



IRIS is...

Secure

The cyber threat landscape is changing and it has become clear that academic infrastructure is now considered a soft target. It is essential for the success of IRIS that we work together to improve information security and mitigate against the risks of cyber-attack. This theme covers aspects of trust frameworks, security policy and operations, identity management, communications, and threat mitigation.

Accessible

Infrastructure that is difficult to use or places unreasonable barriers to entry in the way of users risks failing to realise its potential and leads to inefficiency, increased costs, wasted time and lost opportunity. This theme covers areas such as identity management, user interfaces, user groups and support, training, ad-hoc access to infrastructure, middleware, and other software.

Innovative

IRIS is not just about joining up disparate infrastructures and the implementation or adoption of tools to achieve this. It is also relevant for IRIS to help drive innovation in tools, techniques, and training – either through the synthesis of existing approaches into new, better, integrated systems or through the development of new solutions. This covers areas such as: tool development, algorithms for infrastructure and science, and training.

Sustainable

Sustainability in our infrastructure has more than one meaning. Probably the most prominent at the moment revolves around environmental concerns and climate change. The equipment we use to achieve science outcomes can lead to environmental damage in its manufacture and its operation. Another interpretation of sustainable is in the long-term planning and provision of equipment, services and support. Many large science projects can span decades of activity and as such need to be able to rely on the availability of the infrastructure throughout their lifecycle. This theme thus covers aspects of environmental concerns, operational efficiency both in terms of infrastructure operations but also in its usage, algorithm development, long term planning, funding stability, training, and succession planning.

Flexible

Flexibility is largely about risk, opportunity and responsiveness. Flexibility in operations and service provision, can provide resilience against shocks whether they be financial, technical, environmental or otherwise. It can help maintain agility and responsiveness to new demands and help drive innovation. This theme largely covers aspects around service provision and the structures around how we provide it and how we respond to new challenges and opportunities. But it also can cover innovation and how we might invest in “riskier” projects to realise opportunistic benefits.

Community Driven

A strength of IRIS is the way in which it is community driven and pulls together experience and skills from its constituent communities. It also provides a venue or a forum for discussion between communities around scientific computing and related areas. This theme is, therefore, focussed on how we organise ourselves, how we support the idea of a larger community, and how we leverage that to be more than the sum of our parts.