

# AWS State, Local, and Education Learning Days

Philadelphia

# Secure Research Environment and Portal

Compliant Research Data Architecture and Data Sharing

**Brian McCarthy (he/him)**

Solutions Architect

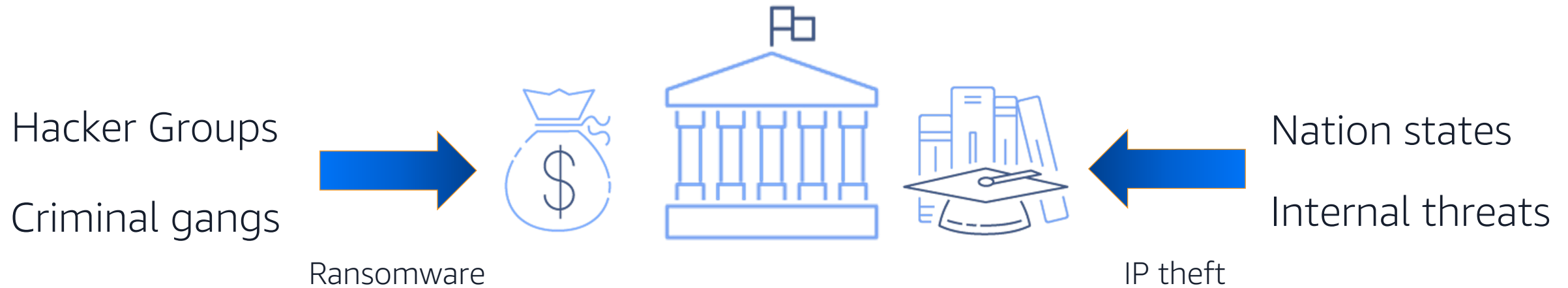
AWS

btmccar@amazon.com

# Why now?

# Why now?

Securing research data has never been more important



# Why now?

Securing research data has never been more important

Research data has value and is an active target

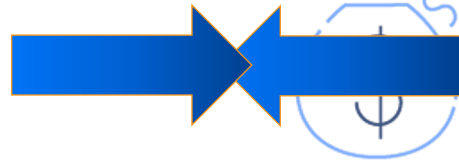
## Ransom costs

## Remediation costs

## Forensic costs

Hacker groups

Criminal gangs



Ransomware



Nation states  
Internal threats

IP theft

**Reputational damage**

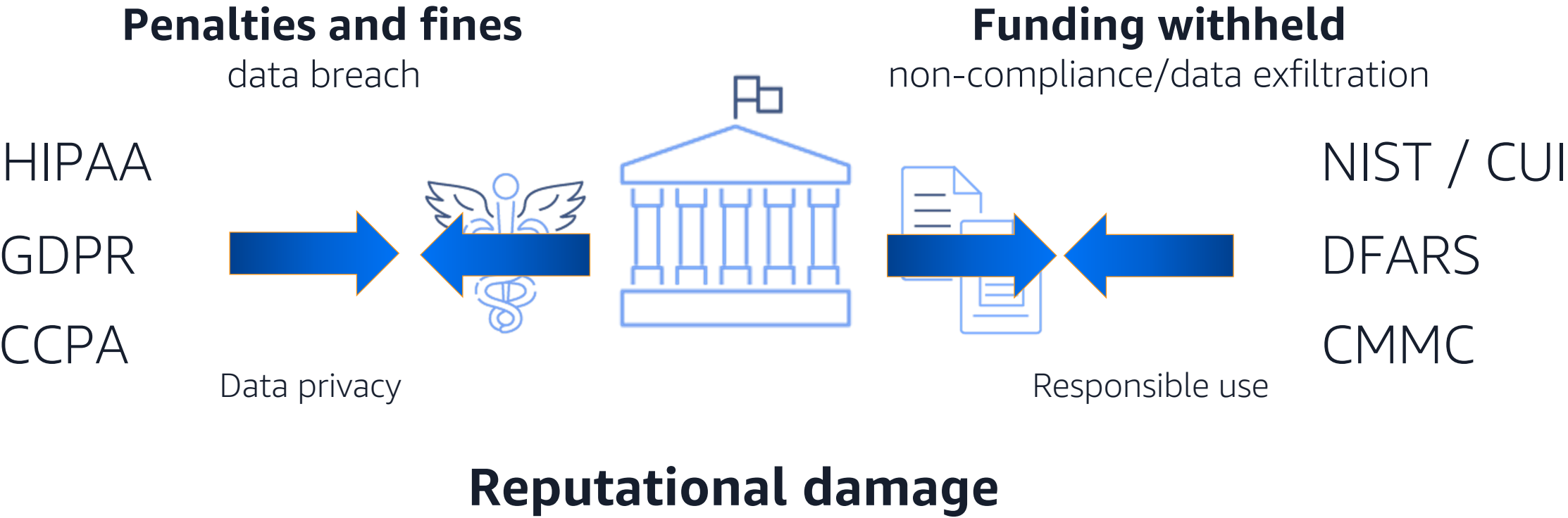
# Why now?

