# Summary of UK TRE working group session on Extending Control.

16/01/2024 Zoom call:

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## Summary:

Seven attendees (13 registered), covering commissioning through to technical architecture and delivery of SDE/TREs and commercial, discussed the scope and remit of the statement, following an explanation of its naissance by Pete Barnsley (Lead of Working Group) – see slides. There were a wide range of viewpoints expressed, all supportive of the need for discussion on facilities that do slide page 5, albeit with questions on the remit.

“…creating an ecosystem that is more harmonised, less fragmented, more cohesive, that enables people to operate at scale with minimal additional effort, is key”,”…how do we think about control especially for people outside an SDE”, “ …keen to know how our TRE will fit with the wider initiatives on SDE etc”, ”lots of problems with language used, and assumptions that come with these terms, especially with technical and non-technical people… assumptions can take us down difficult paths”, “a common platform though would make it much easier to integrate SDEs and projects”, “but if data does not move and worlds are federated, how do you link data”.

“…what do we mean by control…” “maintaining information governance whilst peering SDEs with TRE platform providers and giving each SDE a seat at the project table for data control”, ”… does the data move between SDE and TRE?...” “not necessarily as some technology and common infrastructure support no-copy ‘shares’”

“...how is this different from today…”, “different main tasks (SDE- data curation, TRE research analysis), different cost and planning drivers, a new opening for increased agency of the citizen”, “facing the data sources is very different from facing the data exploiters and their technology needs”, “…the things that delay are still likely to be present if the SDE and TREs are separated… the hearts and minds piece…to accelerate information governance”, ” if we had platforms that halved the time-to-research then everyone would be using those now, but not having them does not mean this should not be a goal”, “this is about streamlining the processes between research project and datasets”.

“the SDEs need to know the TRE Platform is safe… and automation and control config is a key step”, “the SDE has to have a way of agreeing that the model and environment are ‘safe’”, ”…if we can agree what good looks like across the board then it suddenly becomes a lot easier…the challenge is getting everyone to agree”, “.. we are aiming at known way of things happening”.

**Extending control: Associated Info from participants**

Phase 1b DARE UK TRE-FX: <https://zenodo.org/records/10055354>

Phase 1 DARE UK project: <https://zenodo.org/records/7119720>

Bitfount: <https://www.bitfount.com/>

5 safes RO-Crate: <https://trefx.uk/5s-crate/>

Homomorphic encryption: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homomorphic_encryption>

Snowflake and shares: <https://docs.snowflake.com/en/user-guide/data-sharing-intro>

**Slides shared on session:**



Page 1-3: Proposal separating the TRE form the SDE and positioning it within the Trusted Research Edge Domain adjacent to the RPO Research Discovery Domain.

Page 4: The scope of this working group: common infrastructure, architectural share

Page 5: Agenda for event

## Possible form of a Discussion Paper from this Working group:

Below is an indicative structure for a document to share with the UK TRE community and publish. It would be positioned as a discussion document and not policy. Please comment and critique.

**Why extending control and data chain of custody are needed:**

An explanation of key reasons why this working group is important to the space overall and the UK TRE community.

**What options have been proposed for technologies suited to extending the domain of control?**

A presentation of models for extending control and enhancing access to research data for projects. We will use the base pictures (slide page 4 in attached) as the framework to describe the key parts for each option to be able to compare and contrast.

**How could this affect Information Governance (IG) processes?**

An outline discussion of the impact on a generalised IG process: the things that will remain the same; the things that will need to change; the things that may need to change; and possible options and advantages that result. (This section will have had involvement from the UK TRE IG working group)

**How does this affect federation models?**

An outline / explanation of the implications of the federation models and the equivalent for any other working groups that have relevance. (This section will have had involvement from the UK TRE Federation working group)

**The proposed next steps.**

How much agreement is there within the wide UK TRE community on these definitions and thinking? And what is the basis of any disagreement. And then what would be the natural pathway of activity for this area.

## Suggested Scope statement for Working Group

The Extending Domain of Control Working group is focussed on how SDE and TRE facilities operating in different organisations can work effectively together.

It recognises that this is an internal UK TRE discussion, but will help external stakeholder groups and audiences understand the urgent and important need for the separation of SDE from TRE and thus the need to be able to (re)connect SDEs and TREs

As a first phase, it will document the methods and approaches that do enable extension of control by IG processes across technology instances. Its first general aim is communication and so it will attempt to quantify how divergent the UK TRE community is on this – possibly using agree / disagree surveys to capture the level of consensus.