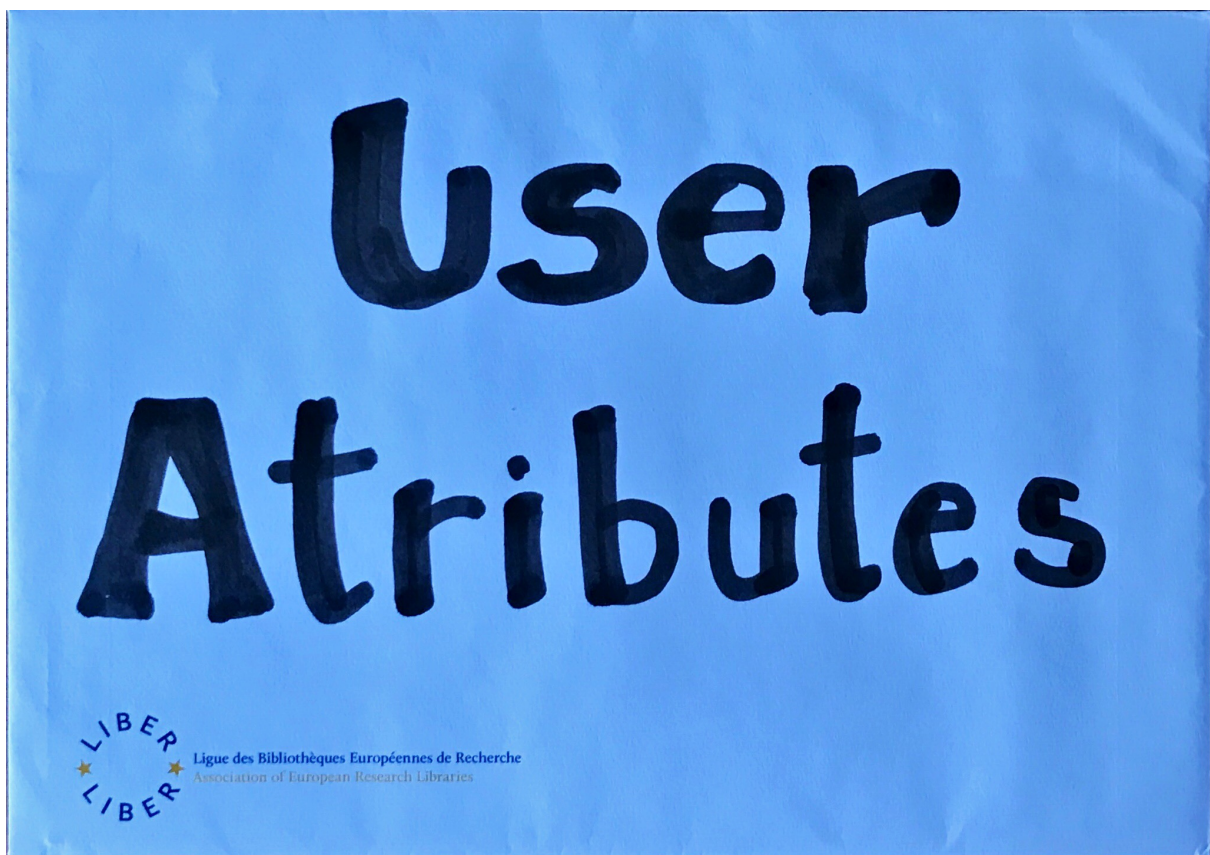
Further Reading

- LIBER 2016 workshop report: [Federate to Win! An AARC Workshop at the LIBER](#)
- [SWITCH AAI Demo](#)