Responsible stewardship of research data is expected



# Why now?

Responsible stewardship of research data is expected  
Compliance defines specific responsibilities for research data



# Research is a unique challenge

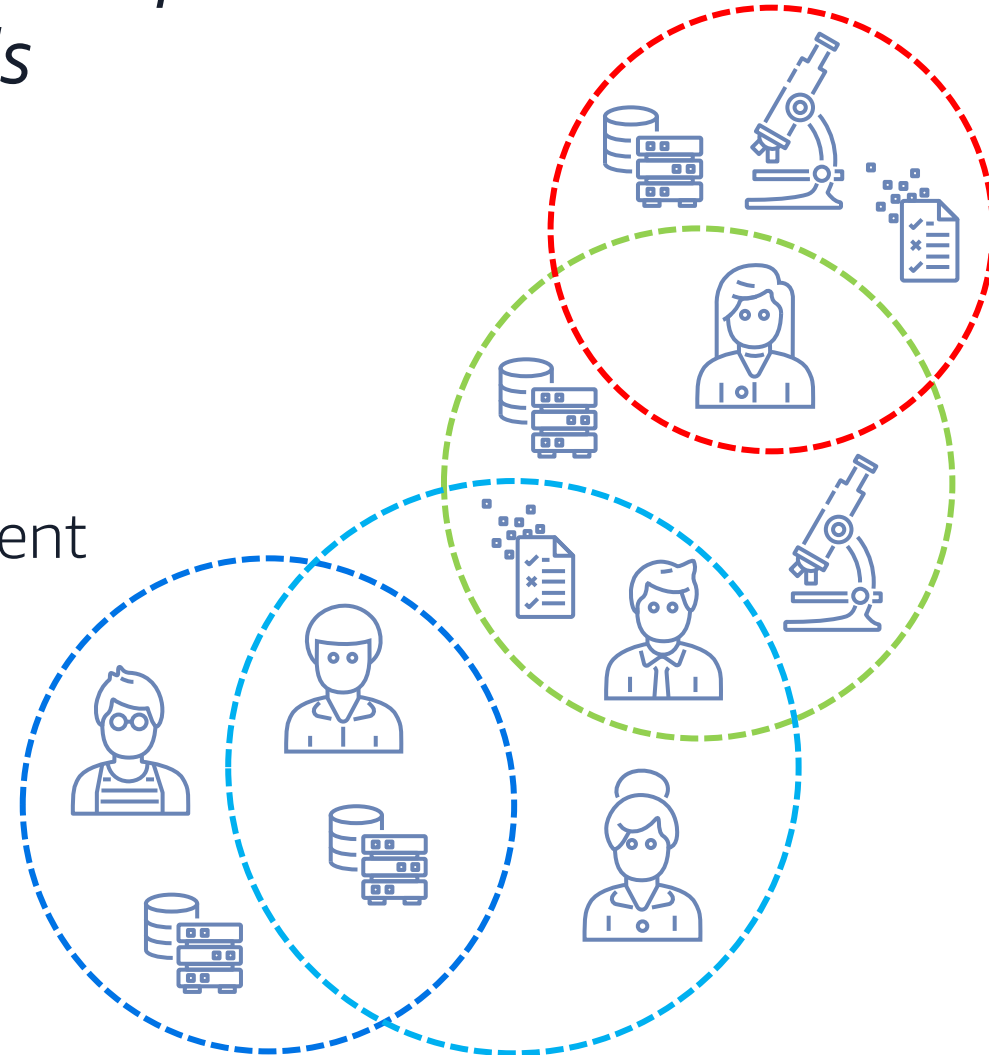


# Research presents a unique challenge

*Research is challenging to secure and make compliant because it often operates within and between islands*

## Factors:

- Researcher-procured and managed equipment
- Researcher population is
  - Collaborative, distributed, mobile, and transient
  - Bring your own device (BYOD)



