



Never underestimate the importance of a good first impression — and for the Identity and Access Management (IAM) program, that first impression is your login screen. We exist to provide the Harvard Community with easy, secure ways to access resources and share information.

What does IAM mean, actually?

IAM is a set of business processes and supporting technologies to enable the creation, maintenance, and use of a secure, unified digital identity. Sound complicated? It shouldn't be. Our goal is to not only to streamline IAM processes for administrative and IT staff, but also simplify access for users throughout Harvard. Within our three-year mission, the IAM program will reduce barriers to access, simplifying information sharing and allowing safe collaboration across School and institutional boundaries.

Where will I find good IAM practices in action?

From improving user onboarding to streamlining role transitions and affiliation changes, the IAM program strives to simplify many facets of a user's identity lifecycle. Additionally, our services provide developers and IT administrators with easy means of integration, reducing the time it takes to offer uniform, secure authentication and access services to the Harvard community. What does that mean for end users? A lot. Here are a few examples of inconveniences and barriers that IAM services will solve.

HMS: Who Gets What?

Harvard Medical School needs a better way to request and grant access to a growing number of resources and systems. The current complex, homegrown process makes local admin support time-consuming and error-prone. Using IAM's new provisioning toolset, HMS will eliminate this overhead while boosting guest sponsorship and account management functionality.

HKS: One User ID

The Harvard Kennedy School is implementing a SAML/Shibboleth-based system to support federated authentication, sparing users the frustration of yet another login and password and keeping the support team from being overburdened by account issues. HKS-affiliated users, including alumni, will enjoy access to a range of HKS resources using credentials they already know.

HAA: Seamless Transition

With alumni coming from a range of sources, a cumbersome registration process (even for recent graduates), multiple help desks, and other hurdles, the Harvard Alumni Association has obstacles to alumni engagement. IAM services will streamline onboarding for alumni, plus make it easier for approved app owners to extend access to alumni-relevant resources.

How does this benefit me? (Hint: It becomes invisible.)

Call it The Case of the Disappearing Hassle. When IAM is done right, you don't even notice its effects — in other words, things just work. You don't have to use a separate login and password for every service you use during the course of your day, let alone carry around a cheat sheet for remembering them all. Contact and other administrative details about you, your colleagues, or your employees persist across locations and services — no more changing your address in dozens of places if you move office or home. If you're responsible for onboarding individuals with new or changed roles (or you switch roles yourself), managing the associated changes to access authorizations becomes easier and more accurate. In short, good IAM makes many of our everyday activities speedier, simpler, and more secure. We've got some long-reaching, complex goals for IAM at Harvard. But the benefit? That's elementary.



TAKE THE MYSTERY OUT OF IDENTITY

Learn more about our program at iam.harvard.edu