



What is the Trustmark Framework?

The Trustmark Framework, currently in use by several law enforcement organizations around the country, establishes a mechanism for codifying and reusing components of different identity, credential, and access management (ICAM) solutions.

What role does the Trustmark Framework play in ICAM?

The Trustmark Framework can help achieve interoperability between various communities of interest (COI) and identity federations without requiring explicit bilateral agreements. While different COIs often have their own specific rules to enable trust, there are also certain requirements that are consistent across communities. Trustmarks are a means to codify those rules in a machine-readable format.

What are the benefits of the Trustmark Framework?

A significant barrier to ICAM adoption is the difficulty in enabling trust and interoperability across multiple COIs and trust frameworks. By codifying and reusing components of different trust frameworks, the Trustmark Framework promotes mutual trust and interoperability in a manner that is scalable, standardized, reliable, modular, decentralized, secure, affordable, and sustainable.

Trustmark Framework Terms

Trust Framework – any structure that builds trust among organizations or users for the purpose of sharing information and reusing identities.

Trustmark – a set of machine-readable trust and/or interoperability criteria that can be used by one or more federations.

Trustmark Provider – an organization authorized to develop and issue trustmarks.

Trustmark Relying Party – a service, site or entity that relies on a third-party identity provider to authenticate users.

Trustmark Framework Concept Map

ICAM policies from different identity federations are identified and codified in a “Trustmark Definition.” Approved trustmark providers use these definitions to issue trustmarks that can be used by multiple entities. The Trustmark Framework is emerging as a viable paradigm for enabling scalable and agile trust for many organizations and communities.

Who Developed the Trustmark Framework?

The Trustmark Framework was developed by the Georgia Tech Research Institute (GTRI) under funding from the National Strategy for Trusted Identities in Cyberspace (NSTIC) as one of the pilot programs for “catalyzing the identity ecosystem.”

What is the current progress of the Trustmark Framework?

The National Identity Exchange Federation (NIEF) is the largest organization leveraging the Trustmark Framework. Trustmarks are currently in use by NIEF partners such as the Department of Justice and reviewed by other trust framework providers.

NIEF is also aligned with the Federal Identity, Credential, and Access Management (FICAM) program, and has been recognized as one of FICAM’s five approved “trust framework providers.”