# Research presents a unique challenge

*On-prem solutions for secure and compliant research have limits*

## Factors:

- Based on point-in-time technology and are either overly generic or tailored to an initial research project's needs
- Adapting to evolving research and compliance requirements is complex and expensive
- Researchers often resist using a solution that doesn't meet their specific needs

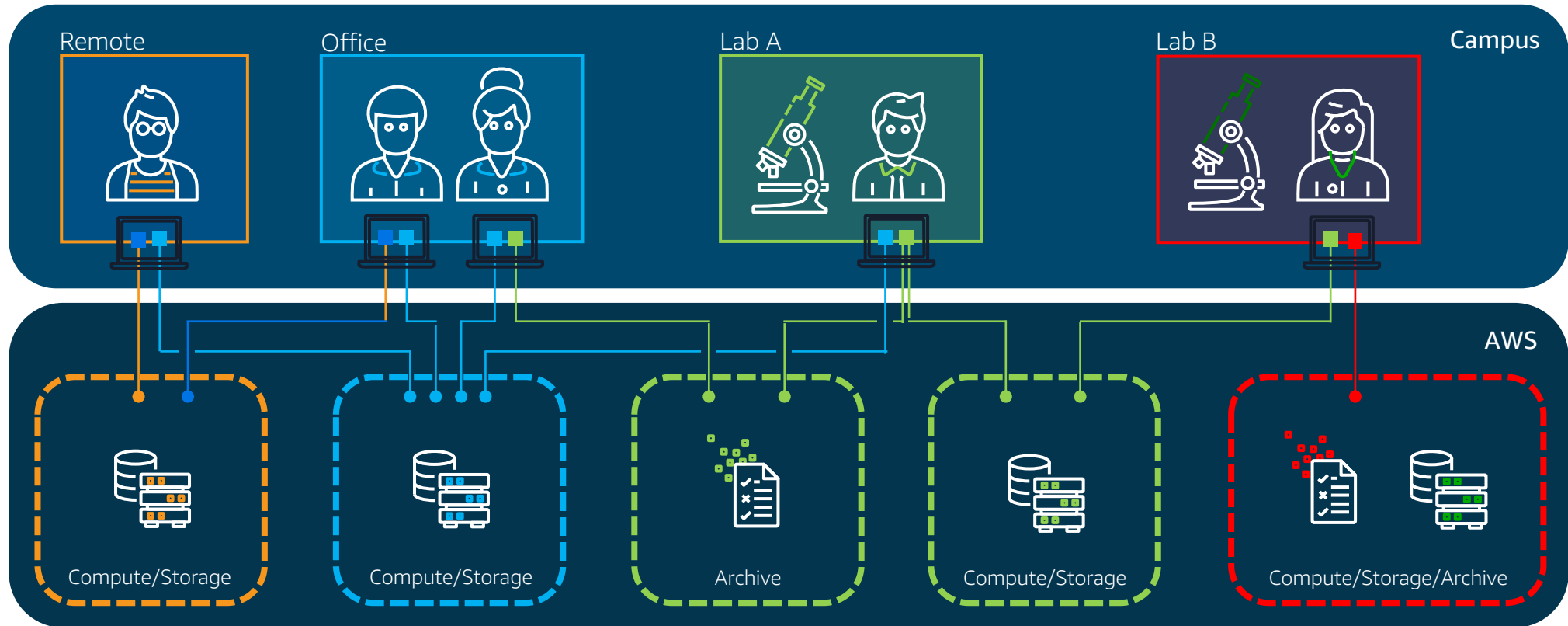


# Why AWS?



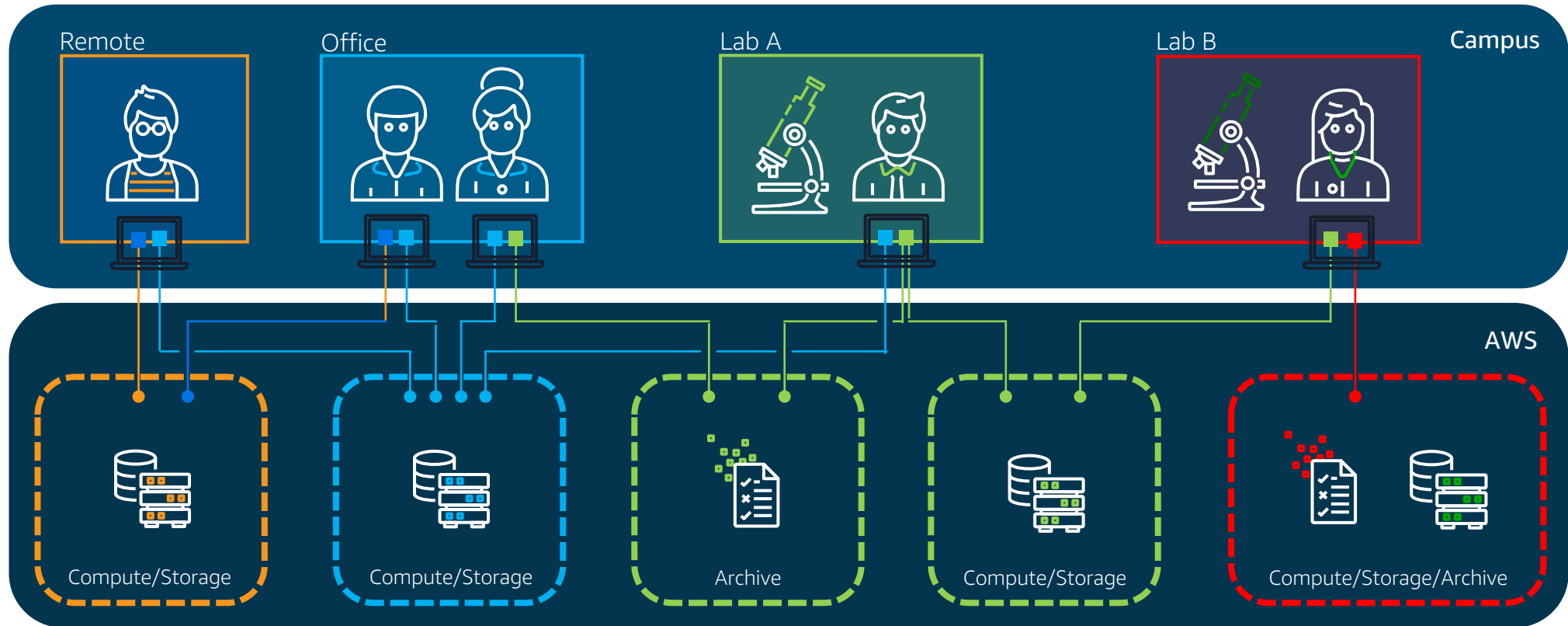
# Why AWS?

*Enables deployment of repeatable research environments that help institutions achieve their security and compliance goals*








# Why AWS?

*Offers a wide range of flexible, on-demand infrastructure that enables and evolves with researcher demand*



# Why AWS?

*Provides a wide range of services enabling institutions to create solutions to meet their security and compliance requirements*

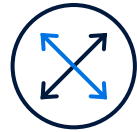
 Identity & access management	 Detection	 Infrastructure protection	 Data protection	 Incident response
IAM IAM Identity Center Organizations Directory Service Amazon Cognito AWS RAM	Security Hub GuardDuty Amazon Inspector CloudWatch AWS Config CloudTrail VPC Flow Logs	Firewall Manager Shield AWS WAF Amazon VPC AWS PrivateLink Systems Manager	Macie AWS KMS CloudHSM ACM Secrets Manager AWS VPN Server-Side Encryption	Detective CloudEndure DR AWS Config Rules Lambda

# Why AWS?

*Elevates your institution's research capabilities along with its security and compliance posture*



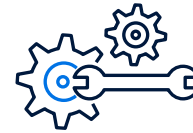
Inherit global  
security and  
compliance  
controls



Scale with superior  
visibility and  
control



Highest  
standards  
for privacy and data  
security



Automate and reduce  
risk with deeply  
integrated services



Largest  
community  
of security  
partners and  
solutions

# How?



# You need a landing zone

- A secure, scalable, multi-account AWS environment based on AWS best practices
- A starting point for net new development and experimentation
- A starting point for migrating applications
- An environment that allows for iteration and extension over time



