

User flows

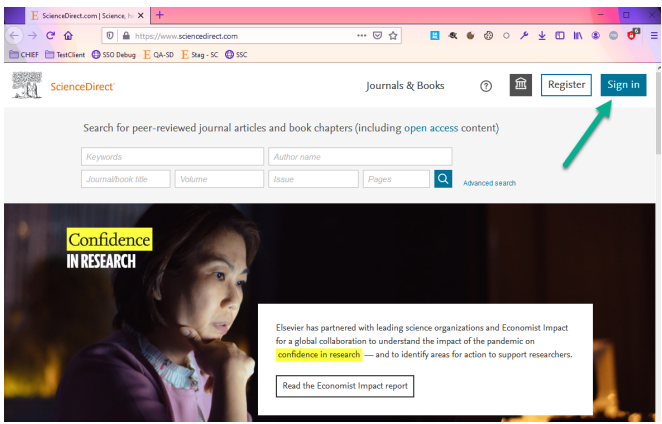
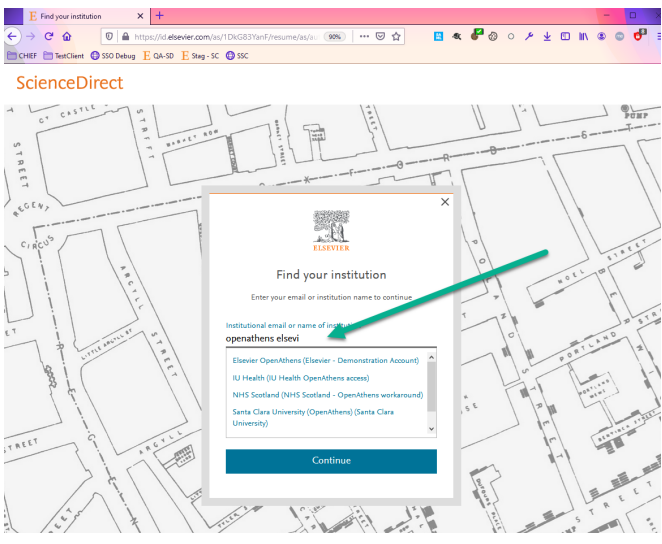
A user will want to visit a resource because they are researching a subject and want to read an article which is available at the resource. They will visit a resource by opening a browser and typing a resource name in address bar, or they'll use a bookmark. The user could also have been sent a link to the article so they'll click a link in the email, or they will click a link in a paper they are reading, either in saved PDF or online.

The user may also be researching a topic and using a search engine which contains articles from various resources, or they may use an application that specialises in a topic of their research, which is also integrated with other applications.

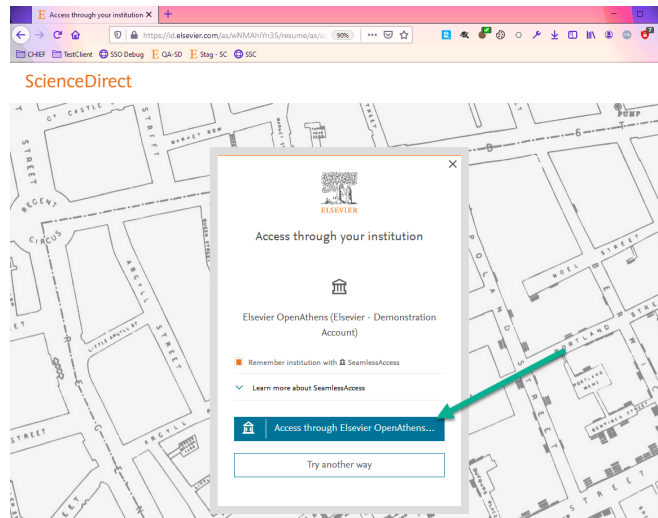
The user may also have been sent an invite to collaborate with a research group at another institution and they will share a wiki or a project or access to some applications for a given period of time.

This is by no means an exhaustive list of use cases; what they have in common, for our purposes, is that the resource needs to know some level of user's identity in order to give the user access to what is due to them, that this identity is being passed from an IdP to an SP via a previously established trust infrastructure which also has user's interest in mind and operates within the law.