# Landing zone elements



Secure and  
compliant

Meets the organization's  
security and auditing  
requirements



Scalable and  
resilient

Ready to support  
highly available and  
scalable workloads

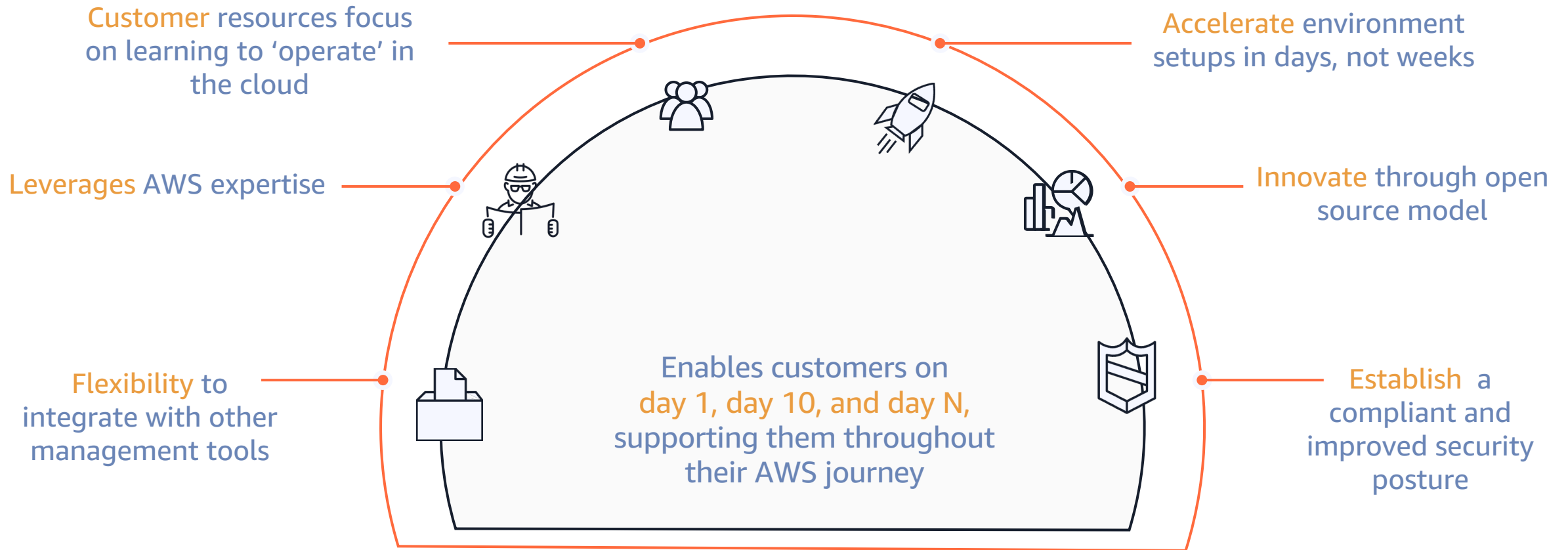


Adaptable and  
flexible

Configurable to  
support evolving  
mission requirements

The **Landing Zone Accelerator on AWS**  
is an open-source software solution  
that accelerates the implementation of  
a customer's technical security controls  
and infrastructure foundation on AWS

# Landing Zone Accelerator benefits



# How AWS delivers

## Example: secure and compliant landing zone

### UCSD Health Secure Research Cloud (HSRC) for HIPAA compliance

#### Drivers

- Prevent removal of research data assets and inappropriate third-party data transfers (IRB vs. policy and legal compliance)
- Prevent proliferation of unmanaged cloud accounts (and gain visibility to monitor activity, data types, workloads, and potential risks)
- Prevent ransomware and research data on mobile devices as a breach source (unmanaged, unprotected, or misconfigured devices)

Partnered with AWS, UCSD Health IS security, institutes, and research groups early

- Compliance is more than technical controls: BAA, governance, and policy



# How AWS delivers

## Example: secure and compliant landing zone

### UCSD Health Secure Research Cloud (HSRC) for HIPAA compliance

#### Solution goals

1. Access controls – technical policies and procedures allowing only authorized persons to access electronic protected health information (ePHI)
2. Audit controls – hardware, software, and/or procedural mechanisms to record and examine access and other activity
3. Integrity controls – policies, procedures, and measures to ensure and confirm ePHI is not improperly altered or destroyed
4. Transmission security – technical security measures guarding against unauthorized access to ePHI transmitted over a network

# How AWS delivers

## Example: deployment of a research workload

UCSD Health Virtual Research Desktop (VRD) – within UCSD HSRC (saw earlier)

Researcher enablement

- A solution that balances security and privacy while still providing a quality user experience
- Access to ePHI via UCSD Data Extraction Concierge Service (DECS) and VRDs  
(data extracted from clinical data warehouse by DECS and placed into investigator's VRD "secure" folder)
- Hardened Amazon WorkSpaces Windows 10 virtual machines
  - Runs within UCSD HSRC and approved by UCSD Health CISO for ePHI
  - Provisioned with: SPSS, R/RStudio, Python/PyCharm, Java 8, and others
  - With approval, access to internal databases



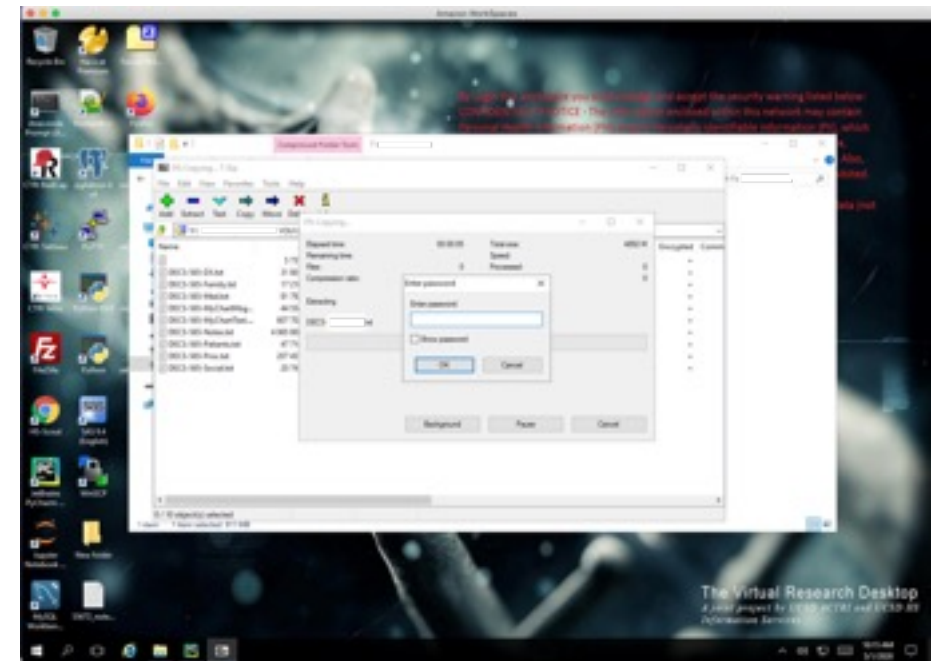
# How AWS delivers

## Example: deployment of a research workload

UCSD Health Virtual Research Desktop (VRD) – within UCSD HSRC (saw earlier)



View of remote desktop from investigator's computer



VRD desktop with application running



# How AWS delivers

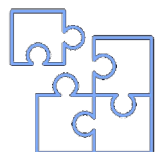
## Outcomes

### UCSD HSRC and VRD

- A flexible environment that supports security, compliance, and researcher workflow
- Structured, limited, and controlled access to ePHI data for research using defined process
- Automated security controls and configuration monitoring limits configuration drift
- Consistent logging makes audits and re-assessments less challenging
- Ability to flexibly add additional research tools and data environments as needed
- Security, compliance, and administrative support (early involvement key)
- Faculty and researcher project/environment support (early involvement key)

# What about data?

# AWS Clean Rooms helps organizations collaborate on datasets without sharing underlying data



## Multi-party collaborations

Collaborate with up to five parties in a single collaboration; extract insights from multiple companies



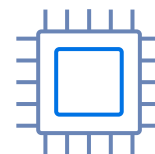
## No AWS data movement

Use Amazon S3 data with direct permissioning and no AWS data movement



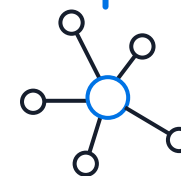
## Query controls and enforcement

Configure analysis rules to restrict the type of analysis allowed on your data



## Cryptographic computing

Pre-encrypt data so that it is encrypted at all times, including during query execution



## Programmatic access

Automate and integrate functionality into existing workflows and products; create white-labeled clean room offering