1 - SAML through WAYF discovery mechanism

Steps	Screen	Additional notes
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A user visits a resource 2. The user clicks CTA that will take them to authn flow 	 <p>The screenshot shows the ScienceDirect website. At the top right, there are buttons for 'Register' and 'Sign in'. A green arrow points to the 'Sign in' button. Below the navigation bar is a search bar with fields for 'Keywords', 'Author name', 'Journal/Book title', 'Volume', 'Issue', and 'Pages'. At the bottom, there is a banner for 'Confidence in Research' with a 'Read the Economist Impact report' button.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the resource may be on the same domain as SP • the resource doesn't have to be on the same domain as SP • an SP can be a proxy for multiple resources • there are a lot of different SPs with a large number of resources behind them, with different attribute requirements and permissions, with a variety of UX
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. The user will search for their institution and select one from the results 	 <p>The screenshot shows a 'Find your institution' dialog box overlaid on a map. The dialog box has a text input field for 'Institutional email or name of institution' and a list of suggestions including 'openathens elsevier', 'Elsevier OpenAthens (Elsevier - Demonstration Account)', 'IJ Health (IJ Health OpenAthens access)', 'NHS Scotland (NHS Scotland - OpenAthens workaround)', and 'Santa Clara University (OpenAthens) (Santa Clara University)'. A green arrow points to the 'Continue' button at the bottom of the dialog.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the user must find their institution • for some institutions that's simple, for other it is not (similar names, multiple IdPs, multiple languages) • the user may make the right choice from the start, or not, and they will have to return and make another choice • there's a variety of WAYF discovery mechanisms, some SPs build their own, others use the federation WAYF

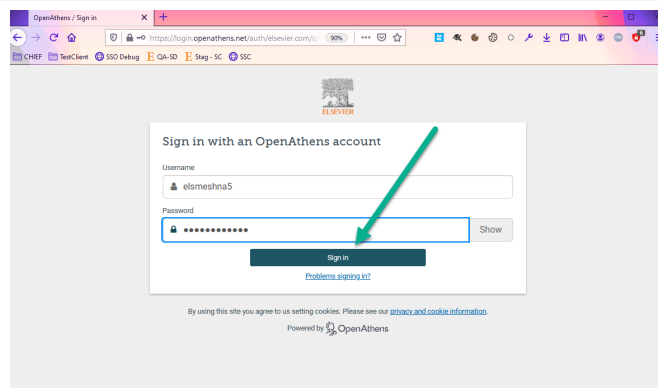
5. The user will confirm institution, if needed



- this is where SP sends a SAML request to the IdP
- the SP and IdP have already established a trust partnership before, either through RE federation or bilaterally

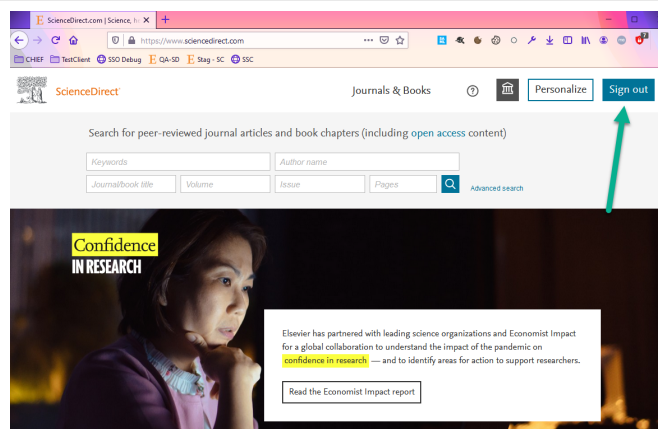
6. The user is taken to IdP where:

- they are asked to authenticate if no active session in browser; or
- they are not asked if IdP maintains a session for them



- this is the only screen that is consistent across the ecosystem for a user
- it is the user's trusted point
- the IdP / library manage attribute release, including PII
- the library respects PII

7. The user comes back to resource and is authenticated



- an SP can be the only authentication at the resource, or
- there can also be a number of different points between it and the resource, managing various authn and/or authz portions
- the user doesn't understand this mechanism
- the user has no idea what does SP represent, this knowledge is in the hands of IdP operator