# Amazon DataZone

UNLOCK THE POWER OF ALL DATA FOR ALL USERS WITH TRUSTED AUTONOMY



Data producers

Teams who want to share data

Amazon DataZone

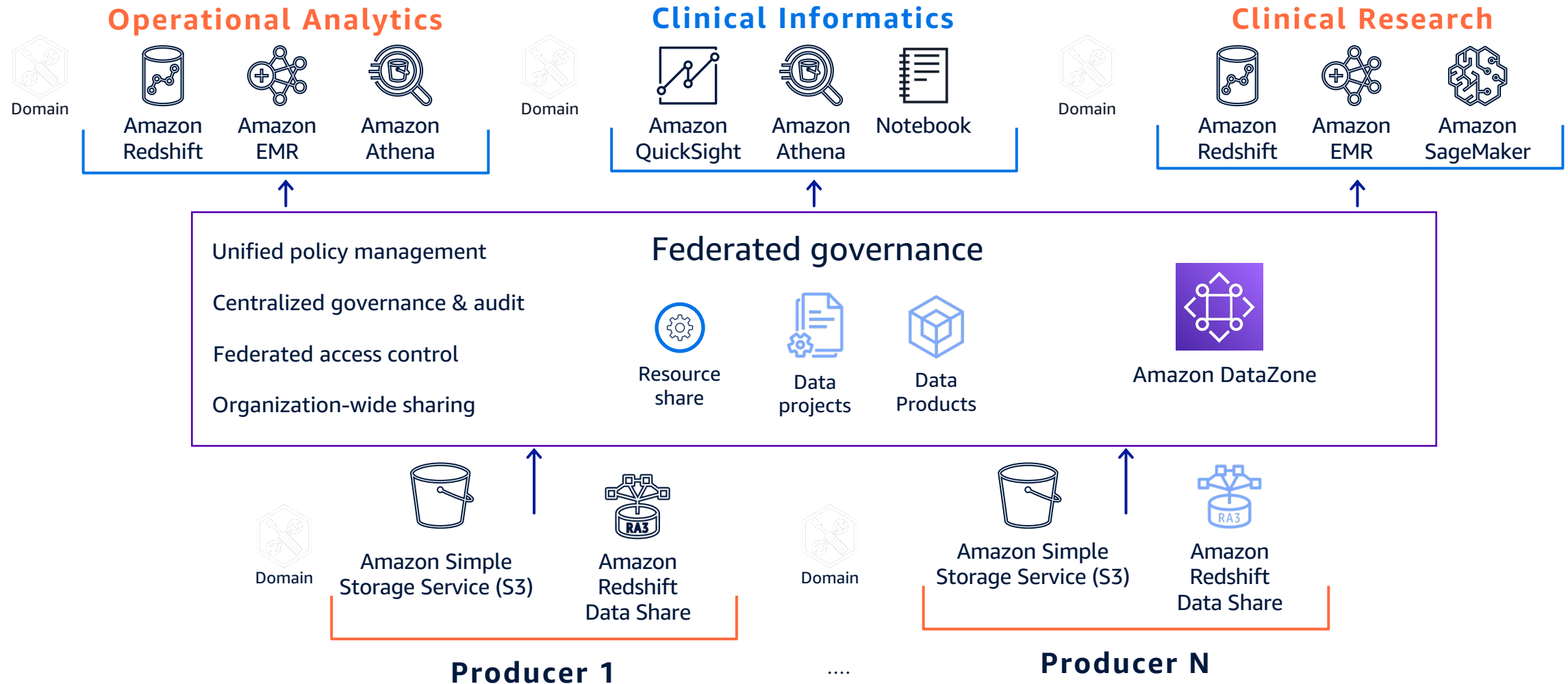
Team who runs the  
data marketplace

Data consumers

Teams who want to use data

# Modern Health Data Mesh Architecture

Decentralized, lightweight federated governance across domain-oriented data systems to drive governed sharing



# CHOP Accelerates Pediatric Research using AWS-Powered Data Resource

## Challenge

As medical researchers generate more and more clinical data, they're faced with the challenge of storing and organizing that data so that researchers can access, study, and cross-reference it to facilitate medical breakthroughs.

## Benefits

CHOP provided the research community with access to genomic and associated clinical data and increased KFDRC's collaborative potential.

CHOP stored 26 billion occurrences of 215 million unique genomic variants from 5,000 participants, while meeting the FHIR industry standard.

## Solution

CHOP built the Gabriella Miller Kids First Data Resource Center (KFDRC), a data source that brings genomics, clinical and imaging data as an open resource for researchers to focus on discoveries in pediatric cancer and structural birth defects.



All of our system is currently built on AWS. . . We went from zero to managing a few petabytes of genomic data within a year using this setup."