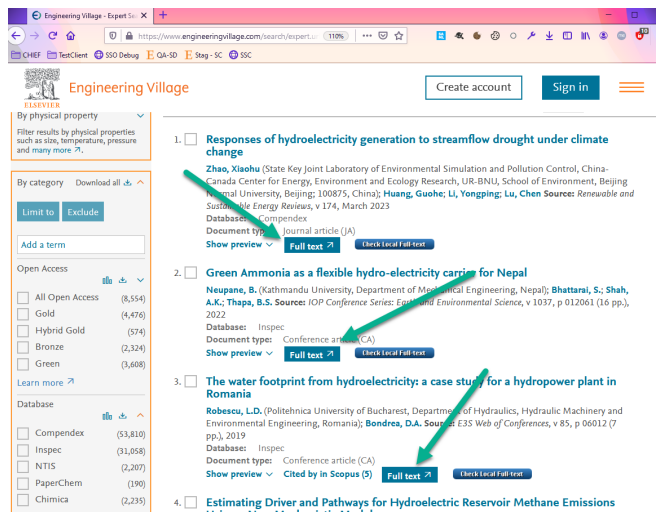
2 - SAML without discovery via an SP or IdP initiated session

The principle of exchange of SAML authn request and response is the same, but the user is spared a discovery journey, sent directly to the IdP and then forwarded to the intended SP.

Some more info about WAYFless journey; the page is Elsevier specific but the mechanism is not: https://service.elsevier.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/28537/supporthub/elsevieraccess/

Steps	Screen	Additional notes
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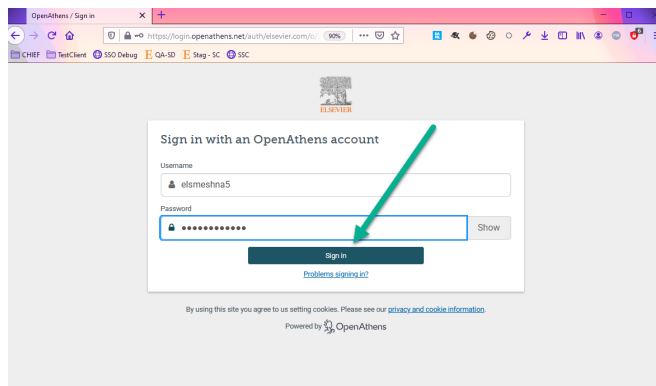
1. A user starts a session at **resource A**,
2. The user finds an article and clicks on a link



- resource A doesn't need to be on the same domain as IdP nor SP nor resource B
- these links can be set up as WAYFLess URLs
- these links can be set up as a redirector (such as OpenAthens redirector) and generate WAYFLess URLs
- they can be set up as IdP initiated links (if SP supports that)
- the links exist on library managed pages and integrated search discovery engines; they can be set up anywhere
- resource A can also just be an IdP such as Azure or Okta

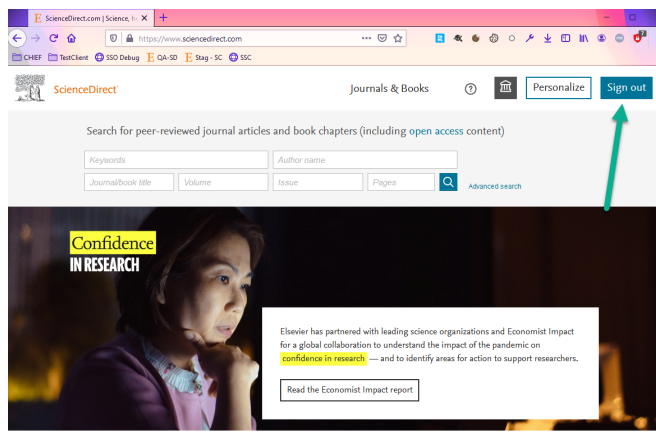
3. The user is taken to IdP where:

- they are asked to authenticate if no active session in browser; or
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- this is the only screen that is consistent across the ecosystem for a user
- it is the user's trusted point
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- the library respects PII

4. The user lands on **resource B** and is authenticated



- an SP can be the only authentication at resource
- there can also be a number of different points between it and the resource, managing authn and/or authz