Allison Heath  
Director of Data Technology and Innovation, Center for Data-Driven Discovery in Biomedicine

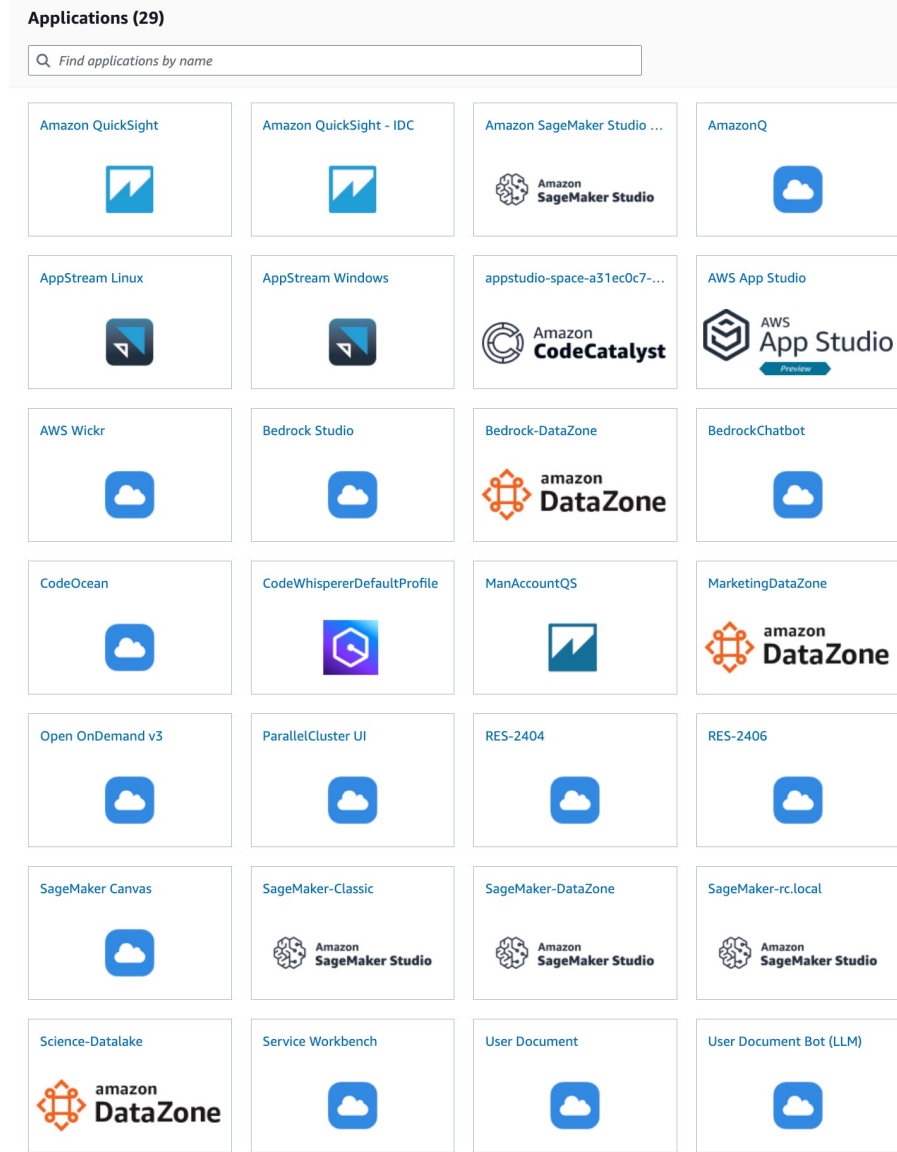


# What about access?

# Portal for Secure Research Environment

The **Secure Research Portal (SRP)** is a landing page that:

- Simplifies AWS service access for researchers and departments, bypassing the complexity of the AWS console
- Offers a user-friendly interface ensuring federal compliance and enabling all disciplines that require cluster and end-user computing and storage





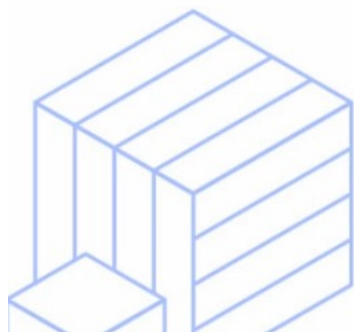


### Sign in to new-research-computing

Username

Next

By continuing, you agree to the [AWS Customer Agreement](#) or other agreement for AWS services, and the [Privacy Notice](#). This site uses essential cookies. See our [Cookie Notice](#) for more information.



# Q & A



# Thank you!

**Brian McCarthy** (he/him)

Solutions Architect

AWS

[btmccar@amazon.com](mailto:btmccar@amazon.com)



**Data and Analytics**

Secure Research Environment  
and Portal